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## **REDSUN RAISIN REPORT #2 -2024 March**

### **SOUTH AFRICAN RAISIN CROP**

#### **HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS REPORT**

**2024 South African Raisin Crop overview**

**South African Sales of Raisins**

**Redsun Raisins sales of Raisins**

**Shipping from Cape Town**

**Operations at Redsun factory**

#### **2024 South African Raisin Crop overview**

The 2024 SA Raisin season has started on a very positive note. Very good weather with a few isolated storms. The storms are sporadic, and considered normal along the Orange River for this time of the year. There has been very limited damage from the rain reported. Along the Olifants River (15% of the SA crop) there has been no rain.

The temperature has been very hot, possibly too hot in some areas. However, generally things are positive,

1. Projected crop size is 86,000mt (source Raisins SA). There is a growing opinion among farmers, that the crop size will exceed 90,000mt for 2024.
2. Quality as seen by Redsun during our grading at intake is good. After taking in about 53% of Redsun's projected intake of 18,000mt, we are noting the following average grading achieved,
  - a. Thompson medium 89% choice grade. Beautiful, free flowing full berries. Moisture content all well within the specifications. We see the Thompson mediums making up 54% of the volume delivered so far. That is a little more than usual. Based on 86,000mt that will be 46,500 mt of Thompson mediums.
  - b. Golden medium 73% choice, which is worse than the 2023 crop. That also demonstrates a 16% standard grading. The berries are good, and free flowing, but the colour is not as regular as we would like it to be. This is as a result of some exceptional heat waves during the development of the crop. There will be more Golden medium standard grade available than we originally estimated. The total goldens delivered so far is 12,75% of total. That means if the trend continues, we will have 11,000mt of goldens in South Africa for 2024. We hope the percentage of goldens increases. If not, we could see a shortage of goldens in the market by June.



Future golden sultanas being loaded on drying trays.

- c. Flame medium with 84,5% choice grade. Very nice quality and the berries are bigger than in previous years. The berry size is more in line with the Californian “select” size. That is 176-265 berries per 100gr, rather than the SA size for medium being 220 to 300 berries per 100gr.
- d. SA sultanas, achieving 85% choice grade. Very nice quality. However, there is a disappointing reaction to the excellent price offered by processors for the sultanas. Only 4% of the total intake so far is SA Sultana. Farmers have preferred to stay with the Thompson medium they have produced for many years with success.
- e. Currants are showing an excellent quality year with 89% choice grade. The market is lively for the SA product in the face of the low Greek production from their 2023 crop.
- f. The jumbo and bold sizes are not up to the same grading as the 2023 due to colour deviations. We are seeing choice gradings varying from 79% choice for Thompson jumbo, to 83% choice for the Black super jumbo.



Grading of intake at Redsun

3. At end February, the South African crop was 52,5% collected based on the crop assessment of 86,000mt. That means product actually delivered to processors. At Redsun, the last two weeks have seen volumes of over 2000mt per week being delivered. It is likely this is the same pattern at all processors.
4. The buying (farmer's stock) market is remarkably relaxed, and well ordered. In previous years, there would be jostling and fighting between processors in order to secure greater volumes of the smaller crops. Maybe, there is a sense that there is a very big crop on hand, and sufficient for everyone to participate fully.

### **South African Sales of Raisins**

Sales are proceeding, however, the figures issued by Raisins SA demonstrate a sales volume for January 2024 as 2155mt. This is 24% lower than the figure for the same time last year (2023). It is not significant, because all deliveries in January 2024 was stock of 2023. We know that 2023 crop size was very small at a 60 204 mt for the whole of South Africa.

What is interesting is the increase on sales to the middle east countries. It demonstrates a growing interest in South African raisins from this region. These were mainly jumbo and super jumbo sizes.

### **Redsun Raisins sales of Raisins**



Thompsons being dried on concrete apron

The sales at Redsun have been very strong from the 2024 crop. Low availability from other producing countries, has caused buyers to come looking for product in South Africa. Due to the unprecedented demand, Redsun has temporarily withdrawn from the market, to enable us to cover sales made with the incoming farmer's stock.

We anticipate the intake to continue until midway through April.

We see prices remaining stable. Delivery dates at the factory are under pressure. Obviously, everybody is looking for their deliveries as soon as possible after the arrival of the new crop. That is not always possible, despite the factory operating at full capacity of three containers per day.

### **Shipping from Cape Town**

Cape Town is the exception among the South African harbours in terms of efficiency. There are relatively few delays, which are usually caused by strong winds. Otherwise the time to service ships is about 4-5 days. There are no ships at anchor waiting to come into the harbour.

Durban is chaotic, with up 18-20 ships at anchor waiting to come into port. Two shipping lines have moved their transshipment port to Port Louis in Mauritius to try and save time.

Cape Town is the port traditionally used for the export of fresh fruit from SA. Therefore, with the help of organised business, operations at the harbour are proceeding well. The raisin industry is benefitting from this efficiency.



Cape Town Harbour

### **Operations at Redsun factory**

We are running the factory on 24 hours shifts. This is unusual for the time of the year, while a large section of our personnel are engaged in the other important part of our business, the intake, grading and logistics of the new crop.

It is very fortunate that many of the staff members from Desert Raisins (closed effective from September 2023) are experienced in raisin processing and were available for Redsun to employ during this time to assist with the intake. 2024 is indeed an exceptional year. The volume anticipated of 86,000mt will be a new record in South Africa. Redsun is fortunate to be able to accommodate the additional volume.



Our new factory at Vredendal is proceeding. The Governmental approvals are taking longer than anticipated. However, we remain confident to commence operations in the new factory during 2025. The new factory will have a processing capacity of 15,000mt. A duplicate of the Keimoes factory.

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