
EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

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IN THE GAMBIA

Period: May 11 - 20, 2010



Government of The Gambia

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AGRHYMET Regional Programme

1. PROGRESS OF RAINY SEASON

The Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ), separating the moist and dry regions over northern Africa, has continued its slight northward movement since the last dekad. However, its mean position during the last ten days (11 to 20 May) was south of the Gambia, in southern Senegal and stretching towards northern Burkina Faso. The country is therefore without rains and characterized by the dry and cool weather condition during the night and early morning, becoming sunny and warm in the daytime.

2. RAINFALL OUTLOOK FOR MAY 21 - 31, 2010

Chances of slight rain are expected over some places.

3. RAINFALL SITUATION

As in the previous dekad, no rainfall was recorded across the country. However, compared to last year during the same period, deficits ranging from 0.8mm to 32.4mm were observed in the Middle and Eastern Thirds of the country. This shows that rains started earlier last year than this year in these regions.

Meanwhile, the earliest onset of rains in the Eastern part of the country is the first or second week of June, progressing westwards until the last week of June, when the entire country will experience rainfall.

Compared to the long-term mean (1971 - 2000) cumulative rainfall during the same period, deficits ranged from 0.2mm to 7.9mm.

4. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

Temperatures during this dekad are high, particularly in the Middle and Eastern Thirds of the country. Highest temperatures when compared to the last dekad had increased by more than 0.8°C and remained above 40.0°C in all stations except those near the coast (Banjul, Yundum and Sibanor), where the highest temperatures were 38.5°C and below.

Minimum temperatures also increased by more than 0.3°C in all stations as compared to the last dekad and ranged from 19.5°C at Kerewan in the Western Third to 26.8°C at Basse in the Eastern Third of the country.

Relative humidity (RH) followed a reverse in trend to that of temperatures, as the Western Third recorded the highest RH ranging from 81% to 90%, whilst the Middle and Eastern Thirds recorded the lowest of 51%.

However, only Janjangbureh, Basse and Fatoto in the eastern sector recorded an increase in RH as compared to last dekad.

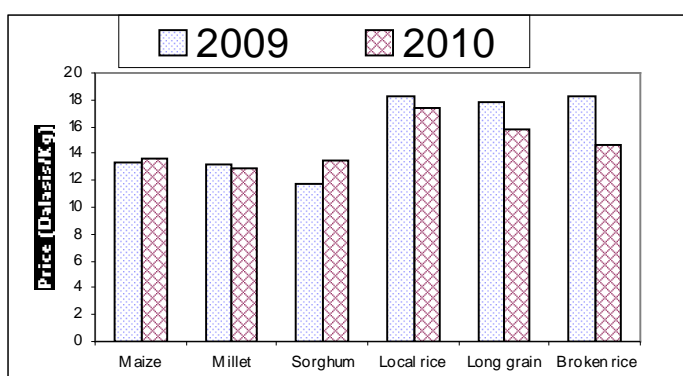
Winds during the dekad were generally moderate to light in speed (30km/hr maximum) as in the last dekad.

5. AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

The major on-field activities by farmers continued to be field clearing, acquisition and preparation of seeds and the repair of farming implements.

6. SITUATION OF MARKETS

Cereal Prices



The food situation is generally good, due to the availability of stocks in households and products in retail and weekly markets. The high price levied on the cereal commodities in the market is due mainly to the places of acquisition normally from the weekly markets (*Lumo*) in the rural areas.

However, apart of maize and sorghum all other cereals recorded a decrease in average prices ranging from D0.30 to D4.00 per Kilo as compared to last year (fig. 1).

Figure 1: Evolution of Cereal prices (Source: Department of Planning)

Horticultural commodity prices

Like in the previous dekad, the prices of horticultural commodities continued to fluctuate according to the demand and supply in the various markets. Average prices of exotic onion remain fairly stable throughout the country. The price of other commodities like tomato, okra and pepper varied from one market to the other.

Fruits

Mangoes are becoming increasingly available in all the markets and the prices are becoming lower. Guava as usual is not available in the markets.

Composition of MWG:

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 Planning Services - Department of Agriculture (DOA)
 Communication, Extension & Education Services - DOA
 Animal Health & Production Services - DOA
 Plant Protection Services - DOA
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