

PRO*ACT

CONNECTING FARMS | EMPOWERING KITCHENS™

Crop Update

September 3, 2025

Heat Lifts Yields, Insects Rise

Another round of heat has rolled through California this week, and it is keeping pressure high across the board. Crews in Salinas and Santa Maria are still starting early to beat the worst of the afternoon temps, but with the heat sticking around, it is beginning to wear on the crops. We are seeing a steady uptick in heat-related challenges. Baby leaf items like arugula and spinach are showing more yellowing and wilting, and broccoli is now dealing with pin rot, thicker stems, and more insect pressure, especially from diamondback moth and aphids. Spring mix and romaine supplies are holding up well, but fringe burn and mildew are popping up more frequently.

On the upside, the warmer weather has helped push growth in iceberg and romaine, bringing up weights and slightly improving yields. This has translated into some recent price easing, especially on iceberg. How long that trend lasts remains to be seen. Disease pressure and insect activity are still very much present, and it would not take much for markets to firm up again if clean lots become harder to come by.



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Pest counts continue to climb across the valley. Thrips and aphids are especially active, and the current weather conditions are ideal for them to spread. Warm nighttime temperatures are also pushing plant maturity faster, which shortens harvest windows and increases variability in the field.

That said, we are still seeing good products come through in many areas. Celery and cilantro are holding strong, and romaine continues to show good heart material and consistent weight. Growers are working hard to manage quality and keep crews safe, but there is no question that this heat stretch is adding stress to an already tight finish in Salinas.

Now is a good time to stay close to the field and keep rotation tight. And as always, maintaining the cold chain will go a long way in protecting quality until it ends up on our forks.

