

the Outlook

As we continue the transition to California fields weather patterns remain problematic for growers across the state. The unsettled weather pattern continues to bring periods of rain and strong winds to much of California as we move through spring. This fairly wet pattern continues to impact field preparation and plantings as these systems swing through. Longer range forecasts keep this moist weather pattern in place through April, at a minimum.

This season's incredible precipitation (150-300% of normal) has greatly improved the drought conditions in California and the west in general. Most of the reservoirs are at or near capacity and the snow pack continues to build with these spring storms. After many years of drought conditions the tremendous precipitation has resulted in what is being called a super bloom of wild flowers in California and the Southwest. Along with the wild flowers, the rain has provided ample moisture for tremendous growth of weeds and grasses throughout the region.

This in turn will provide an ample food supply for insects and other unwanted pests. Reptiles, amphibians and rodents will also have ample food supply and likely be in record numbers this season. This past season in the Salinas Valley (after seasonal precipitation) we saw a significant up-tick in complaints involving insects, reptiles, amphibians and rodents finding their way into a box or bag. With the super bloom of flowers, weeds and grasses this season we expect to see an increase in these type of pest finds this upcoming year.

Growers and processors are on the hunt for supplies, moving into current acreage early to meet demand. This looks to continue into May as growers reach for product in the fields.