

PRO*ACT

CONNECTING FARMS | EMPOWERING KITCHENS™

Crop Update

October 21, 2026

A Change in the Weather

After several weeks of heat, the West Coast is getting a change in the weather. Rain is moving through California's growing regions this week, with the heaviest totals focused farther south. Salinas will see showers, while Santa Maria and Oxnard are taking on more meaningful rainfall. That creates another challenge for crops already trying to finish out a long season.

Lettuce remains high on the watch list. Iceberg, romaine and especially green leaf are still dealing with disease pressure, lower yields, inconsistent weights and tighter supplies as the Salinas season winds down. Huron is helping add volume and quality there has been encouraging, but the market remains firm as the industry works toward full desert production.

Berries are where this week's rain is being felt the fastest.

Strawberries were already slow to recover from the recent heat. California volumes are down across all growing regions, Santa Maria is moving into its normal seasonal decline, and Oxnard is producing smaller fruit with lighter yields after heat-related crop damage.



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Now rain is adding another layer of pressure. Wet weather is slowing harvests and increasing bruising, softness, decay and other quality concerns. Santa Maria and Oxnard are the areas taking the biggest hit over the next several days. Supplies remain limited, markets are elevated, and shippers are focused on covering contracts and existing commitments.

Mexico is not providing much relief yet either. Recent hurricane-related rains in Central Mexico and Baja have reduced crossings and tightened availability on strawberries, raspberries and blackberries. That lighter supply picture will continue over the next couple of weeks.

The good news this week is citrus. New-crop California Navels are officially underway, and the early size profile is exactly what foodservice has been waiting for. Initial supplies are favoring 88ct and smaller, which have been some of the hardest sizes to find through the back end of the Valencia season.

Volume is building now and will continue increasing over the next three to four weeks. As more Navels come online, availability on smaller fruit will improve and pricing is easing.

After months of fighting for small oranges, the early Navel crop is a welcome change. For schools, grab-and-go, fresh-cut and other foodservice programs, these sizes are becoming much more promotable as volume builds.

