

EARLY WARNING BULLETIN FOR FOOD SECURITY

Nº. 2012/12

IN THE GAMBIA

Period: August 21 - 31, 2012



Government of The Gambia

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

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AGRHYMET Regional Programme

1. PROGRESS OF THE RAINY SEASON

The average position of the Inter-Tropical Discontinuity (ITD) during the dekad was located over the coast of Mauritania rising over northern Mali.

The Azores High Pressure Cell remained quasi-stationary over the northern Atlantic Ocean with a mean core value of 1020hpa, whilst the St. Helena High, on the other hand, had a core value of 1030hpa while maintaining a quasi-stationary position over the southern Atlantic Ocean. The latter had strengthened by 10hpa over the former, facilitating the continued inflow of moisture-laden winds into the sub-region hence resulting to the rains that occurred during the period.

2. RAINFALL SITUATION

During this dekad, rainfall intensities recorded ranged from 1.2mm to 84.3mm in the Western Third, 0.3mm to 84.0mm in the Middle Third and from 0.2mm to 36.9mm in the Eastern Third of the country (fig. 1a). Number of rainy days ranged from 7 days to 9 days with dekadal totals ranging from 55.9mm to 259.5mm recorded at Kerewan in the Eastern Third and Sapu in the Middle Third respectively. Generally an increased in dekadal rainfall was recorded this dekad as compared to the previous one.

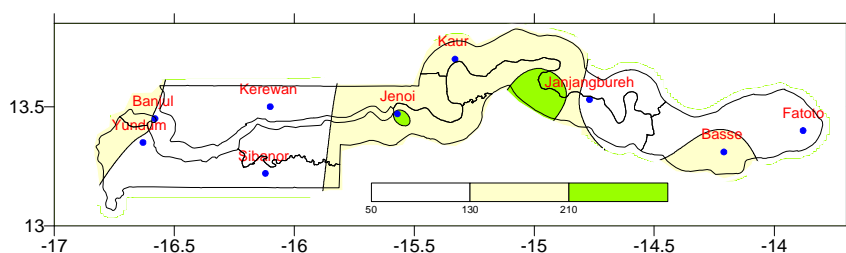


Figure 1a: Rainfall intensity during August 21 – 31, 2012

The seasonal totals as at August 31st, ranged from 510.5mm at Basse in the Eastern Third to 1147.9mm at Sapu in the Middle Third of the country (fig.1b).

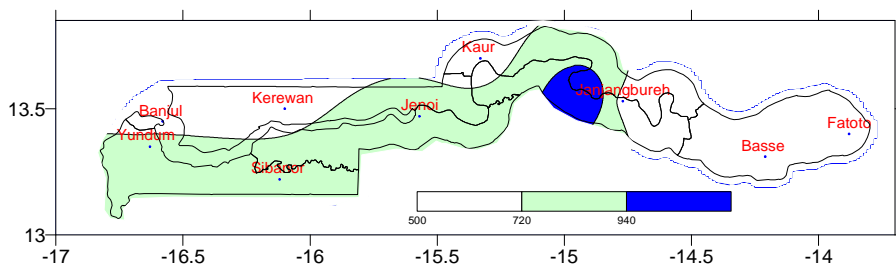


Figure 1b: *Cumulative rainfall from May 1 – August 31, 2012*

As at August 31, the seasonal totals compared to the same period last year (2011) generally recorded surpluses in all stations. Deficits of 50.2mm and 81.1mm were recorded at Fatoto and Basse respectively as compared to the long term mean (figure 1c).

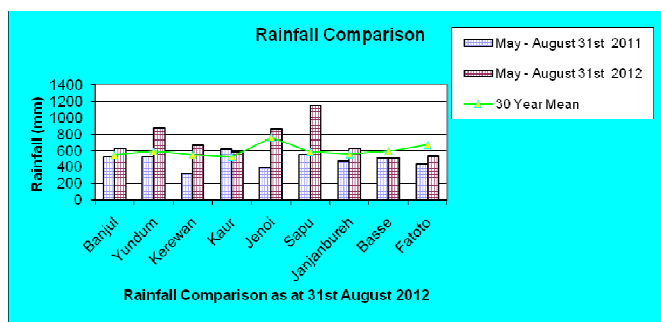


Figure 1c: *Comparison of this year rainfall, against 2011 and the long term mean*

The country average as at August 31 stood at 703.1mm, which is 35% above last year's average (519.2mm) and 20% above the long term (81-2010) mean (584.3mm).

3. RAINFALL OUTLOOK FOR SEPTEMBER 1 – 10, 2012

Rain and thunderstorm sometimes accompanied by strong winds will affect the country.

4. AGROMETEOROLOGICAL SITUATION

During this dekad, temperatures drop slightly as compared to previous dekad due to cloud cover and continues downpour of rainfall. The highest temperature recorded was 32.2°C at Jenoi, whilst lowest temperature recorded was 22.7°C at Janjangbureh both in the Middle Third of the country.

The highest sunshine recorded was 7.1 hours at Sapu in the Middle Third, whilst the lowest recorded was 4.1 hours at Fatoto in the Eastern Third. Maximum evaporation recorded was 6.7mm at Jenoi and lowest recorded was 3.3mm at Sapu, both in the Middle Third of the country.

Maximum Relative Humidity recorded was above 90% throughout the period, whilst lowest Relative Humidity recorded was also 65% during the period.

Winds were generally light to moderate in speed with the passage of line squalls across the country on 27th and 29th August. The highest wind gust recorded were 49.7km/h and 42.8km/h at Sapu and Yundum respectively causing destruction to houses and uprooting of trees especially in the Middle Third of the country.

5. AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

5.1 General crop situation

Overall crop performance in terms of growth and development is progressing satisfactorily across the country.

5.2 Crop development

Cereals

Generally, maize is flowering and in some places the crop has reached maturity and harvesting has started. The early millet crop is at advanced stage of heading and grain formation in many regions. In the Western and Upper River Regions, late millet is at tillering or shooting stages. Sorghum fields are at advanced jointing stage with few fields booting.

The early maturing rice, *Nerica* is at booting stage in certain areas. Transplanting of rice nurseries has started in the lowland fields.

Groundnuts

The early maturing groundnut (Philippine pink) is at maturity in some places, whilst in other places it is at advanced stage of pegging. The other groundnut varieties, *Senegal 206* and *73-33* are at ramification and flowering/pegging stages.

5.3 Pest Situation

No serious pest infestation was reported during the period.

6. SITUATION OF MARKETS

Average cereal prices continued to fluctuate from one market to the other depending on the volume of the commodities supplied and demand at the markets. At the retail markets, average price of coarse grains (maize, sorghum and millet) varied from D15.78/kg in Bakau to D18.05/kg in Brikama, whilst rice varied from D20.00/kg to D25.00/kg (table 1). The price of *Findo* varied from D60.00/kg to D70.00/kg remaining the highest in all markets.

Table 1: Evolution of cereal prices (Source: Planning Services - DOA)

	Retail Markets					Weekly Market	Average
	Latrikunda	Bakau	Tippa Garage	Brikama	Gunjur		
Maize	18.91	15.78	19.97	17.69	19.45	N/A	18.36
Late Millet	13.15	N/A	14.59	17.94	14.56	N/A	15.06
Early Millet	16.21	15.78	15.71	18.14	17.65	N/A	16.70
Sorghum	15.78	15.78	N/A	18.42	19.41	N/A	17.35
Local Rice	24.00	20.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	22.00
Broken Rice	20.00	20.00	24.00	25.00	20.00	N/A	21.80
Long Grain Rice	24.00	20.00	22.50	25.00	20.00	N/A	22.30
Findo	60.00	75.00	N/A	75.00	N/A	N/A	70.00

Average prices of cereals (millet and sorghum) registered a slight decrease as compared the same period last year, whilst maize registered an increase (fig. 2). Average prices of local and imported rice also increased by D4.21/kg and D3.82/kg respectively as compared to August 2011.

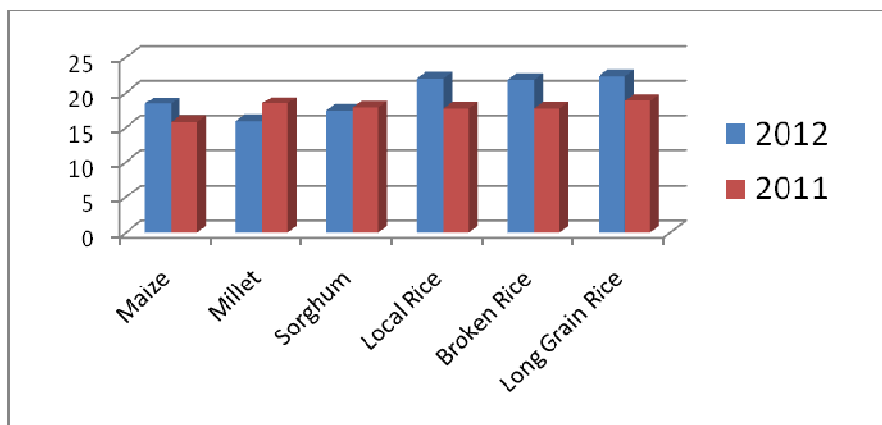


Figure 2: Comparison of cereal prices

The price of beef (meat and bone) ranged from D100.00/kg to D110.00/kg during the period under review, whilst it ranged from D80.00/kg to D100.00/kg during the same period last year. The price of steak beef ranged and from D110.00/kg to D130.00/kg during this dekad, whilst during the same period last year it ranged from D100.00/kg to D120.00/kg.

Table 1: Evolution of cereal prices (Source: Planning Services - DOA)

	Retail Markets					Weekly Markets
	Latrikunda	Bakau	Tippa Kunda	Brikama	Gunjur	
Beef Meat & Bones	110.00	110.00	100.00	100.00	N/A	N/A
Beef Steak	130.00	125.00	120.00	120.00	110.00	N/A

Composition of MWG:

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

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