

Update

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Beacon Commodities



With the Lemon harvest underway in Egypt, Michael was sent to tackle the heat and dust to visit our joint venture where we are producing lemon and grapefruit peel ribbons.



A lorry load of lemons off to be peeled



All eyes on Michael and what he will do next

Lemon Harvest

It seems that we frequently report on crop problems, but this is the nature of farming which is being exacerbated by climatic changes. Happily, the Egyptian lemon and grapefruit crops look good for 2018. The harvest is well under way and the first shipments will arrive in the UK in about 3 weeks.

The harvest is 2 months earlier than Spain and other Mediterranean countries. The acreage of a farm can be up to 250,000 acres but 10,000 acres is normal. The lemons are going to 'juicers' with some reserved for 'table' lemons. Egypt mainly sell to the Gulf, Russia and Europe. The fruit we process is all handpicked and then transported to our processing area to the north of Cairo.



A lemon!



Making the job look far easier than it actually is



On the washing line

Our happy band of peelers asked where the ‘younger’ Houghton was this time around and Michael was pleased to report that Tommy was ‘freezing and wet in England’. In previous years, Tommy managed to peel around 5 lemons before being given the sack – Michael managed 6 before getting the chop! It showed us how they make the processing look so simple and with 20 of them can process 3MT of fresh lemons per day. We are lucky to have such a skilled workforce but understand the work suits them perfectly. There are very few options of casual labour in their region and being a short season allows them to look after their families.

The good news is there will be plenty of acres in the coming years for both grapefruit and lemon. The demand from the Gulf regions will guarantee this.

We do not currently buy oranges in Egypt as they are much more expensive than Spanish. The Egyptian oranges have a premium in The Gulf area which holds up their prices.



A shocked expression when he heard the price

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