



Swaziland Government



FOOD SECURITY UPDATE



**FEBRUARY MARCH and APRIL 2009.
MAY 2009**

Released

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Rainfall for the months of March and April 2009 show a significant decline compared to last season and the longterm average**
- **Vegetation has started to show signs of drying up as a result of the decline in rainfall**
- **A wet winter is forecasted for the first 3 months (April, May, June) of the winter season**
- **The maize production forecast for the 2009/2010 marketing year stands at 70,672 tons.**
- **The total cereal requirement for the 2009/2010 marketing year is estimated at 166,000 tonnes, while the Total Domestic Cereal Availability is 82,000 tonnes leaving a cereal gap of 90,000 tonnes.**
- **The Winter Seasonal Forecast has been appended in Annex 3.**

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AGRO-METEOROLOGICAL CONDITION

a.) Rainfall

Rainfall during the month of March started well in the first ten days (dekad) in most parts of the country and started to decline as the month progressed. This decline continued even to the month April where much below average rainfall was received in most regions of the country (figures 1 – 4).

Cumulative rainfall from the beginning of the season in August 2008 to April 2009 shows that the 2008/09 season received a rainfall total of 2,523mm, which is much below the long term average rainfall total of 3,249mm for the same period and even less than that of last season's accumulated total of 2,775mm during the same period (Figure 6).

The rainfall received in the season has been generally below average for the October-November-December 2008 period while the January-February-March 2009 period saw a significant improvement in rains received in most parts of the country, especially the eastern parts of the country.

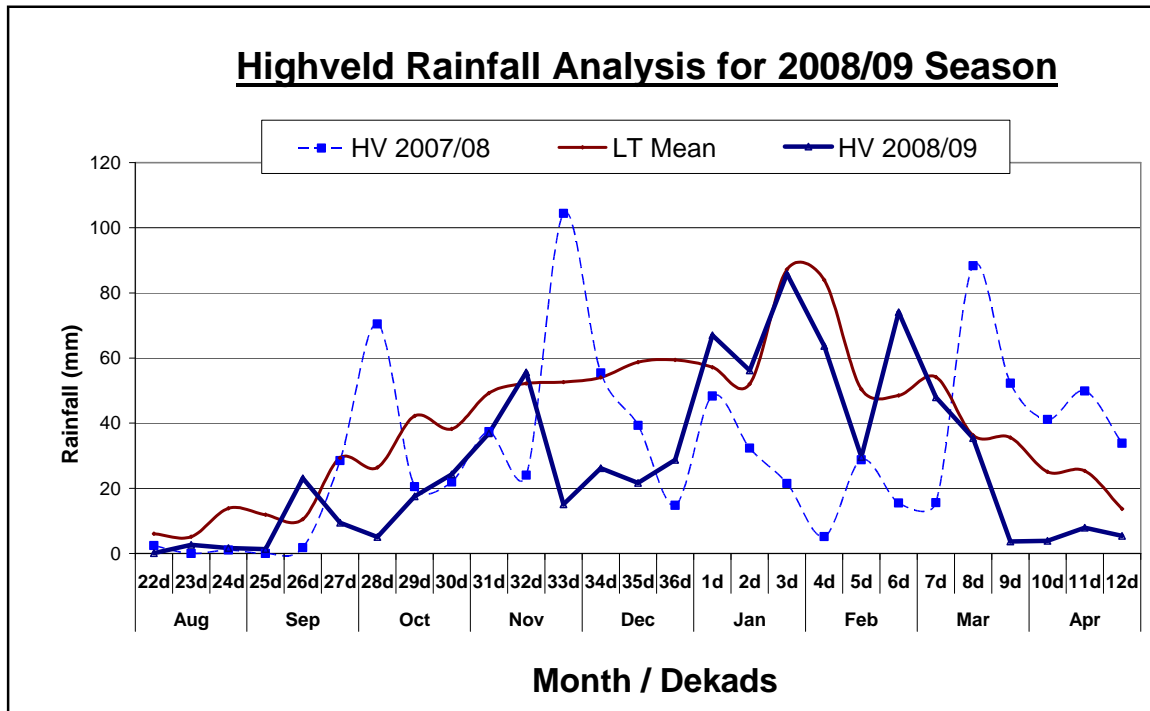


Figure 1: Highveld dekadal rainfall for the 2008/09 season as of April 2009

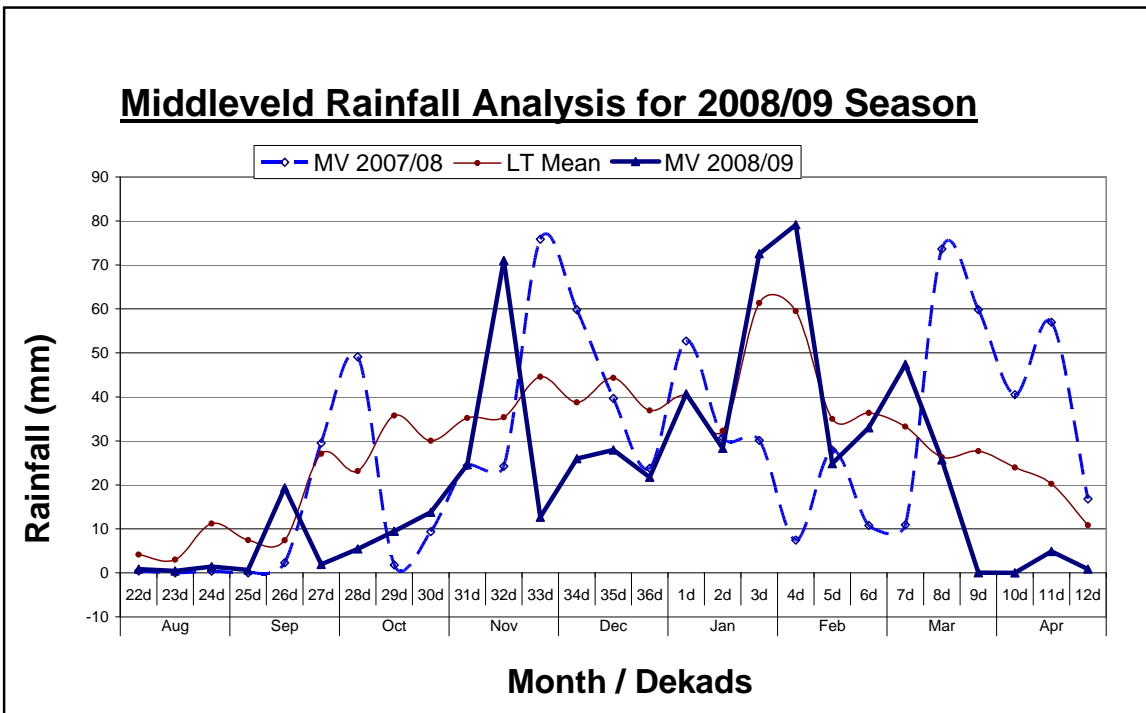


Figure 2: Middleveld dekadal rainfall for the 2008/09 season as of April 2009

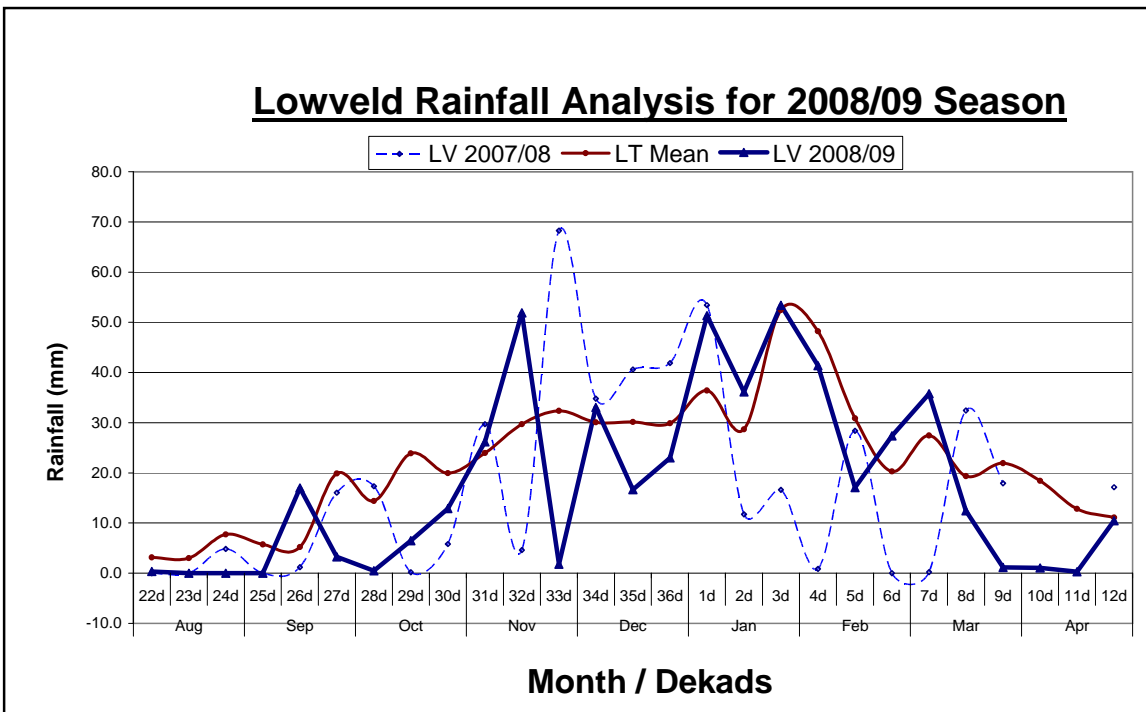


Figure 3: Lowveld dekadal rainfall for the 2008/09 season as of April 2009

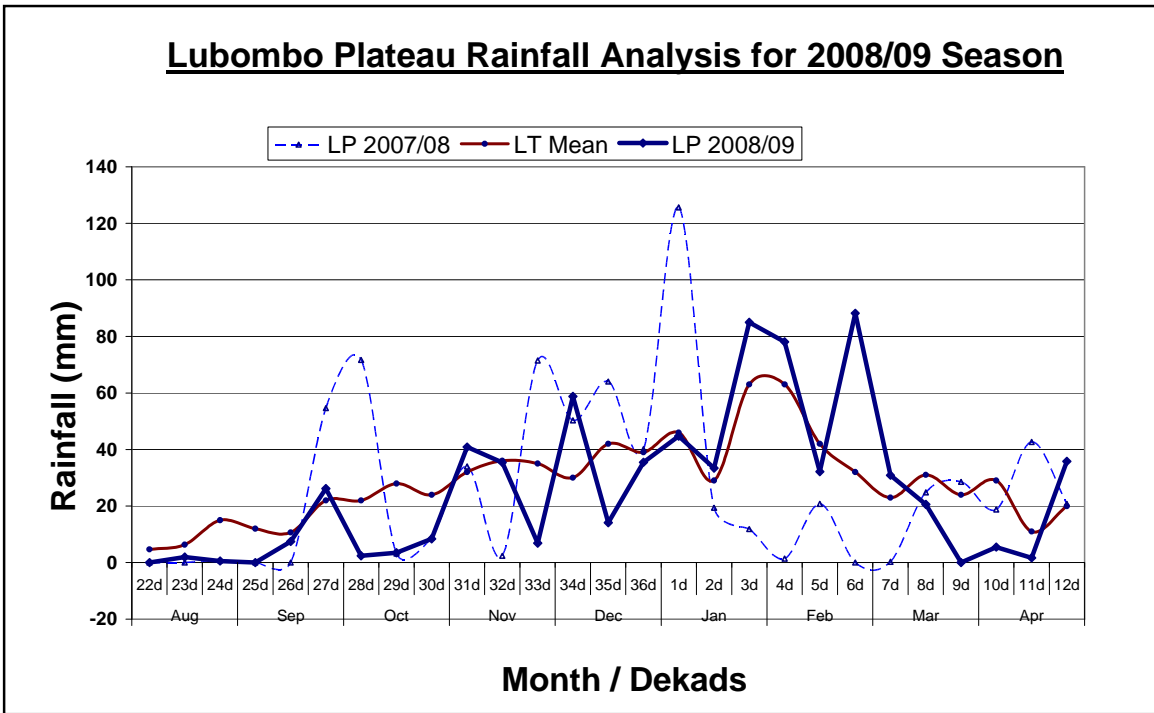


Figure 4: Lubombo Plateau dekadal rainfall for the 2008/09 season as of April 2009

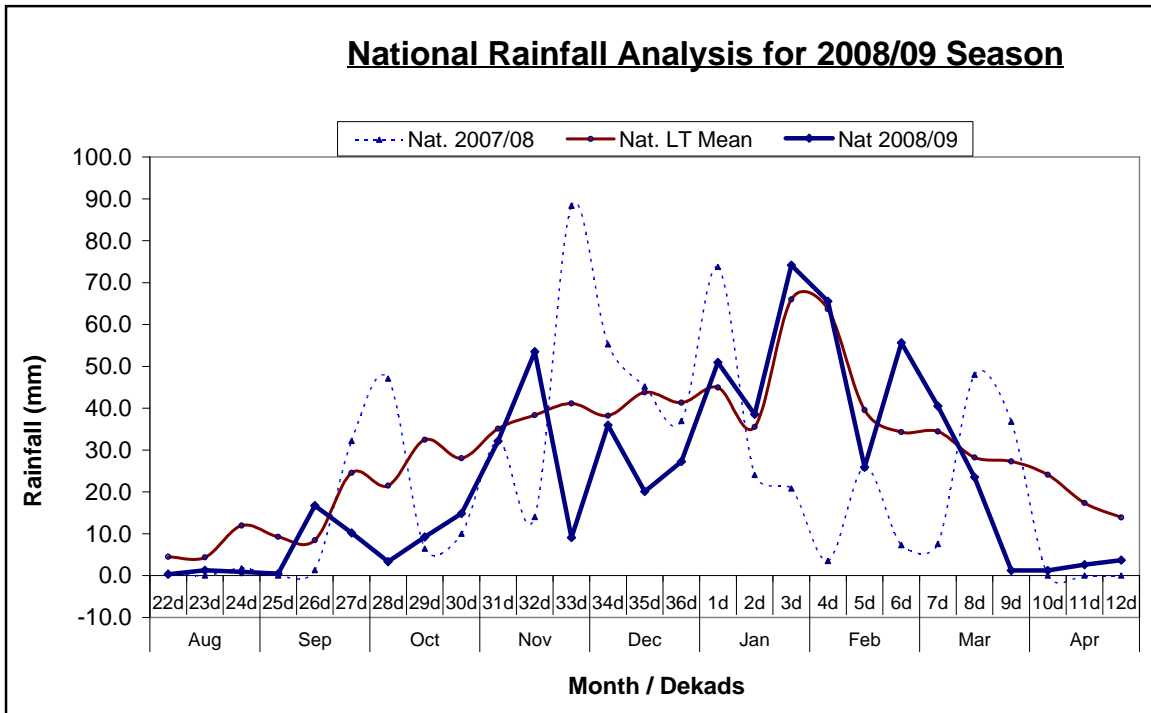


Figure 5: National dekadal rainfall distribution for the 2008/09 season as of April 2009

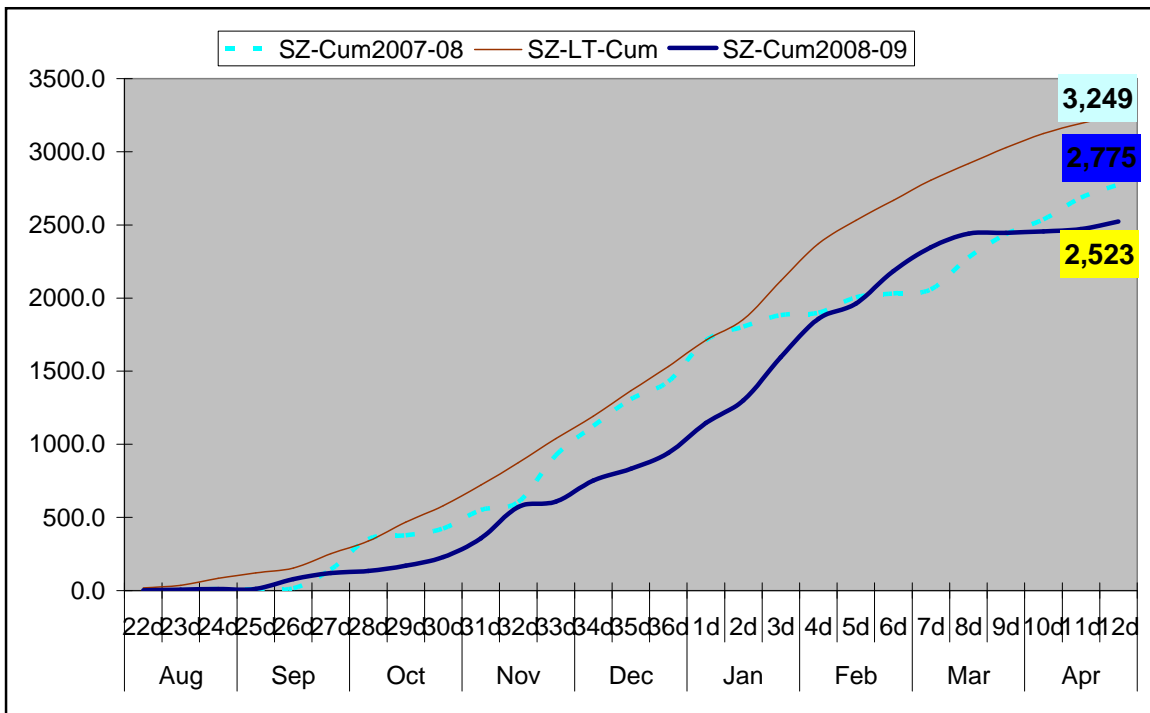


Figure 6: Cumulative rainfall for the 2008/09 season as of April 2009

b.) Vegetation

Vegetation images for the month of March and April 2009 obtained from satellites depict a good to healthy vegetative status (Images 1 and 2 below), save for a few patches in some parts of the Lowveld and a small area in the Highveld around Ngwempisi.

Animal fodder is anticipated to be enough, but not to last the entire winter period, unless we have a wet winter as per the winter forecast contained in this bulletin.

Legend

- ☐ Clouds
- ☐ Water Bodies
- ☐ Bare Soil
- ☐ Almost Bare Soil
- ☐ Initial Vegetation
- ☐ Mode Vegetation
- ☐ Good Vegetation
- ☐ Healthy Vegetation
- ☐ Plantations

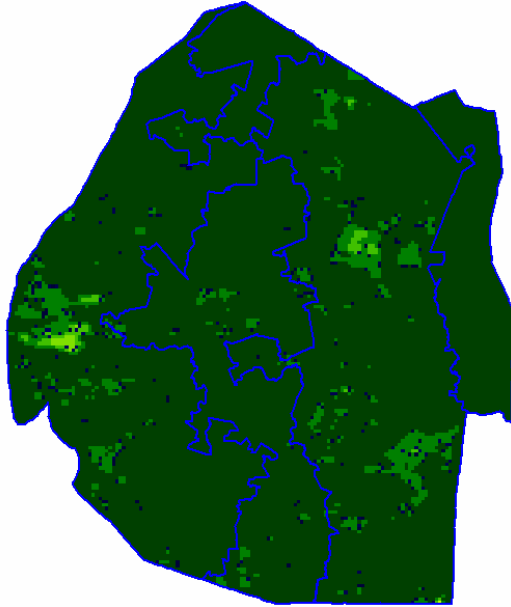


Image 1: 3rd dekad March 2009
Vegetation status

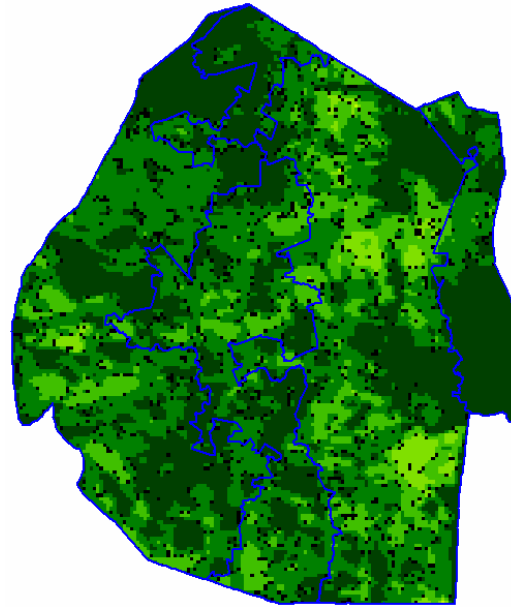


Image 2: 3rd dekad April 2009
Vegetation status

1. Food Security Issues

1.1 Maize crop condition

The prevalent crop stage is grain filling to fully matured; the current farming activity in all the regions is harvesting. An improved harvest is expected compared to the previous season due to improved rainfall patterns.

1.2 Prices

Table 1: Informal Maize Prices According to Agro-Ecological Zones

Agro-Ecological Zone	50kg	70kg
Lowveld	E120 - E190	E200 - E260
Lubombo	n.a	E250
Middleveld	E150 – E200	E250 – E300
Highveld	n.a	E200 – E250

1.3 Cotton Production

The availability of a market and increases in prices has encouraged farmers to engage in cotton farming. Government has now full ownership of the Sikhulile Cotton Ginnery at Big bend. The Ginnery is operational after a period of being idle, this has created a local market for cotton farmers and made it possible to access cotton locally.

An estimated 1600ha is under cotton production mainly in the Lowveld and Middleveld. Currently, the main activities are spraying and weeding. The major varieties used are Delta Opal, Mavolo, CBB 95 and ALBACAL. Government has provided price support, the price schedule is:

Table 2: Cotton prices/kg

	Previous price	Current price
GRADE HA	E2.55	E4.00
GRADE HB	E2.44	E3.80
GRADE HC	E2.27	E3.60
GRADE HD	E2.11	E3.40
BSG	E1.61	E1.80

Source: Cotton Board

1.4 Livestock and grazing

1.4.1 Grazing Areas

The good rain received has improved pasture conditions, pasture conditions range from fair to good.

1.4.2 Livestock

There is an improvement in livestock condition that has been observed. There has been improved water access for both livestock and human consumption; no animals were reported to have died from lack of feed or water. In all the regions there has been no need for supplementary feeding.

1.4.3 Range Management

In view of the good rains there has been optimal grass growth. Farmers are therefore advised to bale grass using such methods as hand baling. As the winter conditions deepen the grass is drying up, therefore the risk of veld fires is slightly higher. Farmers are urged to desist from indiscriminate veld burning; the Ministry of Agriculture should be contacted for advice for when to burn the veld.

Due to the dry conditions the nutrient value of grass is lower; therefore, farmers are advised to feed their animals in conjunction with an energy protein mineral lick (rumevite block). This is available from local feed suppliers. To stimulate feed intake due to low palatability caused by dryness, farmers are advised give their stock molasses mixed with water on a 1:1 proportion. This should be sprinkled over the hay bale.

1.5 Drought Tolerant Crops

The production prospects for drought tolerant crops are reported to be good. The major crops grown are Sorghum, Sweet potatoes, and Cow peas.

FOOD SECURITY SITUATION FOR THE 2009/2010 MARKETING YEAR

ANNUAL CEREAL BALANCE SHEET

As at 1st April 2009

SWAZILAND

ANNUAL CEREAL BALANCE :
2009/10

MARKETING YEAR April - March)

Mid Year Population 1,078,375

Updated May 2009

Thousands of Metric Tons

	Maize	Wheat	Rice	Sorgh/ Millet	All Cereals	Cassava
<u>A. Domestic Availability</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>0</u> -
A.1 Opening Stocks @ 1st April	3	8	0	0	12	0
Formal/SGR	3	8	0	0	11	0
On Farm	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
A.2 Gross Harvest	71	0	0	0	71	0
B. Gross Domestic Requirements	113	39	15	0	163	0
C. Desired SGR Carryover Stocks	2	4	1	0	7	0
<u>D. Domestic Shortfall/Surplus</u>	<u>-40</u>	<u>-33</u>	<u>-15</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>-87</u>	<u>0</u> -
E. Commodity Cross Substitution	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>F. Imports</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>99</u>	<u>0</u> -
F.1 Received	0	0	0	0	0	0
Commercial	0	0	0	0	0	0
Food Aid	0	0	0	0	0	0
F.2 Expected	44	40	15	0	99	0
Commercial	40	40	15	0	95	0
Food Aid	4	0	0	0	4	0
<u>G. Exports</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> -
Commitments Shipped	0	0	0	0	0	0
Commitments Not Yet Shipped	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>H. Import Gap</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> -
<u>I. Forecasted Closing Stock</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>0</u> -
J. Current Stock @ 1st April 2009	0	na	na	n/a	0	0

The production forecast of **70,672T** for 2008/09 is a notable increase from the previous season - **61,995T**. This could be attributed to the wet conditions experienced in the latter part of the planting season (please refer to Agro-meteorological Conditions section). The area planted reported as at February 2009 is **52, 445Ha** which is lower when comparing to that of the previous season which was **60, 355ha**. Several reasons could be put forth for the decline in area planted; one could be the late start of the rainy season, another could be the huge rise in production inputs prices experienced in 2008.

Total cereal requirement is **166 000 T** which is a slight decline from that of the previous season. It comprises of 113 000T maize requirement, 39 000T wheat requirement and 15000T rice requirement. The overall cereal balance projects a domestic shortfall of 90 000T made up of 41 000T maize, 35 000T wheat, and 15 000T rice¹.

¹ Figures may not add up due to rounding off.

2. FOOD SECURITY SITUATION FOR THE 2008/09 MARKETING YEAR

OVERALL CEREAL SUPPLY SITUATION

Table 3: Cereal Supply/Demand in 2008/2009

	Cereal Supply/Demand 2008/09 Year (Figures in '000T)		
	Maize	Wheat	Rice
Opening Stock	3	8	0
Gross Production	62	0	0
Availability	65	8	0
Gross Requirements	117	47	15
Desired stock requirements	2	4	1
Demand	119	51	16
Deficit/Surplus	-54	-43	-16

Table 4: Imports progress in 2008/09

	2008/2009 as at March 2009 (Figures in '000T)		
	Maize	Wheat	Rice
Deficit/Surplus	54	43	16
Planned Imports	44	42	15
Uncovered Gap	10	1	1
Imports Received	41	32	14
Imports Progress (in %)	93	76	93

ANNEX 1 TERMINOLOGY

Total Domestic Cereal Availability: Opening stocks (monitored and unmonitored) plus gross domestic cereal production.

Opening Stocks: Carryover stocks held by marketing agencies, millers, on farm stocks (if available) at the beginning of the marketing year (April 1st).

Gross Domestic Cereal Production: Estimated or forecasted harvested production.

Total cereal Requirements: Gross consumption requirements plus closing stock requirement plus unofficial exports plus official exports commitments.

Consumption Requirements: Aggregated domestic consumption requirements (both food and non-food) over the full marketing year.

Closing Stock: Working stocks plus strategic reserves.

Expected Exports: Forecast level of exports over the marketing year including unofficial exports.

Unofficial Exports: Cross border trade, that is not planned and is unmonitored.

Domestic Shortfall/Surplus: Total domestic availability less total cereal requirements.

Current Import Arrangements: Sum of imports (commercial and food aid) so far received and still expected this year.

Commercial Imports Received: Quantities received by millers and/or marketing boards so far this marketing year.

Commercial Imports Expected: Quantities pledged for delivery in the current marketing year, but not yet received.

Food Aid Received: Quantities received by the World Food Programme, millers and marketing boards so far this marketing year.

Food Aid Expected: Quantities pledged by donors for delivery in the current marketing year, but not yet received.

After-Trade Deficit/ Surplus: Domestic Shortfall/Surplus plus current import arrangements (both commercial and food aid).

Estimated Closing Stock: Projected at the end of marketing year as national cereal stocks on the basis of current import/export arrangements.

Current Stock Level: Stocks of commodities held by marketing agencies, millers, merchants (and/or farmers, if available) at the end of the current reporting period.

ANNEX 2

PARTNERS IN THE NATIONAL EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS FOR FOOD SECURITY

National Meteorology Services (NMS)

Central Statistical Office (CSO)

National Maize Corporation (NMC)

World Food Programme

Ngwane Mills

National Agricultural Marketing Board (NAMBoard)

Chinese Agricultural Mission

Department of Agriculture and Extension (DAE)

Department of Veterinary Livestock Services (DVLS)

Marketing Advisory Unit (MAU)

Home Economics Section (HES)

Grain Storage Section

Swaziland Cotton Board

National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA)

Non Governmental Organisations (NGO's)

FAO

SWAZI VAC

ANNEX 3

Swaziland Winter Seasonal Forecast for 2009

Summary (April – August 2009)

There are increased chances of rainfall in most parts of the country especially during the first half (3 months – May-June-July 2009) of the season and decreasing towards the latter half of the season; July, August, September 2009.

Cooler nocturnal (night) temperatures are expected during the first 3 months of the winter period warming up during the remaining months. Day time temperatures are expected to be mild during the first half of the forecast period and getting warmer during the latter part of the forecast period.

May – June - July (MJJ) 2009

Rainfall

There is a high probability for above normal rainfall during this period of the season, though it is not expected to be heavy rains as this period is usually a dry season in the country.

Minimum (night) Temperatures

There is a high tendency towards below-normal minimum temperatures in most parts of the country during the forecast period, with a small bias towards normal conditions in the south western parts.

Maximum (day) Temperatures

Above-normal maximum temperatures are forecasted for this period with an insignificant bias towards below normal temperatures.

July – August – September (JAS) 2009

Rainfall

There is an increased probability of near normal rainfall during this period with a slight bias towards below normal rainfall in most parts of the country.

Minimum (night) Temperatures

Above-normal minimum temperatures are more likely to be recorded in most of the southern parts (Shiselweni, parts of Lubombo and Manzini) of the country, with a bias towards above normal temperatures in the other parts of the country.

Maximum (day) Temperatures

Much above-normal temperatures will be recorded in most weather stations countrywide during the forecast period.

Updates and more information

Updates to this forecast will be provided on a quarterly basis in a moving three month-period. This forecast serves to assist medium – to – long term planning, whereas daily weather forecasts should be used for short term purposes. Temperature extremes are not harmonized in this forecast, thus it is highly likely that cold spells and heat spells can occur on a day-to-day basis, but on average the forecasted conditions are expected to prevail over the forecast period.