

the Outlook

Mother Nature continues to impact production throughout the Southwestern growing regions as recent cold morning temperatures lessen growth rates in these stands. After one of the warmest fall weather patterns brought crops on weeks ahead of schedule, growth rates have slowed to a crawl. The current widespread freezing temperatures are forecast to continue over the next few days in the region. These temperatures will impact growth rates in the fields for the short term as crops shut down for protection from the cold. Growers already ahead of harvest schedules (due to nice fall conditions) may be hard pressed to meet future demand. Growers will be reaching for supplies to meet demand, with yields extremely low growers are forced to enter younger cleaner fields ahead of schedule. This will leave less acreage for upcoming harvests keeping overall supplies light through December possibly well beyond.

Many early season stands were passed over due to seeder, disease pressure and other quality issues. With the unusually warm fall pushing crops weeks ahead of schedule followed by the current freezing morning temperatures and below average daytime highs we are looking at a possible extended period of light supplies and questionable quality. This is an industry wide problem in the western growing regions affecting all growers and shippers.

That being said you can expect to see typical frost damage in supplies for the near term at a minimum. It can take weeks for plants to recover, if at all, after extended freeze damage making it very difficult to evaluate the fields and upcoming supplies. Strong winds can then do extensive damage to these already weakened crops. This will affect quality and shelf life of processed leaf items due to their weakened condition. Other prevalent issues will include fringe burn, feathering, blister, epidermal peeling and discoloration (blackened color on cilantro, parsley and other baby leaf and mix items). Although a brief warm up is expected long term forecasts show more potential freezing temperatures impacting the region over the weekend.



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To be sure all crops have been affected to some extent and with the winter season not yet underway it is too early to predict future volume. It is safe to say supply shortages, pro-rates and gaps are likely to continue this month. As always weather patterns out west and across the nation will be a major factor as to supplies and quality going forward.

We will continue to monitor the situation and keep you up to date as we gather the information. Be prepared for shortages and loading delays along with lesser texture, quality and shelf life.

