



The Outlook

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CROP OUTLOOK

The very powerful storm system approaching the West Coast later today looks to cause havoc to many crops and residents across the state. This large cold storm system (rare for October) from the Northern Pacific Ocean will tap into subtropical moisture to the south likely bringing rain to all of California and the Southwest in general. Forecasts call for precipitation of (2-4 inches) in the valleys with 6+ inches possible in the mountain regions throughout the state. Another factor associated with this storm system will be the very strong winds. Sustained winds of 30-40 mph with gusts up to 60+ mph are forecast with this system. With the numerous wildfires in California this year debris flows and flash floods are a major concern below the burn areas. This may affect roadways and fields along rivers, creeks and tributaries given the amount of rainfall expected.

This winter type storm system in the early fall looks to be problematic for growers throughout the state as we approach the transition season. Actual damage will depend on winds and the amount of precipitation in the various regions. Winds of this magnitude can cause scaring and knock citrus and avocado's from the trees in these growing regions. They will also leave romaine, lettuce and especially the tender leaf items (green/red leaf, spring mix, spinach etc) tattered and torn, leaving an easy entrance for disease. The heavy rains expected will only increase mold, mildew and disease in these late season (fall) stands, once again impacting yields, quality and especially shelf life of upcoming crops. The late fall strawberry stands in Central California will take another hit as will the new crop supplies in the Oxnard region of Southern California just beginning to increase volume. Melons, stone fruit and grape harvests in Central California along with pears and apples in the northwest all look to be impacted by this powerful storm system. While storms in October are not uncommon the size and strength of this incoming system is a rare occurrence. Forecasts do not expect this system to reach the southwest desert regions of California and Arizona with significant rainfall however windy conditions are expected as this system moves to the east.