Global Citrus Scan (2019_23)

(John Edmonds 16 August 2019) Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

South African Star Ruby grapefruit back on South Korean shelves

Six years ago after a citrus congress in South Korea, South African growers noticed that there was an appetite for the Star Ruby grapefruit. Then last year, after various visits to the country during the past years officials from the Fresh Produce Export's Forum and the Grapefruit Variety Focus Group had a meeting with the e-Mart retail group where it was decided to arrange promotions in E-mart stores of South African Star Ruby Grapefruit. Last year the promotion took place in 30 stores over three days and sales of the South African fruit increased by 50% during the promotion period, after which it dropped to 25% and these increased sales lasted right until the end of the season. "After evaluating last year's results, we decided to repeat the promotions again this year," explained Anton Kruger CEO of FPEF. "This year it will be in 24 stores for four days, starting 17 August...There is a lot of potential in the South Korean market as, like other Asian countries the middles classes can afford a premium fruit and are becoming very health conscious." Anton remarked that he was very happy with the way the promotions were going and added that since last year the demand for grapefruit juice and peeled, ready to eat grapefruit had also increased.
[Freshplaza.com; 13 August 2019]

Citrus industry wins temporary reprieve

The citrus industry has won a temporary reprieve over an EU plan to reduce the maximum residue limit (MRL) for a widely used postharvest fungicide, which could have caused serious disruption to trade within the European market. Last year, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) put forward a proposal to cut the MRL for Imazalil from 5mg/kg to 0.01mg/kg, causing consternation among Europe's main citrus producing countries. Benito Orihuel, CEO of Valencia-based postharvest solutions provider Citrosol, said such a move would profoundly affect the entire trade of fresh citrus in Europe. "Imazalil is the post-harvest fungicide for citrus fruits, and reducing the MRL would effectively end its use, meaning that producers must find a replacement," he said. "There are other fungicides available, but none are as effective as Imazalil, so nobody is really ready for this."…Paradoxically, a measure taken as a precaution to prevent human health could have precisely the opposite effect. "The move would also have made it much more difficult for citrus supplied by Southern Hemisphere countries to withstand the long shipping time required to reach the European market. Following pressure from countries including Spain, Italy and Greece, however, the European Commission has granted Imazalil a three-year transition period while further studies are carried out to evaluate its safety. During that period, the MRL will remain at current levels for mandarins, lemons and limes, while for oranges and grapefruit it will be set at 4mg/kg. According to one Brussels-based consultant, the EFSA's decision to reduce the MRL for Imazalil…was based on the fact that it did not have sufficient information to be able to complete its risk assessment into the toxicological properties of the fungicide, rather than any express concerns over its safety...
[fruitnet.com/eurofruit; 8 August 2019]

Analysis of Chinese market for imported oranges

The imported oranges currently on the Chinese market mainly come from Australia, South Africa, and Peru, with a small additional supply volume from Egypt…The season proceeds in much the same pace as last year…The first half of this season has not been great for South African oranges because Egyptian oranges were still supplied in large volumes. The presence of Egyptian oranges had a direct impact on the sales volume and the price of South African oranges. Now, however, the Egyptian orange season has ended the price and sales volume of South African oranges gradually recovers. The price may increase even further during Mid-Autumn Festival [13 September, 2019]. Australian oranges are doing alright because they are quite popular with Chinese consumers. However, the market conditions are not as great as in recent years. The main reason for this development is the competition with Egyptian oranges and South African oranges…
[Freshplaza.com; 15 August 2019]

Chile poised for imminent citrus access to China as inspectors visit

Chile is hopeful its citrus industry will gain long-awaited access to the Chinese market later this year. Chinese inspectors are this week touring citrus facilities and production sites throughout the country. The Chilean citrus industry has sought market access to China for many years and hopes to achieve it in November…Miguel Canala-Echeverría, general manager of ASOEX, said: "This is very important for the Chilean citrus industry…He expects leaders to sign the protocol at the next APEC Summit in November. Chile currently has access to China for cherries, blueberries, kiwifruit, table grapes, nectarines, plums, avocado, apples, and, more recently, pears…
[Freshfruitportal.com; 8 August 2019]