

# LESOTHO METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES (LEKALA LA TSA BOLEPI)



## Ten-Day Agrometeorological Bulletin

11<sup>th</sup> –20<sup>th</sup> October 2006



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*...dedicated to the agricultural community  
... aimed at harmonizing agricultural activities with weather and climate*

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## *Highlights*

- Improved rainfall situation during this period.
- Planting in the highlands is in progress.
- Hailstorm.

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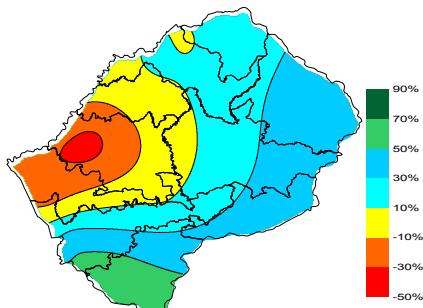
**WEATHER SUMMARY**

The first half of the dekad was dominated by a High Pressure which resulted in very fine weather for the entire country. Otherwise the second half of the dekad was under the influence of an Interior Trough which drew moist air from the tropics coupled with an influx of moist air from the Indian Ocean Anticyclone. Consequently the country received some significant amount of rainfall.

**RAINFALL SITUATION**

The second dekad of October 2006 experienced good rainfall. The rainfall occurred mainly during the second half of the dekad. The rainfall was normal to above normal over most parts of the country except over western regions of Mafeteng where the dekad rainfall was below normal. Mafeteng received the least dekad rainfall of 10.7mm. The northwest regions of Maseru and the central highlands of Semokong registered rainfall in the range of 25mm-40mm. On the contrary Quthing recorded the highest dekad rainfall of more than 70mm. On the other hand massive hailstorm was experienced over some parts of Leribe moving northwards into some parts of Butha-Buthe. Mafeteng had few number of rainy days (three days). The rainy days ranged from four days in the north to northwestern lowlands of Leribe and Butha-Buthe, and the southwest lowlands of Mohale’s Hoek to nine days in the high-lying areas of Mokhotlong.

**Cumulative percentage rainfall departure from Normal**



**Fig.1: Cumulative rainfall departure from normal: 1<sup>st</sup> Sept to 2<sup>nd</sup> dekad. October 06.**

Cumulative rainfall since 1<sup>st</sup> September to 20<sup>th</sup> October 2006 is below normal in the west and the adjacent northwestern lowlands. Quthing and of Mohale’s Hoek in the south to southwest regions had positive percentage rainfall departure. This shows that the southern to southwestern regions have had good rains since September 2006.

**TEMPERATURE**

On average, temperatures were normal to above normal during the dekad under review. Maseru and Mokhotlong had largest temperature deviations of 1.5°C and 1.4°C respectively. Butha-Buthe in the north registered the lowest daily minimum temperature of 1.5°C on the 19<sup>th</sup>, which might be due to hailstorm experienced over Leribe and Butha-Buthe. The highest daily temperature of 27.7°C was registered at Maseru on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

**CROP STAGE AND CONDITION**

Rains of the dekad under review encouraged farmers to initialise the summer agricultural activities. However, still few fields have been cultivated in the lowlands. In the highlands and most parts of Quthing and Mohale’s Hoek, due to the consistency of various forms of precipitation, crops and pastures are expected not to be under major moisture deficit. But because of the occurrences of low temperatures and snowfall in the months of August and September summer crops may not be on time. Winter wheat is performing well in most parts of the country.

**DEKADAL OUTLOOK (21– 31 OCT 2006)**

Dry and hot conditions are expected mainly during the first half of the forecast period. Nevertheless, relatively wet conditions may be anticipated over the second half of the period where isolated to scattered rains are expected. Temperatures will be mainly mild to warm.

Table 1

		Rainfall and Temperature Summaries										
		Rainfall (mm)						Temperature (°C)				
		Total From Sept 06 to 2nd Dek Oct 06						11 - 20 October 2006				
STATION	ALT.	Actual	Normal	Rain			%Dept. from	Minimum	Maximum	Dekadal	Dekadal	
NAME	(M)	R/Fall	R/Fall	Days	Actual	Normal	Normal	Lowest(Day)	Highest (Day)	Mean	Normal	Deviation
Butha-Buthe	1770	55.2	24.2	4	81.7	75.6	8	1.5(19)	25.5(15)	16.245	16.3	-0.1
Leribe	1740	52.6	24	4	82.1	71.5	15	-	-	-	16.5	-
Mafeteng	1610	10.7	23.1	3	44.6	59.3	-25	9.3(11)	-	-	16.1	-
Maseru Airport	1530	38.4	22.3	6	59.2	67	-12	9.0(11)	27.7(15)	18.64	17.1	1.5
Mohale's hoek	1600	49	25	4	98.9	69.3	43	9.5(19)	27(15)	17.48	16.7	0.8
Mokhotlong	2200	51.8	20	9	93.1	64.9	43	5.5(11)	25.6(14)	15.035	13.6	1.4
Moshoeshoe I	1628	28.8	26.1	6	41.7	70.1	-41	9.5(11)	26.6(16)	17.995	17.1	0.9
Phuthiatsana	1750	N/A	28	-	-	78	-	8.9(11)	-	-	16.8	-
Quthing	1740	70.4	24.1	6	134.5	80.1	68	9.1(20)	26.4(15)	17.815	16.5	1.3
Semonkong	2458	37.9	22.1	7	79.6	76.1	5	3.5(11)	22.0(15)	12.205	11.7	0.5
Thaba-Tseka	2160	42.3	22.1	7	85.4	70.6	21	6.4(20)	21.3(16)	13.38	13.4	0.0

Fig.3

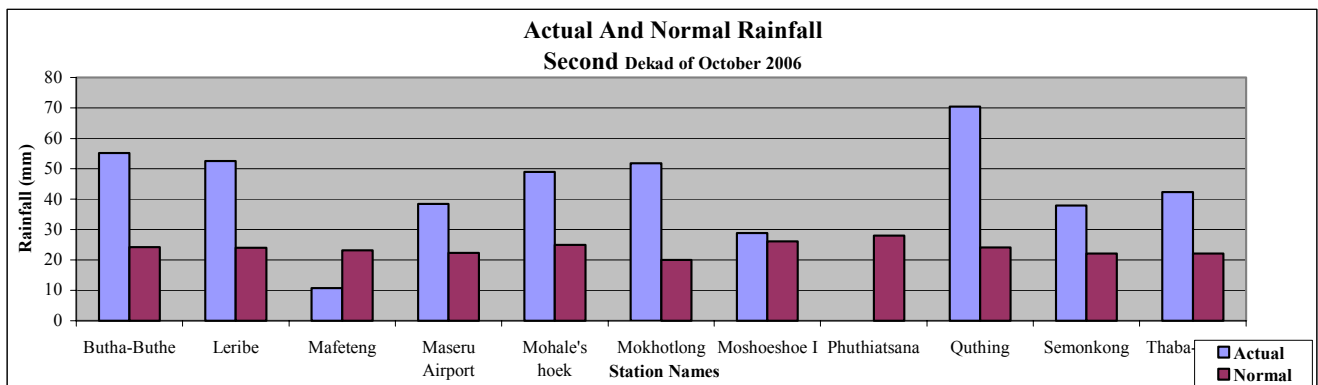
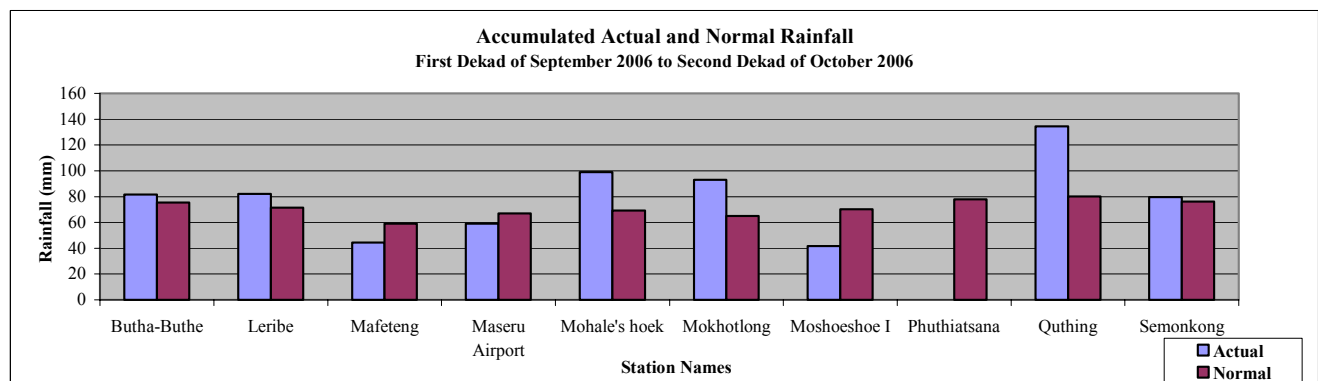


Fig.4



## **Glossary**

Dekad : Ten day period

Normal: Average figure over a specific time period.

% Rainfall Departure from Normal:  $(\text{Actual Rainfall} - \text{Normal Rainfall}) / \text{Normal Rainfall} \times 100$

NDVI: Normalized Difference Vegetation Index -

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And it is

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Comments and Contributions would be highly appreciated.