

PRO*ACT

CONNECTING FARMS | EMPOWERING KITCHENS™

Crop Update

July 15, 2026

Heat, Humidity, and the Handoff

Warm and humid weather is driving the story in the Salinas Valley this week. These temperatures may not look extreme compared to other parts of the country, but our valley is not built for warm, sticky weather. When humidity hangs around and daytime highs climb, quality issues show up quickly in row crops and berries.

Excellent supplies of lettuce and leaf are in the forecast, but internal burn is starting to show up in some lots. Packers can trim outer leaves at harvest to clean up visible defects, but burn deeper inside the head is much harder to sort out, especially on iceberg and romaine. Baby leaf items remain in good supply overall, with spring mix, spinach, arugula, and baby kale showing healthy color, texture, and sizing. Shelf life will need to be watched closely as humidity stays in the forecast.

Strawberries are feeling the heat. Salinas and Watsonville are seeing smaller berry sizing, overripe fruit, and excessive bruising tied to the warm, humid conditions. Crews are working to keep the pack clean, but some of these issues will be more present after arrival than at shipping. Reduced shelf life should be expected. Santa Maria is dealing with similar weather and quality challenges. Higher freezer demand is giving growers another outlet, which is helping keep the fresh market firm.

Blueberry supplies are moving in the opposite direction. Oregon and Washington are producing good volume, and Michigan will continue increasing over the next several weeks after a slower, weather-affected start. New Jersey is still producing light volume. Markets are trending lower as supply improves across multiple regions.



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Blackberries remain one of the more limited berry items. The industry is still working through planting and transition gaps, with relief expected in early August as Mexico, Oregon, and California's Central Coast increase volume. Demand is outpacing supply, and markets remain elevated. Raspberry supplies are improving as additional fruit comes out of Baja, and markets are softening.

Melons are finally turning the corner, especially on cantaloupe. Production out of Firebaugh and the broader Westside is picking up, and the market has started to settle from the record highs seen over the past few weeks. New fields are producing very good quality, with a straw-colored external appearance, strong flavor, and a larger sizing profile. Cantaloupe supplies will remain stronger for the foreseeable future, but smaller melons will remain limited and carry a premium.

Honeydews are improving a bit more slowly. Production is increasing, but the pipeline has been empty long enough that pricing is still elevated. Sizing is peaking on 5s, with smaller honeydews much harder to come by. Quality has been very good, with clean external appearance and strong brix levels.

It is the dog days of summer, and there is still no better way to enjoy it than with a fresh salad. Lettuce and leaf supplies are strong, but quicker turns will be important as heat and humidity keep shelf life in focus. Melons are improving, berries are moving in different directions, and schools will be back in session before we know it.

