

Global Citrus Scan (2020_9)

(John Edmonds 18 March 2020)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

RSA adjusts to Covid-19 measures

Amidst harsh and far-reaching measures introduced by the South African government to stop the spread of the Coronavirus, the South African citrus and topfruit industries are moving into their 2020 exports season filled with much uncertainty...While minor ports have been closed for entry by people, the export terminals and therefore the flow of containers is not expected to be affected. There are some concerns about the availability of containers being returned to South Africa. Crew transfers for vessels will however not be allowed in South African ports... The CGA singled out the Coronavirus outbreak as a new challenge to fresh produce exporters across the globe. "It is encouraging that China's logistics services are expected to be fully operational soon, with cargo volumes and ship calls having swiftly rebounded over the past two weeks." It says, however, that the outbreak across the European Union, the largest export market for South Africa's citrus, remains a concern. "This could still result in a decrease in demand and a shortfall of containers when the export season kicks off in May. It is therefore critical that exporters confirm that there are containers available before they start shipping,"

[Eurofruit; 18 March 2020]

Morocco faces tough citrus season

"There's been a general shortage of citrus out of Morocco—there is about a 75 percent decrease in volume from last year," says Michel Matouk of Cherry Hill, NJ-based World Fresh Produce, who brings in lemons, grapefruit, clementine and oranges from Morocco into North America. The lack of production out of Morocco is blamed on a few factors, says Matouk. "First, there was a lack of water. Then, the temperature was higher than usual. But the major factor for the decrease in volume is due to last year's season. There was an overproduction of 30-35 percent and the growers were unable to pick the increased volume from the trees promptly enough to avoid issues in this year's harvest. This created shock to the trees and the consequence is less fruit with bigger calibers." He adds that this situation particularly affected clementines and oranges...

[Freshplaza.com; 17 March 2020]

Egyptian oranges reach Chinese market in larger volumes

In China there is a large production of oranges which has come on the market for the last few months. Besides the local supply, imported oranges are also doing well. Currently Egyptian oranges are coming on the market. This year the shipments were a bit delayed in the beginning of the season, because the coloring...COVID-19 ... had a direct effect on the export of Egyptian oranges...Since week 8 Leopard Fruit Trading has been receiving Egyptian oranges for the Chinese market again..."When the first shipments arrived in week 8, we could not receive them directly in Shanghai. Due to the virus Shanghai port had too many containers on the terminal which could not be moved. A lot of truck workers were still in their hometowns and it was uncertain when they could be back in Shanghai. Therefore we mostly shipped to Guangzhou. We receive new containers every week. The quality is very good and is well appreciated in the Chinese market."..."The price is good compared with previous season but the movement is slow...Our supply is more or less the same as last year, because the total production of this season from Egypt is 30% less. We think the season will also be finished earlier...At this moment, it does not matter whether you are selling in Shanghai or Guangzhou, the buying power has not yet come back to normal due to the virus. On the one hand clients are fewer and, on the other hand, restaurants and juice bars are all closed. The virus is also still spreading in countries around China, so it just depends how that will further develop...

[Freshplaza.com; 11 March 2020]

Citrus flavonoid could cut obesity

Canadian scientists have found a molecule in citrus that appears to drastically reduce obesity and reverse its negative effects. Researchers at the Western University of Ontario say mice fed a high-fat and high-cholesterol diet that were given nobiletin, a flavonoid found in oranges and mandarins, were noticeably thinner and had reduced levels of insulin resistance and blood fats. The study, published in the Journal of Lipid Research, found the beneficial compound also reduced the amount of plaque in arteries. "We went on to show that we can also intervene with nobiletin," said senior author Professor Murray Huff. "We've shown that in mice that already have all the negative symptoms of obesity, we can use nobiletin to reverse those symptoms, and even start to regress plaque build-up in the arteries, known as atherosclerosis." Huff said the team had not yet been able to pinpoint exactly how nobiletin works...

[Eurofruit; 9 March 2020]