

# the Outlook

The first in a series of storm systems currently moving through Central California will once again bring a very wet pattern to California into next week. This powerful storm will bring rain and strong winds into Baja, Northern Mexico and possibly showers into Central Mexico. Rain totals of 1-3 inches are expected in the Sinaloa and Sonora growing regions with up to an inch possible in the Yuma region. These warm storms are incorporating tropical moisture from the “Atmospheric River” effect. Following storm systems will remain to the north mainly affecting Central and Northern California, with light rain expected in the Southern California region early next week.

This warm system will add even more mold, mildew and disease pressure to the desert stands already severely impacted by mildew. Harvest delays are likely with the amount of rain expected in the Yuma region. Powerful winds will also impact the region over the next few days. The short term result will be lesser supplies, texture and quality from this region as fields dry out and recover. Stands remain weeks ahead of schedule in the warm temperatures as insect pressure is likely to rise as well.

This season has delivered exceptional rain totals thus far with more on the way. While rain is desperately needed in drought stricken California, the amount of rain this winter creates it’s own set of challenges for growers. Beginning with planting schedules. The constant rain and saturated ground has not allowed growers to work (till, shape and seed) the spring acreage on a normal planting schedule.

Many fields will have to be reshaped due to heavy rains degrading the rows. Continuous rains have also created a perfect environment for weeds to thrive in the fallow ground. Growers will have to remove the weeds (spraying, tilling)



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before seeding the stands. Add to this a general lack of labor and saturated ground from the constant rains preventing the heavy machinery (tractors) from entering the fields. Many cole crops (broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, etc.) were planted before the onslaught of rains. The generally warm winter and rains have increased growth rates in these stands as well.



All of these factors point to a rocky transition and likely production gaps in the spring season. On a positive note mid-term forecasts bring in dry conditions late next week into early March which should give growers some time to work the acreage.

