

The Outlook



October 9, 2020

As we look towards the transition to the desert regions of California and Arizona current and previous growing conditions continue to hamper production. Previous heat waves and wildfires along with continued warm, humid overnight conditions have taken a toll on yields and quality across the Central Coast fields. All of these factors have contributed to an increase in insect, pest, mold, mildew, and disease pressure especially in the lettuce and leafy greens supplies. A number of soil-borne diseases (sclerotinia, botrytis) and insect viruses (INVS, Impatiens virus) continue to impact yields and quality in the leafy green fields.

Add to this heat-related damage (bottom rot, fringe and tip burn, weaker texture) mold, mildews, and insect pressure and we have a perfect storm to diminish yields and quality. Broccoli and cauliflower stands have fared a bit better however mold and mildew continue to impact cauliflower along with diamondback moth larvae (worms) as brown bead and branching remain prevalent in many of the broccoli fields.

The result of all of these factors has been lesser yields, supplies, and quality causing growers to enter many fields ahead of schedule. This in turn will likely bring an early end to the Central California season and an early move to the transition acreage and desert growing regions. Bottom line is that yields and quality of leafy greens will be considerably lower across the board with most other crops challenged as well. We expect to see a roller coaster ride with spikes and drops in supplies likely through the end of the season.

