



# The Outlook

December 5, 2011

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## Crop Outlook

As fall harvests continue weather patterns will play a vital role as to supplies and quality in the Southwestern growing regions. The last in a series of fairly dry but very cold low pressure systems from Utah will move south through Arizona today. A cold air mass will continue to settle over the region through Wednesday, resulting in possible freezing temperatures in these desert stands. At the moment we do not believe hard freeze conditions will occur however they are possible in the coldest locations. Daytime highs will struggle to reach 60 degrees with morning lows in the 30s. Winds associated with this system will likely keep temperatures above hard freeze levels (28 degrees for 4+ hours) however forecasts indicate possible hard freeze conditions in the Coachella Valley region of California early this week.

Lettuce ice reported this morning continuing through mid week will lessen overall production and quality as shippers must wait for stands to warm up before harvesting. These very cold temperatures (ground temps in the low 50s) will also bring growth rates to a crawl in these fields this week at a minimum.

This current as well as previous storm systems last week and over the weekend brought extremely heavy wind events throughout California and the desert locals. These winds ripped through Southern California last week impacting the young citrus and avocado orchards and the strawberry fields in the Oxnard region. With strong winds continuing today and more cold temperatures on tap for this week crop assessments will take some time to complete. At this time we will have to wait and see how these winds and cold temperatures impact the various growing regions this week. It is safe to say overall supplies and quality will be a challenge for the near term at a minimum.