

Global Citrus Scan (2020_10)

(John Edmonds 30 March 2020)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

PPECB proves its worth

For more than 90 years South Africa's PPECB has served the South African fresh produce industry with distinction... "Notwithstanding the global lockdown, the movement of product remains essential," said Lucien Jansen, chief executive of PPECB... "As a National Public entity, the PPECB delivers inspection, cold chain and food safety services to the perishable export industry," Jansen continued. "The PPECB delivers these services to about 1,500 activity points across South Africa. It inspects about 200 different types of products exported to more than 90 countries globally."... "During the lockdown the PPECB had to really think outside the box and staff were required to make a lot of sacrifices," Jansen confirmed. "One example is that with the start of the citrus season, the PPECB has more than 100 inspectors or assessors that are on relief duty and moving from their home regions to where the needs are... As many quest houses are not taking guests for short stay visits, inspectors are taking a nap in their cars whilst en-route to relief duty regions to break the journey and rest. In addition to protecting themselves against the virus, they still need to be on the lookout for wild animals and snakes while doing orchard inspections."

[Asiafruit; 28 March 2020]

Demand spikes across North America for oranges

Oranges are seeing a serious spike in demand in North America that is likely tied to the COVID-19 virus making its way throughout the continent... East Coast suppliers are seeing the same thing. "With the COVID-19 virus this last week, we've seen a pretty big spike in orange demand. People are trying to up their vitamin C so we've seen an increase in sales," says GT Parris of Seald Sweet in Vero Beach, FL. "While sales were normal, this definitely will help the bottom line and the grower."... On the West Coast, it's a slightly different scene affecting supplies. "This current pressure on supply is driven in part not only by the disease and also a reaction to the weather that we've had out here. Rain has somewhat curtailed the amount of fruit that we're able to harvest," says Wilson... All of this means that pricing is stronger of course. "There's no gouging—so no doubling of prices or anything like that. Pricing has just crept into the range where the grower can make some money finally," ...

[Freshplaza.com; 26 March 2020]

Israeli youth mobilised to pick fruit

Israel's government has signed a new order allowing thousands of young people over the age of 18 to take part in the citrus harvest as the country faces a severe shortage of pickers because of the coronavirus crisis... producers said the move would help thousands of farms that have been in short supply of labour since the introduction of restrictions on the movement of Thai and Palestinian workers since the start of the outbreak... 15,000 Thai workers who left the country have not been allowed back in, with another 5,000 Palestinian workers face similar restrictions... The young workers will be required to comply with the strict regulations set out by the Ministry of Health to prevent contagion, including maintaining a distance of 2 metres from co-workers, wearing gloves and facemasks and regular hand washing. Volunteers will work for alternate 10-day periods in order to prevent cross contamination. In addition to the young recruits, Israel has seen a dramatic increase in volunteers who have been put on unpaid leave because of the outbreak and prefer to contribute to society rather than staying at home...

[Eurofruit; 27 March 2020]

Standout year for Australian produce

Statistics released by Hort Innovation show in the past financial year Australian horticulture recorded its highest ever production value. The value of Australian horticulture reached a record A\$14.4bn (US\$8.96bn) in FY2018/19 (end 30 June 2019), representing the seventh consecutive year of growth... Individually the value of orange exports reached A\$311m (US\$191m) in FY2018/19, while the value of mandarin exports reached A\$139m (US\$85m).

[Asiafruit; 30 March 2020]

France calls coronavirus unemployed to work in agriculture

...With the borders closed, the foreign temporary workers who usually arrive on these dates in the Gallic fields cannot enter. To alleviate this deficiency and, at the same time, offer a way out to those who are out of work due to the epidemic.

[Fruittoday.com; 27 March 2020]