

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO (14/10)

Justin Chadwick (9 April 2010)

QUOTE OF THE WEEK *"I think I've discovered the secret of life – you just hang around until you get used to it"* – Charles Schulz

PLANT HEALTH MEASURES FOR 2010

South Africa has always responded to plant health concerns from importing countries, and has been proactive in ensuring that we are not responsible for the spread of pests and diseases. Measures introduced in 2009 for CBS meant a dramatic reduction in interception incidences. CBS is a difficult disease as symptoms develop over time, so that fruit inspected at a packhouse and found free of the disease, could develop symptoms in the future. This is particularly true if the fruit is not quickly introduced into the cold chain, as the cold inhibits symptom development. All fruit that is inspected and not shipped within 28 days (hard citrus) or 21 days (soft citrus) has to undergo a reinspection. In addition, audit inspections on other consignments are carried out at the port to ensure that fruit is clear of pests and diseases. In order to guide these inspections Department Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) have developed an Alert List. This Alert List includes those production units that are considered to have a risk for CBS. All facilities storing citrus (whether inland or at the port) will be required to present consignments from these listed production units as and when required by DAFF. It is important that all sectors in the citrus industry take joint responsibility in dealing with CBS, all citrus storage facilities are asked to adhere to these rules and to cooperate fully with DAFF.

SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE CITRUS

Eurostat statistics for the period 2007 to 2009 indicate that South Africa and Argentina account for 80% of **citrus exported** from the southern hemisphere to the EU27. South Africa accounts for 50% while Argentina accounts for 30%. Other southern African countries account for a further 3% - Swaziland 2% and Zimbabwe 1%. Of the other South American countries Uruguay accounts for 9%, Brazil 6%, and Chile 2%. Argentina dominates southern hemisphere **lemons**, although their market share has dropped from 85% in 2007 to 76% in 2009; whereas South Africa's market share has increased from 12% in 2007 to 18% in 2009. Uruguay is the only other southern hemisphere country with lemon volumes of any significance, varying between 3 and 5% over the three year period.

South Africa dominates the **grapefruit** category with 79% market share in 2009 (up from 70% in 2007). Argentina's grapefruit market share dropped from 18% in 2007 to 13% in 2009, while Swaziland has remained at 7 to 8% market share.

Southern Africa accounted for 68% of the **orange** imports into the EU 27 from the southern hemisphere in 2009 (South Africa 63%, Swaziland 2% and Zimbabwe 3%); similar to levels in 2007 (69%) and 2008 (70%). Of the South American countries Argentina accounted for 15% market share for oranges in 2009, Uruguay 11%, Brazil 3% and Chile 2%.

In the **soft citrus** sector, Argentina has gained market share from 23% in 2007 to 31% in 2009. This has been at the expense of South Africa (48% in 2007 to 44% in 2009) and Chile (5% in 2007 to 1% in 2009). Uruguay has maintained market share of between 22 and 24%.

CITRUS MARKETING FORUM (CMF)

It was noted that at the last CMF (on 24 March) the growing sector was not well represented. In discussing this with some grower representatives, it was commented that many growers believe that the CMF is only for export agents to discuss marketing issues, and it is not necessary for growers to attend. This is definitely not the case – a wide range of subjects are covered. This includes presentations by DAFF on plant health and quality/food safety issues; presentations by PPECB on inspection and quality assurance, report back from the variety focus groups, items of interest from all the citrus export markets and other issues of relevance. All the growers that attended the March meeting felt enriched by the experience and gained valuable knowledge for their business.

The next CMF will be held at the end of May (earlier this year to prevent travel problems with respect to the World Cup) and growers are urged to attend.

**GROWERS' FUND THEIR FUTURE THROUGH THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CITRUS
GROWERS' ASSOCIATION, CITRUS ACADEMY AND CITRUS RESEARCH INTERNATIONAL**