

the Outlook

A Pacific storm system passing to the north will bring a chance of rain and powerful winds (25-40mph gusting to 50+mph) to Southern California and the Southwestern Desert regions into the weekend. Cold air associated with this system will continue to bring freezing morning temperatures to these desert fields into next week. Recent rains have added to the problem with mold, mildew, and disease pressure on the rise in the fields. With the unusually warm fall pushing these crops weeks ahead of schedule followed by weeks of freezing morning temperatures and below-average daytime highs, we are looking at an extended period of light supplies and questionable quality. This is an industry-wide problem in the western growing regions affecting all growers and shippers.

You can expect to see typical frost damage in supplies for the near term at a minimum. When freezing temperatures occur, the ground/soil will pull moisture from the plant back into the soil, leaving lettuce and leaf items dehydrated. This makes the product brittle and difficult to pack and contributes to oxidation (pinkening or pink rib) that is prevalent in many pack-outs, affecting texture and shelf life. It can take many weeks for plants to recover, if at all, after extensive freeze damage making it very difficult to evaluate the fields and upcoming supplies. Strong winds can then do extensive damage to these already weakened crops. This will affect the quality and shelf life of processed leaf items due to their weakened condition. Other prevalent issues will include fringe burn, feathering, blister, epidermal peeling, and discoloration (blackened color on cilantro, parsley, and other mix items).





PRO*ACT

Jan 9, 2020

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Long-range forecasts show more potential freezing temperatures impacting the region this month. Crop assessments will be ongoing for some time due to the vast area affected, and fields begin to show the extent of damage received.

Supplies will remain tight, given the weather pattern. Be prepared for shortages and loading delays as growers struggle with yields and quality in upcoming supplies. We will keep you up to date as we gather more information.

