



The Outlook

January 14, 2015

© 2015 PRO*ACT, LLC

Outlook

With warmer temperatures in the desert regions expected to continue into next week, fields will begin to show the extent of damage done by the freeze. Most crops were weeks ahead of schedule due to warm fall temperatures and seed varieties planted. These early season varieties are not adapted to the warmth received this fall. This increased growth rates while substantially lowering yields in the fields. Then the extended freezing temperatures that impacted the entire region arrived. Growth rates slowed to a crawl while causing extensive damage to the numerous crops in the fields further lowering yields. Overall texture and shelf life will be severely challenged in upcoming supplies. This has impacted all commodities and shippers in the region. Processors looking for product are entering younger fields to meet demand. This along with light yields will only further lessen available product/fields down the road. Growers will be reaching for product leading to supply shortages and gaps moving forward.

Iceberg, romaine and leaf lettuce supplies are showing lighter carton weights, ribby misshapen heads, less than optimum solidity along with fringe burn, blister and epidermal peel (EP) prevalent as growers enter these fields ahead of schedule. As these blisters open up they will begin to discolor due to oxidation. Strong winds expected this week may add a little dust to the product along with wind and fringe burn especially in leaf and lettuce stands. As growers enter these young, tender lettuce stands ahead of schedule (before optimum maturity) you can expect to see lesser overall texture and an increase in mechanical damage and oxidation, causing discoloration (pinking or pink rib). The tender spring mix and baby leaf items have of course have also been severely impacted

Broccoli and cauliflower supplies are in a similar situation due to cooler temperatures slowing growth rates and warm temperatures early in the growth cycle impacting growth rates in these stands. Field damage assessments will be ongoing likely for the rest of the season due to this freeze, with quality and shelf life likely to be a challenge for the long term.

Heavy rains (1-2 inches in Oxnard) in Southern California over the weekend, has curtailed strawberry harvests this week from this region. Coupled with lighter supplies from Florida due to cool weather and rains will keep product tight for the near term.