

Global Citrus Scan (2020_23)

(John Edmonds 7 August 2020)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

South Africa set for US citrus high

Citrus from South Africa, sold in the US under the Summer Citrus umbrella pioneered by Western and Northern Cape citrus growers, has forecast another milestone this year. Growers in these regions of South Africa are expecting a bumper export season, with around 60,000 tonnes of fruit being shipped from Cape Town to the port of Philadelphia on the west coast of the US this year. This is an increase of 9 per cent on last year's export volume, and is the second year in succession that South Africa is forecasting record shipments to the US.

[Eurofruit; 6 August 2020]

China approves more Chilean citrus

...Chilean oranges, lemons, clementines, mandarins and grapefruits originally gained access to China in December 2019 pending a visit from Chinese authorities to verify phytosanitary requirements. However, the Covid-19 pandemic prevented any visit. Horacio Bórquez, national director of Chile's agriculture department SAG, said China had reviewed the protocol earlier in 2020 and approved 11 producers to allow exports to begin... "Negotiations were initiated with the Chinese authorities in order to find an alternative that would allow shipments to begin even without making this visit," Bórquez said. "Remote supervision of citrus plants applying for export was later added from which we passed with flying colours, and 34 new establishments were confirmed... Antonio Walker, Chile's minister of agriculture, said the development would help the country's citrus industry diversify...

[Asiafruit; 6 August 2020]

China citrus market lifts on limited supply

After suffering a slump between March and May, China's citrus import market has picked up following a drop in shipments from Australia and South Africa. The high Vitamin C content of citrus has not been a major draw for Chinese consumers, importers said. The anticipated Covid-19-fuelled surge in demand failed to eventuate. Instead large inventories of Egyptian oranges built up on the market, causing prices to slump and leading to substantial losses... Market prices have begun to pick up in recent weeks... Arrivals of Australian citrus were down by almost 50 per cent year-on-year between mid-May and the end of June (Week 21 to Week 27), according to Zhang... Delays to shipping schedules were one of the key constraints on Australian volumes, he noted. "Fruit was slow to colour, so the shipping schedule was delayed by almost a month compared with previous years, resulting in a one-month gap in the market and allowing market demand to gradually accumulate." Escalating political tensions between Australia and China have further impacted shipments, Zhang noted... "The tensions in bilateral relations have made fruit growers and exporters reluctant to ship to the Chinese market, which has contributed to the shortage," he said.

[Asiafruit; 29 July 2020]

"Argentina is paying the true price of the EU's CBS policy"

... "When you look at the bigger lemon picture, we are where we thought we'd be. The big volumes place pressure on markets. The world is overproducing lemons and we are going to rub shoulders on the market," says Hannes de Waal of the Sundays River Citrus Company... He expresses great sympathy for Argentina, in whose economic situation he sees a grave warning to South Africa. "Argentina is in real trouble and their economic situation should be a monetary lesson to South Africa. Their production costs are unsustainably high. Farming for the low residues required by the juice markets is the cause of all of the complexity. They find themselves in a very difficult situation." Citrus black spot management is very difficult, a tremendously complex field, he says. "You need chemicals to fight black spot, but citrus oil is exceptionally sensitive to chemical residues." South Africa's more central geographical location, bringing the Middle East closer, as well as a lower cost structure enables the country to absorb the tremendous strain exerted by citrus black spot management. "Argentina is this season paying the true price for the EU's citrus black spot policy which has South Africa and Argentina in a vice. All this for a purely cosmetic mark on the skin of the fruit," Hannes says, emphasising the line of argument long put forward by the South African citrus industry: that the disease cannot establish a foothold in a Mediterranean climate...

[Freshplaza.com; 23 July 2020]