

# EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

No. 2010/03

## IN THE GAMBIA

Period: May 21 - 31, 2010



Government of The Gambia

Produced and Published by the Multidisciplinary Working Group of the AGRHYMET Regional Programme

Focal Point: Department of Water Resources

TEL: (+220) 4227631 / 4224122 / 8905229 - FAX: (+220) 422 50 09

E-MAIL: [dwr@mofwrnam.gov.gm](mailto:dwr@mofwrnam.gov.gm) / WEB: [www.mofwrnam.gov.gm](http://www.mofwrnam.gov.gm)



AGRHYMET Regional Programme

### 1. PROGRESS OF RAINY SEASON

As in the previous dekad, the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ), separating the moist and dry regions over northern Africa, continued its slight northward movement. Thus, its extreme position during the last eleven days (21 to 31 May) was north of The Gambia, (over northern Senegal and stretches over northern Burkina Faso and Nigeria). This northward surge of the ITCZ resulted to moisture influx into the West African sub-region, hence the rain and thunderstorms observed over the Gulf of Guinea States and Sahel, including the eastern part of The Gambia.

### 2. RAINFALL OUTLOOK FOR JUNE 1 - 10, 2010

Thunderstorm and/or rain are expected over places particularly over the central and eastern sectors of the country.

### 3. RAINFALL SITUATION

During this dekad, rainfall was recorded in the extreme Eastern Third of the country during the first half of the dekad, with Fatoto and Basse recording daily totals amounting to 0.3mm and 26.8mm respectively (fig. 1).

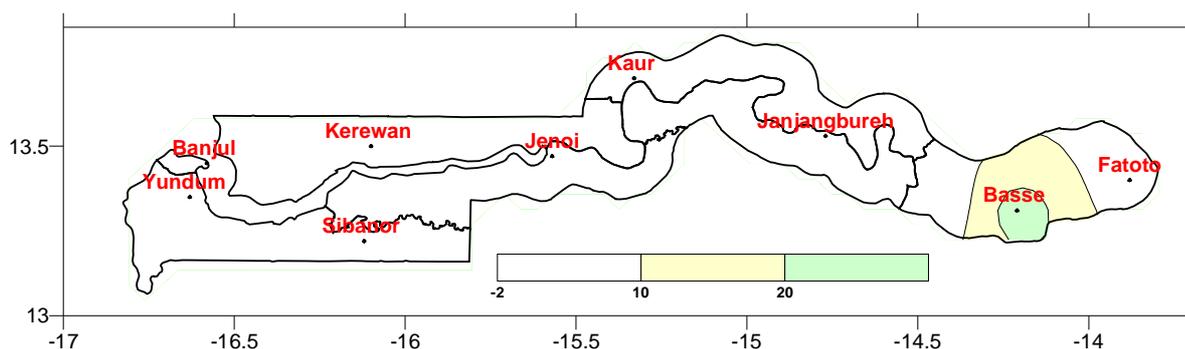


Figure 1: Rainfall intensity during May 21 - 31, 2010

However, compared to last year and the long-term mean (1971 - 2000) during the same period, deficits ranging from 2.8mm to 32.1mm were observed in the Central and Eastern Thirds of the country, except in Basse that recorded a surplus.

#### 4. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

Temperatures during this dekad remained high, particularly in the Middle and Eastern Thirds of the country. Highest temperatures rose to over 42°C in the Central and Eastern Thirds of the country compared to 40.0°C during the preceding dekad.

Minimum temperatures also increased by more than 0.5°C in all stations as compared to the last dekad and ranged from 20.0°C at Kerewan in the Western Third to 26.7°C at Basse in the Eastern Third of the country.

The relative humidity (RH) as in the previous dekads followed a reverse in trend to that of temperatures. The Western Third recorded the highest RH ranging from 79% to 91%, whilst the Middle and Eastern Thirds recorded the lowest of 82%.

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

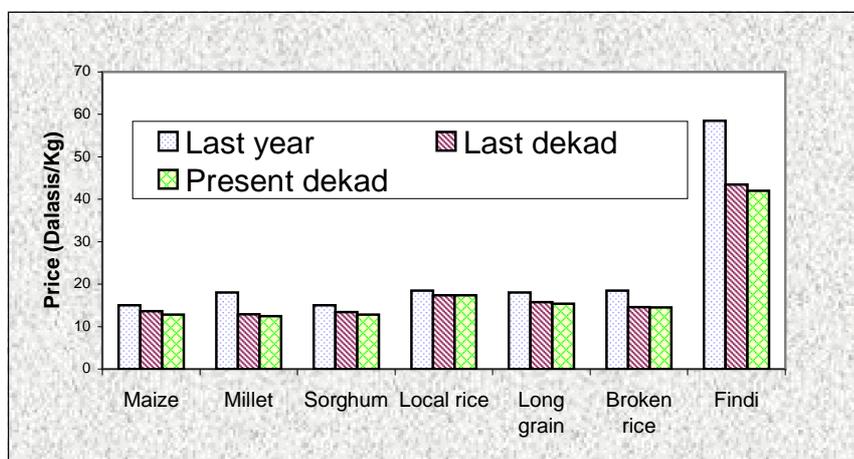
#### 5. AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

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 coarse grains (i.e. millet, maize and sorghum), as well as rice and hungry rice locally called *Findi* were part of the seven major crops grown in



**Figure 2:** Evolution of Cereal prices (Source: Department of Planning)

The Gambia. Coarse grains production and the area planted to these grains have significantly increased in the past few years. This has contributed to their continuous availability in the markets throughout the year. Meanwhile, the average prices of these grains have slightly decreased as compared to the preceding dekad, whilst when compared to the prices during the same period last year, these commodities registered a significant decrease ranging from 6 to 30% (Fig. 2).

However, the average price of groundnut (D17.90/Kg), stands higher than all the cereals apart from *Findi*. This could be attributed to the households' general dependence on the crop for their daily culinary requirement. The price of beans also remained high at D24.00/Kg.

## Horticultural commodity prices

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. Average prices of okra, chili and large pepper are the highest among the other horticultural commodities and remained at D35.14, D44.10 and D56.47 per kilo respectively.

## Price of beef

Despite the promotion of marketing of meat by the Government through setting of a ceiling price of D60.00 and D80.00 for meat & bone and steak respectively, the price of these products continued to remain higher in the urban markets where it rose to D75.00 and D100.00. This occurrence was evident in several previous months for all the five major urban markets covered by this report. Variably, rural weekly markets were following ceiling price set by the Government which is the same as the one currently in use by the Kanalai farm stall.

<b>Composition of MWG:</b> Department of Water Resources Planning Services - Department of Agriculture (DOA) Communication, Extension & Education Services - DOA Animal Health & Production Services - DOA Plant Protection Services - DOA National Environment Agency	<b>Direct your comments and questions to:</b> The Director Department of Water Resources 7 Marina Parade, Banjul The Gambia Tel: (+ 220) 422 76 31 / 422 41 22 / 890 52 29 Email: <a href="mailto:dwr@mofwrnam.gov.gm">dwr@mofwrnam.gov.gm</a>
--	--