

the Outlook

As we continue the transition from Desert growing regions to coastal California fields most crops seem to be on schedule and in decent shape. The exception being the cole crops (broccoli, cauliflower, brussel sprouts and asparagus). These crops generally prefer the cooler temperatures of the coastal regions. This year has seen a very warm and dry February followed by a wet pattern in early March and now a strong high pressure ridge is keeping most of the storm systems to the north with temperatures well above seasonal averages. These crops are already weeks ahead of schedule and providing very low yields in the early Salinas harvests. This trend looks to continue as we move through the transition over the next few weeks.



The Desert regions continue to be 8-15 degrees above normal and the pattern looks to continue through the end of the season around early April. Some minor cool downs and gusty winds are expected as the storm systems pass well to the north. These warm temperatures are increasing insect activity in the region as well as seeders, heat related burn and some rib blight in current lettuce supplies. With temperatures expected to remain warm these problems will continue to impact yields and quality in the late season desert supplies.



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The heavy rains experienced in early March in the Salinas Valley has interrupted some plantings in the region as the ground is just to saturated to bring in the heavy equipment (tractors) to till, shape and plant the crop. This may lead to some supply disruptions down the road in the early summer months. Long range forecasts are trending towards a drier and warmer spring but that can change as the El Nino influence remains in the Eastern Pacific Ocean.