

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO (15/15)

Justin Chadwick (24 April 2015)

QUOTE OF THE WEEK “Money can’t buy friends, but you can get a better class of enemy” Spike Milligan

KNOWING WHAT THE CUSTOMER WANTS

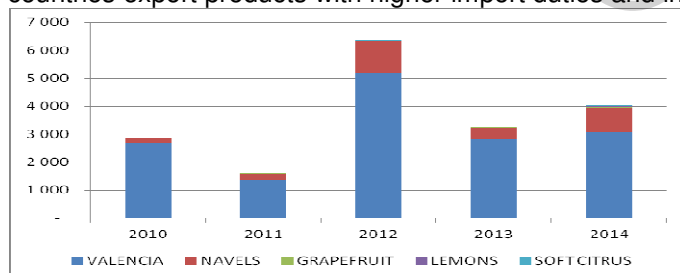
Last weekend I went to a restaurant with my family; the waiter explained the use of a cylindrical shaped wooden object on the table – if we needed a waiter we should turn the object so that the green painted end was up; if we did not need the waiter then the red painted end should be up. How many of you have been interrupted with a “is everything alright” as you are about to deliver the punch line to your joke? Or as your better half is about to make a confession you have been waiting for? Or as your sales pitch hits the right note? Asking how your meal is going is good customer service, but asking at the wrong time is irritating. Now you (the customer) have control – you can get the waiter when you need him; and the waiters do not waste time with the people who are OK (have the red side up) and deal with those who are not (with the green side up) – pretty neat!!

Wouldn’t it be great to know exactly what the customer wants in the fresh produce industry? I am sure that many traders have learnt mechanisms to find this out. The easiest is to ask them – and this is what makes fresh produce trading such a personal business. Successful traders spend a lot of time with their customers. It is better to learn about a problem early on than wait until the orders drop off. This is what makes trade shows so popular – the opportunity to sit with one’s trading partners and ensuring that you know if the green side is up (we need to talk) or the red side is up (all is good and we do not need to change anything). The Western Cape Citrus Producers Forum (WCCPF) is excellent at this – every year they have a planning session in Citrusdal – they invite all their receivers in the US to this meeting; they then discuss exactly what these receivers want – and from this determine a delivery plan that meets customer expectations.

Over the years various people visited CGA to introduce internet platforms for fresh fruit trading – none have taken off; this is probably due to the personal nature of trading in fresh produce; fresh produce trading needs immediate attention to problems and flexibility on both sides. Looking at a computer screen just does not replace this. Southern Africa has fresh produce traders who have been in the business for many years – they have adapted as situations change and are a great asset to our industry; they ensure that we sell over 1.5 million tons of citrus every year. Thanks to all those who know when to take action (the red side up); and when to maintain a holding pattern and build relationships for the difficult times.

INDIA

This week Fruit South Africa took part for the first time in the Fresh Produce India trade show and conference. South African citrus is fairly poorly represented in India; we exported only 4 000 tons into this market in 2014 – no grapefruit, lemons or soft citrus. Most exporters claim the high import duty is the stumbling block – but other countries export products with higher import duties and in big volumes; so this cannot be the only reason.



On Thursday the Fruit South Africa delegation visited the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India’s western regional office in Mumbai. The regional director brought all his inspection and management staff which allowed for good discussion on the implementation of FSSAI regulations. All regulations and updates to regulations can be found on www.fssai.gov.in

PACKED AND SHIPPED

To end Week 16 Million 15 Kg Cartons	Packed	Packed	Packed	Shipped	Shipped	Original Estimate	Latest Prediction	Final Packed
SOURCE: PPECB	2013	2014	2015	2014	2015	2015	2015	2014
Grapefruit	1,6 m	1,2 m	1 m	0,3 m	0,2 m	15,3 m	15,7 m	15,6 m
Soft Citrus	1,3 m	1,4 m	1,5 m	0,9 m	1,1 m	10 m	10 m	10 m
Lemons	1,5	1,7 m	1,8 m	1,1 m	1,3 m	13,6 m	13,6 m	13,2 m
Navels	0,2 m	0,1 m	0,1 m	-	-	25,1 m	25,1 m	26 m
Valencia	0,1 m	0,1 m	-	-	-	49,1 m	49,1 m	50,9 m
Total	4,7 m	4,5 m	4,4 m	2,3 m	2,6 m	113,1 m	113,5 m	115,7 m

SOUTHERN AFRICAN CITRUS GROWERS’ HAVE INVESTED IN THEIR FUTURE THROUGH THE ESTABLISHMENT AND CONTINUED FUNDING OF CGA, XSIT, CRI, RIVER BIOSCIENCE, CGACC AND CITRUS ACADEMY