

the Outlook

The stubborn high pressure system out West finally begins to move east over the holiday weekend. This heat wave brought weeks of above average temperatures to the western growing regions the latter part of June. A strong marine influence has kept the coastal fields in check (for the most part) with the warmer inland fields taking the brunt of the heat.

This unusual weather pattern is typically found in the late summer months (Indian summer) of September and early October in California. Concern for growers are not only the temperatures reached, but also the duration of this early heat wave. The extreme temperatures can impact growth rates (many crops shut down for protection during extreme heat) as well as affecting the tender bloom or flowers and ripening of many crops that experienced the heat.

While sunburn, bloom drop, and early ripening are easily identified following these temperatures, the stress put on the plants can influence size, quality and yields down the road. These longer term potential problems are much harder to identify and can take some time to show up following the heat. Remember that the summer has just begun and the typical warmer temperatures and potential future heat waves remain a threat.

Current coastal stands remain ahead of schedule by a week or more with yields continuing to be on the light side for this time of year. Current supplies are showing increased insect activity along with wind, fringe and some internal burn issues as the strong marine layer contributes to mold and mildew issues. With summer plantings coming on across the nation the California growers plant at 60% of normal due to the local deals further diminishing available acreage for the summertime. Add to this the continued labor issues growers have finding enough workers to harvest the numerous crops.

Given the above factors supplies will vary from shipper to shipper depending on the growing location and future yields. Diminished shelf life will continue for the near term at a minimum as we roll through summer harvests.

