

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO (19/12)

Justin Chadwick (18 May 2012)

QUOTE OF THE WEEK "Resentment is like drinking poison and then hoping it will kill your enemies." Nelson Mandela

CITRUS GREENING

Worldwide Asian Greening is recognised as being amongst the biggest threats to citrus production and exports. The Floridian citrus industry spent huge sums of money and imposed draconian measures to prevent the spread of the disease. California has for some time beefed up its borders to prevent introduction, and just last week the following appeared in the media *"Mexico has recognised that 60% of citrus plantations are affected by the "Yellow Dragon" or HLB plague. In Colima there are around 25 thousand hectares of lemon. At the moment, the plague is out of control, although something could still be done if the government and the producers launch an emergency programme"*

Growers in South Africa need to be on the lookout for any signs of this disease, and to report these to the CRI, CGA or DAFF. Most importantly, any new propagation material must enter South Africa through the correct channels. People in the industry are the best equipped to assist the State in the endeavour to prevent introduction of contaminated material – since a lot of pest and disease introductions globally are due to passengers carrying contaminated material in their luggage it is our duty to be on the lookout when we travel, and if fellow travellers have material in their possession to alert officials at the port of arrival.

RISKS

It is reported that one out of every three people that summit Mount Everest die in mountaineering accidents. Makes me think that if I was a mountaineer and summited Mount Everest I would immediately hang up my boots so as not to become another statistics. But mountaineers are thrill seekers and risk takers, and so they keep taking the risks until 1 out of 3 ends up dead.

Those who sell fruit on consignment are also risk takers. Although they may not have to pay the ultimate price for their risk taking (like the Everest climbers do), the financial consequences of taking these risks are often felt for many years. Surely it must be better to secure a fixed price rather than sell on consignment – and what is worrying many in the industry is the tendency for some exporters to start selling on consignment in markets that have traditionally been fixed price markets. Surely exporters should be trying to convert consignment markets into fixed price markets, rather than the other way around. It may be a difficult ship to turn – but turn it we must. There are enough risks in farming (maybe even more than mountaineering!) without adding to these risks by moving to consignment sales marketing.

PACKED AND SHIPPED

With the Satsuma season all but finished the packed volume (1 551 920 cartons) is well shy of the initial estimate (1 939 883 cartons). The Soft Citrus Focus Group will meet next week to update their prediction. With the UK having a liking for Satsuma's 66% of soft citrus exports to date have gone to that destination (2011 36%). This has been at the expense of soft citrus exports to the Middle East (2011 12% 2012 3% ytd), Asia (2011 7% 2012 1% ytd) and Russia (2011 12% 2012 3% ytd). Grapefruit packers continue to report on smaller fruit sizes – with Japan only starting up (exports to date 2012 20% 2011 27%) most fruit has been exported to northern Europe (2012 46% 2011 36%). The first pick of lemons was lower than last year, but the second pick is making up for that – with exports concentrated on the Middle East (2012 54% 2011 36% ytd). This has been at the expense of Russia (2012 13% 2011 18%) and northern Europe (2012 15% 2011 12% ytd).

To Week 20 Million 15 Kg Cartons	Packed	Packed	Packed	Shipped	Shipped	Original Estimate	Latest Prediction	Final Packed	Final Shipped
SOURCE: PPECB	2010	2011	2012	2011	2012	2012	2012	2011	2011
Grapefruit	3.6 m	4.5 m	4.8 m	4.3 m	3.1 m	15.2 m	13.9 m	16.2 m	15.3 m
Soft Citrus	2.9 m	2.5 m	2.2 m	2.2 m	1.8 m	7.6 m	7.6 m	6.9 m	6.7 m
Lemons	3.3 m	2.5 m	2.3 m	2.5 m	1.6 m	11.1 m	10.6 m	10.8 m	10.2 m
Navels	2.2 m	1.6 m	1.1 m	0.8 m	0.4 m	22.9 m	21.9 m	21.2 m	
Valencia	-	-	-			46.1 m	46.1 m	44.2 m	61.7 m*
	12 m	11.1 m	10.4 m	9.8 m	6.9 m	102.9 m	100.1 m	99.3 m	93.9 m

* All oranges

**GROWER FUNDED ACTIVITIES OF THE CGA, CRI AND CITRUS ACADEMY
ENSURE A GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE SOUTHERN AFRICAN CITRUS INDUSTRY**