

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO (11/22)

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Justin Chadwick 18 March 2022



“Reality is created by the mind. We can change our reality by changing our mind” Plato

ROADSHOW - ZIMBABWE

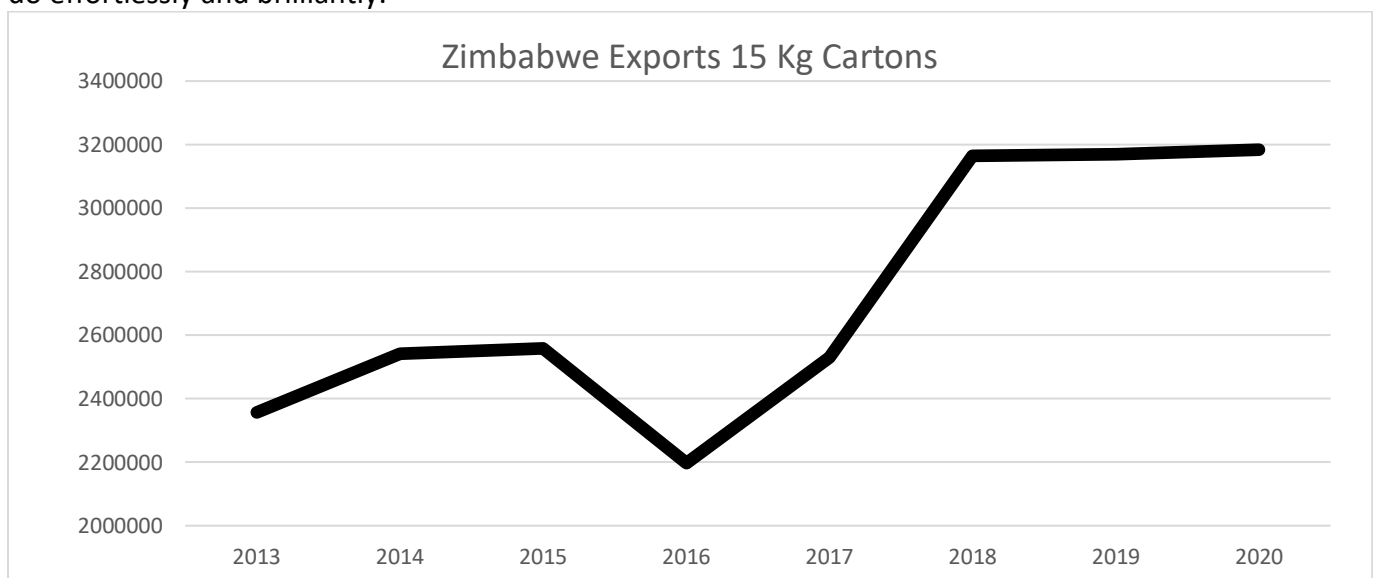
For the B Team the last roadshow meeting was held in Zimbabwe on Friday 4 March – with a welcome break on a farm in Zimbabwe over the weekend (followed by a brutal fourteen-hour drive back to Durban on Sunday).

Growers in Zimbabwe epitomize the word resilient. When I joined the industry in the late 1990’s the Zimbabwean citrus industry was on an upward trajectory, with export volumes increasing and good quality fruit being exported. The government’s land reform agenda changed that trajectory – and production and exports slumped. In recent years the path has changed again – and export volumes have started to grow. This export growth will be further stimulated by the protocol signed between Zimbabwe and the People’s Republic of China, which allows for the export of citrus fruit to the PRC. There are still some administrative issues to conclude before implementation, all going well the Chinese consumers should be able to receive some safe, nutritious and excellent quality Zimbabwean fruit in 2022.

There is a saying “’n Boer maak ’n plan” (a farmer makes a plan – but sounds much better in Afrikaans) – in the case of Zimbabwean growers that rely on themselves for everything this is the truth. Growers have embraced the sustainability agenda – the farm we visited had the biggest solar system that I have seen on a farm – with all day time energy needs being supplied by their own solar system. The growers are also experimenting with drones for crop spraying (the biggest drone I have ever seen).

The roadshow was attended by over forty delegates, many veterans of the industry but also a number of new entrants. There is a revival of citrus plantings in the north of the country which will see the present production increasing in the near future.

The B Team would like to thank the Zimbabwean citrus growers for their hospitality – something which they do effortlessly and brilliantly.



LEMONS FAST OUT THE BLOCKS

The first batch of early lemons have been dispatched – reaching the 1 million carton mark (ahead of 2021 exports of 844 000 cartons year to date). The bulk (645 000 cartons) have been sent to Middle East (2021 year to date 506 000 cartons). South East Asia has also received more than 2021 (185 000 versus 110 000). Export volumes to Russia have decreased – 129 000 cartons 2022 versus 188 000 cartons 2021, while export volumes to Canada have doubled (28 000 cartons in 2021 increased to 56 000 cartons in 2022).

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