

the Outlook

As we begin to ramp up production from the desert growing regions of California and Arizona overall growing conditions will continue to impact yields and quality for the near term at a minimum. As local/regional fall deals complete their season demand will quickly shift to western production further impacting overall supplies. Lighter than anticipated production from the transitional acreage in Huron, has also contributed to lesser overall supplies as we begin desert area harvests.

As we transition to these desert stands weather patterns will continue to impact supplies. The generally warm and humid fall weather pattern (which increased growth rates and lowered yields in the Salinas Valley) impacted these Desert area stands as well. Very warm temperatures, 10-15 degrees above normal, are forecast for the next week further impacting upcoming supplies.

The early iceberg acreage in the region has been affected by the heat as insect populations increase seasonally. Iceberg lettuce yields will remain moderate with smallish head size, irregular solidity and ribby head formation. The hot weather has contributed to lesser yields due to high core (seeders) in virtually all of the current acreage. This looks to increase with the hot weather pattern. Strong winds look to continue to impact the region increasing wind and fringe burn while impacting texture and shelf life of current supplies.

Romaine and leaf lettuce supplies are also seeing reduced yields in the current hot weather pattern. A generally ribby (twist) head formation along with seeders and fringe burn are common in these fields. Carton weights will remain on the light side with mechanical damage on the rise during pack out and transit due to the ribby and twisting head formation and weaker texture. Heart material is very limited in these fields as most of the fields are showing an open head formation. Need cooler overnight temperatures to help cupping and bleaching in the romaine stands.

Weather patterns in mid-November look to be problematic especially in the desert regions as the transition to these desert stands is typically a challenge. Keep a close eye on inventories as quality will be compromised as well. You can expect lesser carton weights, quality and shelf life as we continue what will undoubtedly be a very challenging transition to desert area stands.

