

AGROMETEOROLOGICAL UPDATE



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CONTENTS

HIGHLIGHTS	1
CONTENTS	1
RAINFALL SYNOPSIS AND PROGNOSIS	1
RAINFALL AND TEMPERATURES	2
RAINFALL	2
TEMPERATURES	2
MAIZE AND OTHER CROPS.....	3
MAIZE CROP STAGE AND CONDITION..	3
OTHER CROPS	3
CURRENT FARMING ACTIVITY	3
LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES	3
WATER (BULK) AVAILABILITY.....	3
MEDIUM-TERM OUTLOOK.....	3
RAINFALL	3
TEMPERATURE.....	3
SOIL MOISTURE	3
WIND SPEED	3

HIGHLIGHTS

- Improved rains fell in some parts...
- A slight improvement in vegetation....
- Very few ploughing observed....
- Slight increase in rainfall anticipated.....
- Warm to hot temperatures.....
- Slight improvement in soil moisture expected.....

RAINFALL SYNOPSIS AND PROGNOSIS

➤ SYNOPSIS - PAST TEN DAYS

Improved rainfall was received during the second dekad (ten-days) of October 2016 indication a movement towards the start of the rainfall season. The rainfall amounts are still below average, but above that of the previous 2015/16 season.

➤ PROGNOSIS - NEXT TEN DAYS

Rainfall is expected to slightly increase during the outlook period.

RAINFALL AND TEMPERATURES

RAINFALL

A slight improvement in rainfall was observed during the second dekad of October 2016, however still below average and above that of previous season 2015/16 (Figure 1) below.

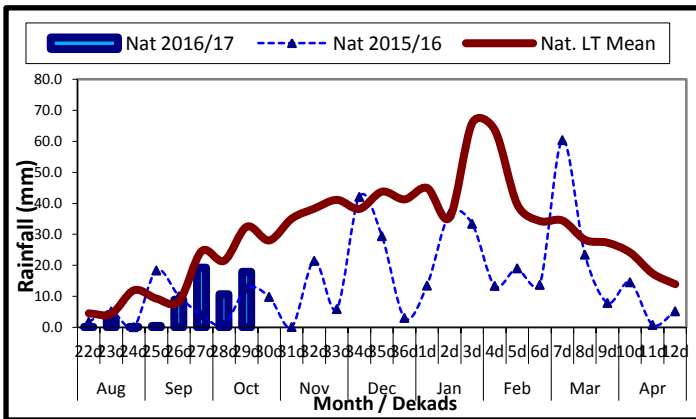
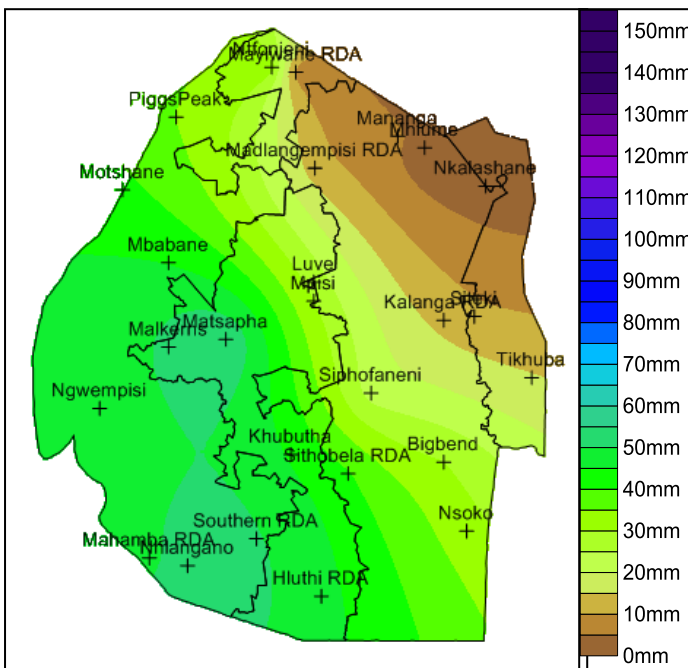


Figure 1: Rainfall distribution as second dekad of October 2016



Map 2: Spatial rainfall distribution for second dekad October 2016

Most parts of the country received rainfall between 15-55mm, apart from the north-eastern part (Map 1).

Table 1: Rainfall (mm) for 2nd dekad October 2016

	HV	MV	LV	LP
2015/16	20	11	8	11
Average	42	36	24	28
2016/17	37	13	16	6
Anomaly	-5	-23	-8	-22

TEMPERATURES

Cold to warm temperatures were recorded over the country as stations recorded below to slightly above average temperatures (Table 2 below).

Table 2: Temperatures (°C) for 2nd Dekad October 2016

Station	Element	2 nd dek Oct	Average	Depart
Mbabane	Max	NR	25.43	NR
	Min	12.6	14.03	-1.47
Piggs Peak	Max	21.3	25.70	-4.40
	Min	12.5	14.63	-2.09
Nhlanguano	Max	NR	25.53	NR
	Min	12.0	14.00	-2.05
Ngwempisi	Max	24.2	25.60	-1.4
	Min	11.6	13.77	-2.217
Matsapha	Max	24.1	26.20	-2.15
	Min	15.0	14.77	0.25
Bigbend	Max	28.2	26.80	1.42
	Min	18.6	15.77	2.84
Mananga	Max	27.3	26.80	0.49
	Min	18.0	15.90	2.1

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MAIZE AND OTHER CROPS

MAIZE CROP STAGE AND CONDITION

Very few fields have been ploughed in readiness to plant maize. Most fields are still to be ploughed.

OTHER CROPS

There are no other crops reported to have been planted.

CURRENT FARMING ACTIVITY

Currently farmers are commencing with land preparation activities, due to recent rains received in the country during the first and second dekad.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES

There is a slight improvement in grazing areas in the Highveld and Middleveld. However, vegetation continues to be poor in the Lowveld and Lubombo Plateau, especially in the north-eastern parts of the country (**Image 1**) due to insufficient moisture. This continues to increase the demand for bales imported from the Republic of South Africa.

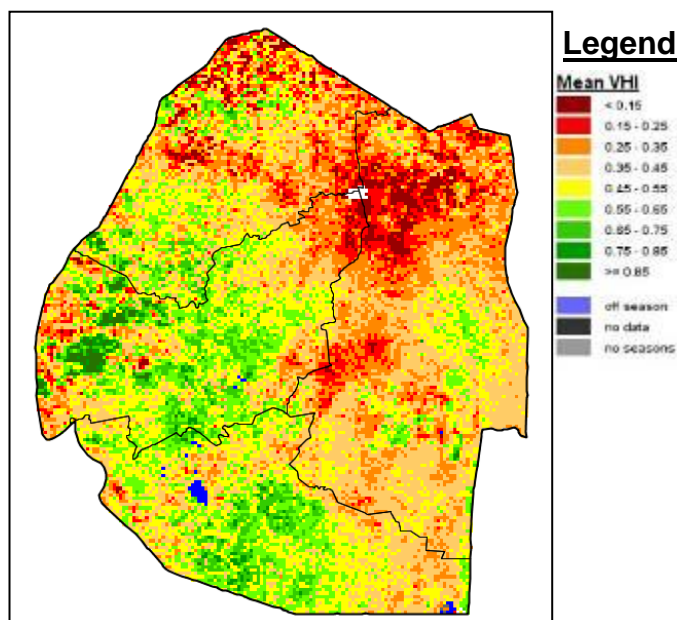


Image 1: Vegetation Health Index image (2nd Dekad October 2016) Source: FAO-GIEWS

WATER (BULK) AVAILABILITY

Bulk water continues to decline in most major reservoir dams in the country. The recent rains have proved insufficient in improving water levels.

MEDIUM-TERM OUTLOOK

RAINFALL

A slight increase in rainfall expected in most parts of the country in the outlook period.

TEMPERATURE

Warm temperatures expected in most parts of the Highveld and Middleveld, but slightly hot conditions expected in the Lowveld.

SOIL MOISTURE

Slight improvement in soil moisture anticipated.

WIND SPEED

Wind speeds will be mostly that of a gentle breeze with no gust conditions expected.

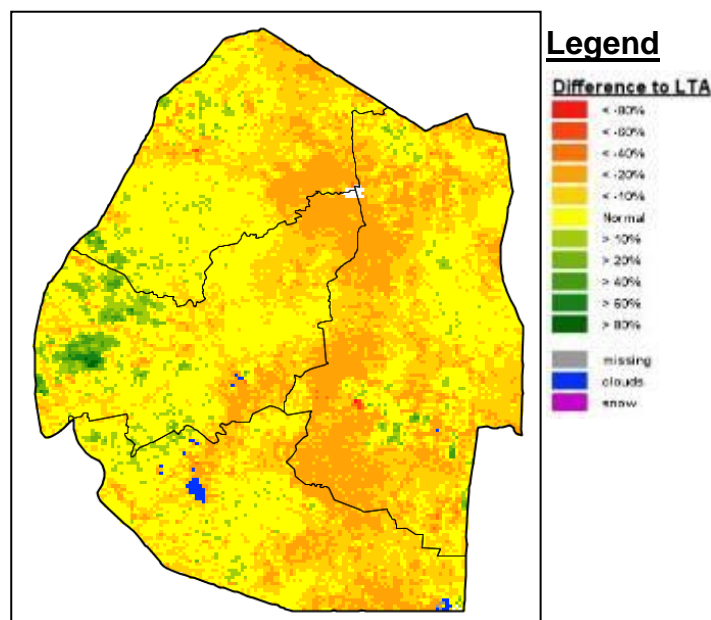


Image 2: Vegetation anomaly image (2nd Dekad October 2016) Source: FAO-GIEWS

CONTRIBUTORS, PARTNERS AND SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Please Note: This bulletin is issued in support of the efforts by the National Early Warning Office (NEWU) for food Security in the Ministry of Agriculture to provide Swaziland's current agronomic and meteorological developments to users, stakeholders, government authorities and international organizations during the farming season.

The NEWS is currently made-up of a core team of the National Early Warning Unit (NEWU) of Ministry of Agriculture, the Agromet Unit of the National Meteorology Department and the Agricultural Statistics Unit of Central Statistics Office (CSO).