

# the Outlook

As we complete the transition from the desert regions to coastal California fields the unsettled weather pattern continues to bring periods of rain and strong winds to California as we move through into spring. The wet weather pattern this winter has impacted field preparation and plantings in California causing many growers to be 2-3 weeks behind schedule. This may lead to some supply gaps in late spring.

Along with the disruption in plantings, the rain has provided ample moisture for tremendous growth of brush, weeds, and grass throughout the region. This in turn will provide an ample harborage for an invasion of insects and other unwanted pests. Reptiles, amphibians and rodents will also have ample food supply and likely be in larger numbers this season.

This past season in the Salinas Valley (after similar precipitation) we saw a significant uptick in complaints involving reptiles, amphibians, rodents and especially insects finding their way into a box or bag. Aphids, thrips and gnats are in large numbers in the fields at the moment. With the ample weeds and grasses this season we expect to see a similar increase in these types of pest this spring. This is an industry wide problem affecting most shippers and commodities. Extra care should be taken during kitchen preparation to avoid these small insects from getting to a patron. As we move into new coastal acreage we should begin to see lesser insect populations for the near term.

