

Weekly Ag Report

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Hi all this is David Lile with this week's Ag Report. Good to see the rains this past week soaking up the ground and adding to the previous moisture. Fall rains before the weather turns truly cold are valuable to local ag for a few reasons. Cattlemen that ship out and depend on foothill rangelands for winter pasture really appreciate the jump start that fall rains provide. For example, a long-term data set collected at the UC Research and Extension Center over in Mendocino County showed that the amount of rainfall received by November 20th had a major influence over the total year's production of rangeland forage. That single factor accounted for about 50% of the year-to-year variability in rangeland forage growth. The reason fall rains are so important is that the temperatures are warm enough and the days are still long enough for good germination and plant growth. Once we get into December and January, low temperatures and short day length slow things down significantly.

More locally we have a similar situation with our winter wheat. Most farmers rely on fall rain to provide the moisture needed to germinate winter grain crops. If we don't get those fall rains before cold winter weather, germination can be sporadic and young seedlings can be lost to severe weather or frost heaving. In the worst cases fields may need to be cultivated and reseeded in spring. Again, the moisture we get prior to Thanksgiving is critical.

And speaking of Thanksgiving, there is no other holiday so deeply rooted in appreciation of agriculture production and fall harvest. So among our many blessings, let's not forget to count the abundant, safe, relatively low-cost food supply that we might otherwise take for granted. And to a large degree, US farmers do feed the world...last year \$115 billion worth of American agricultural products were exported around the globe. In particular here in Lassen County we have much to be thankful for when it comes to agriculture. True we often times get caught up in the high cost of doing business, the ever increasing number of regulations, and our often fickle weather patterns, but the reality is we do have much to be thankful for. For me personally, it is the community in which we live. We don't always agree on everything, but ours is a community where agriculture is truly valued and still a major part of the fabric of our culture. And for that we should all be thankful.

We'll be back next week with the Ag Report.