

The recent storms in California have dealt a heavy blow to the state's cherry crop, says Ian LeMay, president of the [California Fresh Fruit Association](#) (CFFA).

In fact, he notes that the heavy rains and other inclement weather have led to a loss of roughly 50% of the crop.

However, growers may have escaped even more extensive damage due to the late timing of the season.

"There is a bit of a silver lining in that the season was about two weeks late, so what we're hearing from the industry is they are hopeful that they can get some mid- and late-season cherries that might have not been as impacted as those that were ripening right during the storms."

As a result, he says growers are hopeful that they'll be able to get "a decent amount of product" off the trees next month.

"What we're being told is that in the first week of June through that third week of June, we should see a more consistent crop coming off the cherry trees."

Beyond the cherry crop, LeMay adds: "Early season varieties of stonefruit have been moderately impacted."

He explains: "With stonefruit, so far we've seen very little impact in terms of the projected volume. That could change depending upon other additional weather systems that could come through."

While there was no major crop loss of the category, he explains the effects of the recent California storms might not be apparent right away.

Currently, there is "obviously some staining on the fruit because of the rain. We've also seen a slowing in the maturation in the fruit due to the lower temperatures".

Though this hasn't caused any big delays, it has led to some lower packouts, he notes.

A few other crops took a hit with the California storms as well.

"Some of the hailstorms that came through central California did impact other commodities. I'm familiar with a few tomato growers out on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley that were impacted."

"In this period of the season, any weather - whether that be rain, hail, or heavy winds - could definitely have impacts on our commodities."

As for how the CFFA is responding, he notes: "We're going through all the mitigation efforts that we can to try to limit the impacts but we are a bit at the mercy of Mother Nature right now."

Still, CFFA's growers are optimistic that the worst is over.

"As of right now, our growers are feeling confident that they've weathered the storm. We expect some warmer weather next week, and hopefully these storms will blow through and we'll get more into a normal pattern towards the end of next week."