

the Outlook

A strong High pressure system out west is forecast to bring possible record high temperatures to the Southwestern desert regions this week following weeks of above average temperatures. This may increase heat related defects (seeder, fringe burn, internal burn etc) in these last rotation crops in the desert stands. Although supplies are fairly abundant at the moment broccoli and especially cauliflower growth rates can increase dramatically in these weather spikes, lowering yields and causing disruptions down the road. The warmer temperatures throughout the west will promote insect activity in the entire region as well as increase growth rates in upcoming transitional acreage.

At this point most crops are on schedule as we look to the transition however Mother Nature may have something in store for the West Coast as we look toward spring. Long range forecasts expect a fairly significant change in the weather pattern for the west coast in early March. To quote the weather advisory service, "El Nino rain has a good chance to return and not be the dud it has been in February. It appears that the beginnings of a wetter pattern should start March 3rd with a dose of light rain with a series of very wet storm systems expected to follow beginning around March 6. A very strong 200+mph southern mid latitude jet stream is setting up from Hawaii to the west coast at the latitude of San Diego to drive storms into California with excellent dynamics. The westerly flow is also expected to tap into an extensive area of tropical moisture prior to reaching California."

While the timing of this set up is not ideal for planting schedules any precipitation at this point is welcome. We will have to wait and see if these systems come through as advertized and bring the much needed rainfall to California. With the tropical moisture associated with these systems building of the Sierra snowpack is unlikely however any rains that help fill the depleted reservoirs will be welcome in California.

