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REDSUN RAISIN REPORT #2 – 2021

SOUTH AFRICAN RAISIN CROP FEBRUARY 2021

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Weather Damage to the SA raisin crop

The weather we are experiencing in South Africa at present is perfect for making raisins. We have temperatures of 40C and a humidity factor of 15%. This has been the case for three weeks now. Farmers are busy with the job of harvesting the grapes and preparing them for the drying process. We expect this harvesting process to continue until the last week of February.

The weather has not been kind to the South African raisin farmers as follows

1. Originally 2021 raisin crop was assessed to be 90,000mt, a new record (2020 raisin crop was 85,080mt)
2. On 19th October 2020, a heavy frost destroyed wide areas of young fruit buds along the Orange River, which adjusted the crop assessment to 85,000mt.
3. During the first half of January 2021 between 200-300mm of rain fell over the Orange River raisin producing region, damaging the quality of the grapes on the vines, particularly the early ripening varieties. The grapes had higher sugar levels which absorbed more water. The region east of Upington received more frequent and heavier downpours of rain that the region west of Upington stretching to Augrabies Falls.
4. The damage was not great on the varieties that ripen later eg merbein. At that stage, the rain caused the estimated crop size to be adjusted to 75,000mt for 2021.
5. The northern and eastern regions of South Africa have been receiving wonderful rains that has caused all the major dams/reservoirs on the Vaal and Orange River systems to be filled to over 100% capacity. For South Africa, this has brought essential relief from the drought we have been experiencing for the past 5 years. Even the Kalahari Desert has turned green. Rivers that have not flowed in the lifetime of many adults, have flowed for the first time caused by the rain.

6. The excess water is now flowing down the Orange River towards the Atlantic Ocean. The raisin making region is coping with a flooding river that has risen by 6 metres above its normal level.



the Orange River against the bridge in front of Ikaia Lodge

7. The Orange River flood of 2011 caused major devastation to the raisin crop because it happened in January 2011 before the grapes could be harvested, and the flood walls were in a state of disrepair and had not been maintained. Since then, 370km of floodwalls have been established along the Orange River to protect the vineyards. These floodwalls have stood up to the test, but have collapsed in places, causing relatively minor flooding.
8. The flooding is estimated to have cost the SA raisin industry another 3,000mt.

Therefore, we are now estimating a crop of 72,000mt of raisins from 2021. It remains a good sized crop.

Fruit fly infestation

Another devastating factor associated with the 2011 flood, was the infestation of fruit flies that attacked the grapes that were laying in the sun to be dried. The fruit flies arrived with the moist conditions in the vineyards. In 2021, the authorities acted in terms of a study that has been ongoing and they have been treating the vineyards with an aerial spray to prevent fruit fly infestations. The treatment has been intensified as a result of the flood.

It has been reported by farmers that the region is free of fruit fly.

The chemical used is very specific and is used world wide without leaving any residue on the fruit. Redsun is doubling our residue testing frequency of incoming fruit to ensure there is not any excessive residue on fruit delivered to our factory. We are doing this only as a precaution. We do not see residues from the fruit fly treatment as being a problem. The product they are using is known as GF-120 NF which is a selective concentrate bait for control of fruit fly infesting various fruits including grapes. It is suitable for use on organic certified crops.

It is very fortunate, that this fruit fly process was already in place before the rain and flood arrived. Well done to the relevant authorities and Raisins SA. The farmers are paying for it at the rate of ZAR 0,07 per kg of raisins delivered.



Golden medium farmer's stock crop 2021

Intake of 2021 crop raisins

As at 10 February Redsun had already received 1,175mt of 2021 crop. This crop has come mainly from Namibia and the north western region of South Africa. The quality is good. It is nice to see good quality golden medium raisins produced by some of the farmers in Namibia

The intake from along the Orange River is slower in starting. We will have more to report next week. We have heard many stories about damage to the grapes by the rain. Clearly, these damaged raisins have fallen to the ground, because we are receiving good free flowing product.

As of 10 February (very early in season) we have seen 43% Of our intake being Thompson mediums. Thereafter 20% of a combination of dark jumbos, bolds and mediums. Surprisingly, there has only been 6% of our intake as SA Sultanas.

Raisins SA are predicting that there will be 10,000mt of SA sultanas made in 2021. That is 14% of the crop. We have no reason to disagree with them. The volume will come from the WP sultanas (6% from 2020 crop) and probably OR sultanas (3% of 2020 crop). The balance will come from Thompson mediums. (37% in 2020).



Redsun Bins leaving the factory for delivery to farmers 2021 crop

Goldens will come in later. As of 10 February Redsun has received 67 mt of golden medium from farmers in Namibia. The quality is excellent. The Industry is concerned that the colour of the goldens made from the 2021 crop will not be as good as in previous years due to the

weather conditions. There may be blemishes, swartbakkies and greenish colour due to lower sugar levels. We wait and see as the product comes in. So far, the product is excellent quality.

Currants have now started coming in. Very good quality. The product is totally unaffected by the adverse weather conditions. They are produced in the Western Cape province only.

Processing of the 2021 crop

We have not started processing the 2021 crop as yet. We are still processing the 2020 crop orders. We anticipate starting selected 2021 crop orders next week with the urgent golden orders.

Processing is running on a single shift as half of our staff are working the intake procedure at our factory.

Solar Energy at Redsun

Redsun is proud to announce that we are now delivering **naturally sundried raisins**, washed and packed in a **naturally sun powered factory**. We have 608 solar panels mounted on our warehouse roof. These panels have a 203,7 kilowatt potential power generation from the hot sun shining over our factory. This is sufficient to drive all machinery, air conditioners and other electrical equipment on our site. The electricity meter at the gate stands still. Over the weekends, when Redsun is not working, Redsun supplies the local authority with power for redistribution among the local residents of Keimoes.

It is magical, how hot sunlight is converted to electrical energy to operate our production line and entire factory.

COVID 19

This virus continues to dominate our activities at Redsun. Stry's Strauss, our manager technical services has contracted the virus, while driving in a pick-up vehicle through vineyards with one of our farmers. That is what he does, always giving advice to farmers regarding agricultural practices. He has been recovering for the past 24 days. The progress is slow. We wish Stry's and his wife Lanza a safe return to full health.

At Redsun, we continue to exercise the basic defences of sanitising, meetings out in the open, masks at all time and washing hands without physical contact. Besides Stry's, we have 132 people that are avoiding contamination at our factory premises. We receive excellent co-operation from our farmers that deliver to us.

Vaccinations are a long way off for us in South Africa. Therefore, we continue to apply the basics with methodical care.

South African Raisin Deliveries January 2021

According to the report from Raisins SA, South Africa delivered 3,257mt of raisins during January 2021. That is a 41% growth on the deliveries of January 2020 (deliveries of 2,303mt). All of this product is carry in from 2020 crop. Included in these deliveries was 803mt of goldens.

Redsun estimates that the carry-in crop as at 31 December 2020 is 27,400mt. The main damage caused by the rain and the flood in 2021 is estimated to be 13,000mt.

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