

Global Citrus Scan (2020_19)

(John Edmonds 2 July 2020)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Tradition takes a back seat

It will be a quiet 4 July at Citrusdal in the Cape, as Covid-19 disrupts old traditions for South Africa's citrus industry. This day normally marks the real start of the Summer Citrus from South Africa campaign which was launched in the early 2000s and has been an extremely successful market development programme. With the development of this campaign, another tradition of exchange between South Africa and the US became part of the export programme. From the start of the South African season inspectors from the US Department of Agriculture travelled to South Africa to inspect the fruit before it is shipped from Cape Town...At the same time, growers from South Africa travelled to Philadelphia, the discharge port of South African citrus, where they spent three weeks at a time to assist the importers and trade and to give real-time information to their fellow growers back home. Industry leaders such as the late Gerrit van der Merwe and Piet Smit, were the originators of the programme...This year, for the first time, this exchange has been interrupted. The South African authorities and their US counterparts had to make emergency plans for the inspection and clearing programme to continue, while South African growers will this year stay at home. At Karnemelksvlei near Citrusdal, ancestral home of the Van der Merwe family, the 4 July has not been the same since the untimely death of Gerrit van der Merwe two years ago. Until then Gerrit would every year call his fellow growers together under the giant oak tree next to the homestead for their own 4 July celebrations...In the time of Covid-19, with most exporters suffering major delays in their shipping programme, the US citrus campaign remains on schedule...The South African growers exporting to the US said that they have a bumper crop of excellent quality fruit. "We have so much to be thankful for," said senior grower Johan Mouton. "We just have to manage ourselves throughout this season."

[Eurofruit; 25 June 2020]

"Even Navels are now being sold as juicing oranges"

A challenging market, that is the common denominator that Jaap den Boer of Olympic Fruit sees when it comes to the citrus market. "...We also see that the market for pressing oranges is generating particularly high prices." "Normally around this time we have volumes on the market from Spain, Morocco and Egypt. This year, however, those countries have fewer volumes and, partly due to the corona virus, sales have also gone fast...South Africa normally only comes on the market with large volumes of squeezed oranges in August. The empty market provides prices of around € 15 for a carton of pressing oranges...We also expect the first early Valencias from South Africa around this time, but due to the aforementioned delays in the South African ports, they are arriving a little later...What we are seeing at the moment is that, for example, the smaller sizes of navels are sold as squeezed oranges...It's a different story for the lemons. "Spain had low volumes and quality problems, which meant that there were high prices on the market. South Africa, however, had a good harvest, just like Argentina, and sent a lot to the European market. The price is under pressure, but it is being sold...The grapefruit market is stable, with a striking number of large sizes and a scarcity of smaller sizes..."

[Freshplaza.com; 1 July 2020]

Argentina establishes export ban for lemons to EU after finding Citrus Black Spot

Due to findings of Citrus Black Spot in Argentinian lemons in European ports, Argentina made the decision to put an export ban into place starting today (July 1st) which is to last for at least 15 days...All shipments that were sent prior to July 1st are exempt from the ban. These loads will be allowed to enter the ports and be exported by the European Union, given that they meet all the inspection requirements. Alejandro Moralejo, CEO of Salix Fruits comments: "...This is an untypical year where CBS appears in a very aggressive way in the lemon crop." "...The European lemon market is currently under pressure from overlapping supplies from Spain (Verna), Argentina, and South Africa. This reduction of loads from Argentina will reduce the amount of fruit on the lemon market...In addition, South Africa will keep supplying Europe for a longer period and Spain is selling the last Verna lemons." It should be noted that the European markets are rather quiet now in terms of demand. After the madness of April and May, as the coronavirus curve goes down, so it does the consumption.

[Freshplaza.com; 1 July 2020]

"Price of Egyptian oranges in China picks up after reaching bottom"

"This year, the Chinese fruit market as a whole has been sluggish. Affected by this, the market for Egyptian oranges continued to decline, from 110-120 yuan per box (15 kg) all the way down to 60 yuan. Prices have only just picked up recently." Yu Dejun of Shanghai Nongfu Fruits said. "Although the market for Egyptian orange has recently picked up after hovering around the bottom for nearly three weeks, due to the weak market, it lacks the momentum to improve...Currently, Egyptian oranges in the Chinese market are all from storage." "For Egyptian oranges, the market in Europe and Southeast Asia is much better. Among them, the volume sent to Bangladesh is large. The price of 13 US dollars per box was still acceptable at the time."

[Freshplaza.com; 1 July 2020]