

Weekly Ag Report
Tom Getts, UCCE Weed and Crops Advisor
January 18, 2017

Morning, this is Tom Getts at the Lassen County Cooperative Extension Office with your Weekly Ag Report. Well, the holidays are over and we are in the doldrums of winter. It is a good time to look at the books and start planning for the next growing season. I have been doing quite a bit of computer work lately, and with all the precipitation we have received over the past month, I thought I would share some of the numbers.

Looking at the Department of Water Resource website, currently, the Northern Sierra has 132% of the average snowpack for this date, where the Central Sierra is sitting at 163% and the Southern Sierra is just below 200%. This is great news for all Californians, and hopefully the mountains continue to get hit. Potentially we should be getting another system coming through the area this weekend! I'll cross my fingers you are staying warm and dry out there.

Looking at the US Drought Monitor website, it is night and day from last year. On January 10th of 2016 the majority of Lassen County and the Central Valley were considered in exceptional drought. As of January 10, 2017, the US Drought Monitor indicated no drought conditions for Lassen County and the majority of the Sacramento Valley. A good portion of the San Joaquin Valley is still in extreme drought, but only a very small portion is now considered in exceptional drought.

Likewise, many of the reservoirs around the state have come up near their historic averages, with many, like Oroville and Shasta, exceeding the historic average water levels for this time of year.

And how about that Susan River? Currently it is flowing at 5.2 feet, or about 163 cubic feet per second. On January 9th with the rain and snow event we had, it crested at 13.3 feet or nearly 3,000 cubic feet per second. This is similar to the flow in 2012, and slightly less than the flow in 2005. But how does this flow stack up with some of the historic floods of the past? The second highest recorded flow was in '97 where the river reached 17.31. The highest flow was in 1970 at 18.5 feet or about 5,000 to 6,000 cubic feet per second. So, on a volume basis, the flow of 1970 was nearly twice what the flow was this January.

Well, it seems like feast or famine for Lassen County, exceptional drought followed by floods. But I don't think too many people will be complaining if the mountains continue to build their snowpack.

I wanted to end with some information about the Farm Bureau Scholarships. If you are in high school, it is the time of year to think about filling out scholarship applications. Every dollar you can raise for school will be a dollar that doesn't have to come out of your pocket! The Lassen County Farm Bureau offers scholarships to students, and applications need to be filled out by March 17th. I know it is hard to be proactive when the deadline is a few months away, but your future self will thank you if you do it now!

Well that was your Weekly Ag Report. Until next time...