

the Outlook

Weather trends continue to impact yields and quality of current production in Central California. An unusually warm winter was followed by heavy rains that disrupted spring plantings. Although California did receive an average rainfall this season the majority of the state remains in extreme drought conditions. The summer months have been a series of upper level low pressure systems causing an increased, dense marine layer and light afternoon winds, especially along the coast. This heavy marine layer or fog brings in substantial moisture to the coastal fields and the light afternoon winds do not promote afternoon drying. This will create plenty of opportunities for mold and mildew growth in these coastal stands. Long range forecasts keep this pattern in play into early September. Weather patterns, field locations, water issues (drought conditions), recent wild fires, smoke and ash have all contributed to an increase in pest activity this season. Higher levels of pest activity have been reported throughout the region as critters look for food and water and run from smoke and ash. Insect (The majority of complaints) finds and complaints are at an all time high as are rodent, reptile and amphibian complaints. An uptick in these finds began in the spring and has continued into the summer. These pests are usually on the increase in the fall but the above mentioned factors have increased the activity ahead of typical seasons. Processors are adding workers to harvest crews and fresh cut lines and slowing production in order to attempt to mitigate these problems at pack out. As schools begin classes and local deals across the country wind down demand will begin to shift to California supplies in the near future. As always upcoming weather patterns in the late summer and fall will be the major factor as to production yields and quality.

