



The 2010-11 Winter Forecast: Gaze into my Crystal Ball

Farmers make predictions every year; when to plant; when to wait; when to water; when to fertilize; when to harvest; and so on. Mother Nature has the single largest influence on their decisions of any unknown. Will winter be colder than last? Warmer? Will the snowfall be more? Less? How do I take those predictions and make my business decisions?



Well, the experts have released their predictions for the coming winter. As we would suggest if you were looking for financial or health advice, please consult your local experts to help you determine what is in the best interests of your business.

Predicted Highlights

Heavier Snow for Chicago, Minneapolis and Detroit, Normal Snowfall for NYC, Philly and D.C. The major metropolitan areas of the mid-Atlantic that were pummeled with snow last year will get a break this winter, but that doesn't mean there will be no snow to shovel. In contrast, Chicago, Milwaukee and Minneapolis could be in the heaviest snow zone this upcoming winter.

Winter's Worst Cold and Snow

AccuWeather.com Chief Long-Range Meteorologist Joe Bastardi is predicting that the worst of winter's cold and snow will be from the Pacific Northwest into the northern

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Worker Protection Standard for Agricultural Pesticides



This is part of our on-going series of articles to provide information about regulations that affect our industry.

EPA's Worker Protection Standard for Agricultural Pesticides (WPS) is a regulation aimed at reducing the risk of pesticide poisonings and injuries among agricultural workers and pesti-

... involved in the production of agricultural plants) and pesticide handlers (people who mix, load, or apply pesticides) that work at over 600,000 agricultural establishments. The WPS contains requirements for pesticide safety training, notification of pesticide applications, use of personal protective equipment, restricted-entry intervals after pesticide application, decontamination supplies, and emergency medical assistance.

Who and What Are Covered?

The Worker Protection Standard (WPS) protects employees on farms, forests, nurseries, and greenhouses from occupational exposure to agricultural pesticides. The regulation covers two types of employees:

Pesticide handlers -- those who mix, load, or apply agricultural pesticides; clean or repair pesticide application equipment; or assist with the application of pesticides in any way.

Agricultural workers -- those who perform tasks related to the cultivation and harvest-

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USDA PACA fee increased on September 23

Starting Sept. 23, the annual license fee for the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act was increased from \$550 to \$995, according to a final rule published in the Federal Register Aug. 24.

The annual license fee increase is the first since 1995, the U.S. Department of Agriculture said. The proposed rule that laid out the plan for the fee increase was published in March of 2010.

The regulation also removed exemptions for branch locations. The rule increased fees for each branch location to \$600, compared to the previous rules that charged firms \$200 for each branch location in excess of nine. Under the final rule, the maximum amount a licensee will pay each year will rise from \$4,000 to \$8,000.

The regulation also eliminated the multi-year license renewal option for commission merchants, brokers and dealers, the final rule said.

In a summary of comments received about the regulations, the USDA said comments about the fee increase were received from Irvine, Calif.-based Western Growers, the Newark, Del.-based Produce Marketing Association and the Washington State Potato Commission, Moses Lake.

The agency said Western Growers and PMA strongly supported the PACA branch and the proposal, though Western Growers requested branch fees be waived on the first and second branch locations.

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Senate Passes Child Nutrition Bill



Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act Improves Child Nutrition Programs and Improves Healthfulness of School Meals

By unanimous consent, the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (S. 3307) passed the U.S. Senate. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Chairman Blanche Lincoln (D-AR) introduced the legislation earlier this year, which will "... expand access to the child nutrition programs to reduce childhood hunger, improve the nutritional quality of school meals to promote health and address childhood obesity ..."

"The drive for healthier kids through increased consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables is something that the entire produce industry has pursued for many years now," said United Fresh President and CEO Tom Stenzel. "We commend Chairman Lincoln, Ranking Member Saxby Chambliss and the Senate Agriculture Committee and members of the Senate for their passage of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act. This bill provides a clear road map for healthier school meals and greater access to fresh, healthy fruits and vegetables."

Important provisions in the bill include an increased reimbursement of \$.06 per school lunch which is tied to serving healthier meals consistent with the Dietary Guidelines, including more fruits and vegetables. This is the first increase in the reimbursement rate in 40 years. The bill also provides more training for schools to serve healthier meals, and strengthens school wellness policies.

The NWA joined other crop groups to urge the House to reauthorize child nutrition, and will continue the effort in the lame duck session following the November mid-term elections.



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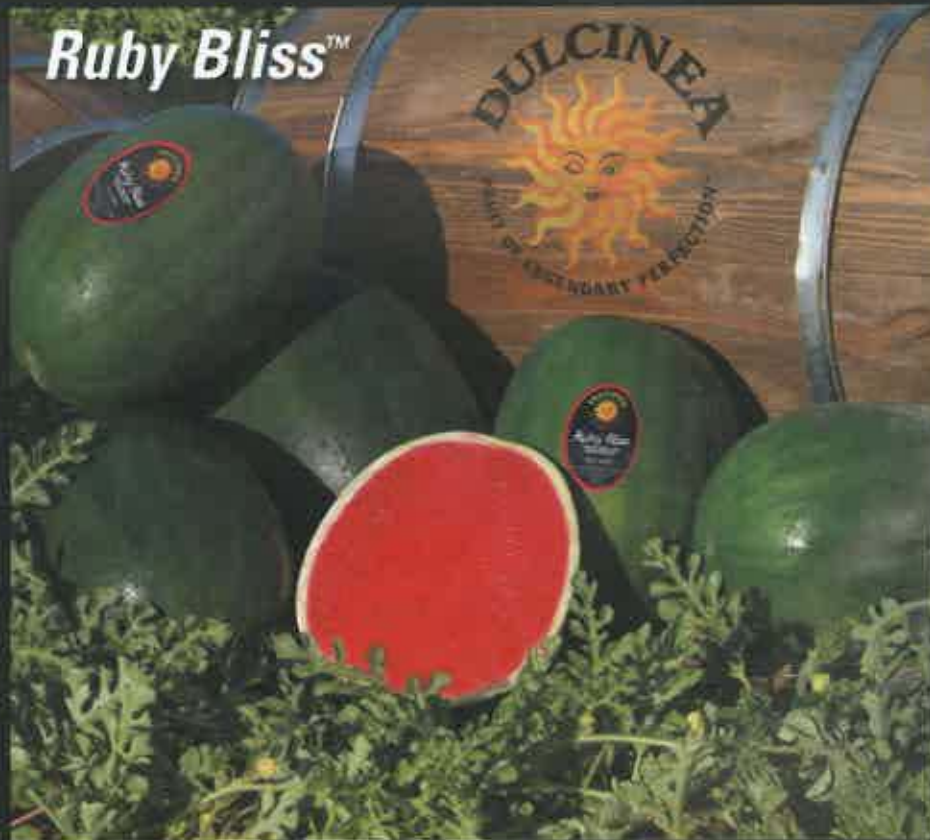
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