

LESOTHO METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES

(LEKALA LA TSA BOLEPI)

Agrometeorological Update

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Highlights

- Above normal rainfall across the country
- Below average maximum temperatures and above average minimum temperatures
- Poor Rangelands
- Fields slowly cultivated

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MOISTURE AND HEAT STATUS

Rainfall situation

There was a slow start in agricultural activities (cultivation) owing to prolonged dry spell prior to planting even going into September which is the starting of the planting season in the highlands. There onset of rains on the 01st October which is the first dekad of October was timely for planting activities in the lowlands.

First dekad of October resumed with good significant rains which fell from the 01st in most areas. The recorded rains were above normal for the period and also more than that of last year at the same period. August and September had been very dry with only a few drops in the last dekad of September. (See Figure 1 below).

Map1: Dekadal Rainfall for 1st dekad of October, 2017

The whole country recorded above normal rainfall, with excess rainfall ranging from 52% at Botha-Bothe to 617% at Qacha’s Nek. (See Map2 below).

National Rainfall distribution

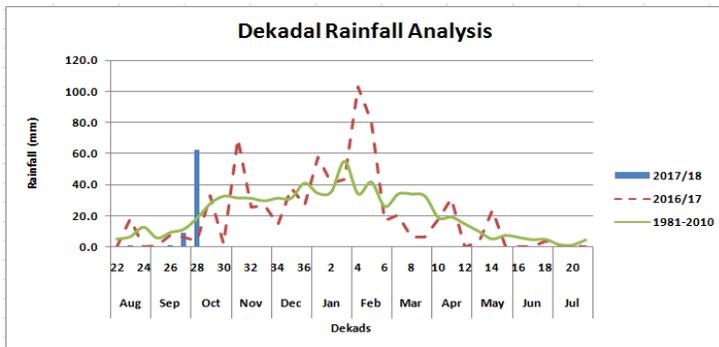


Figure 1: Seasonal Rainfall Distribution as of 1st Dekad, August - October 2017

The southern lowlands (Mohale’s Hoek) and highlands (Qacha’s Nek) recorded highest rainfall 97mm and 124.2mm respectively. The northern lowlands (Leribe & Butha-Buthe) and central highlands (Thaba-Tseka) received the lowest rainfall ranging from 37.1mm to 45.8mm. (See Map1 Below).



Map 2: Percentage Departure from Normal Rainfall for 01 August – 10 October 2017

Temperatures

Maximum Temperature

The Lowlands, Mountains and Foothills all recorded below normal maximum temperatures over the entire dekad (See Figure 2 below).

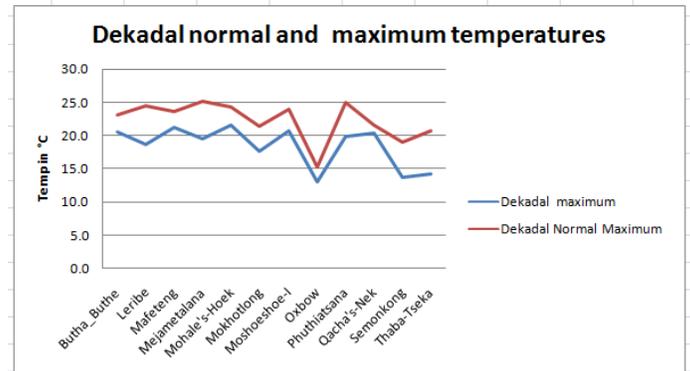
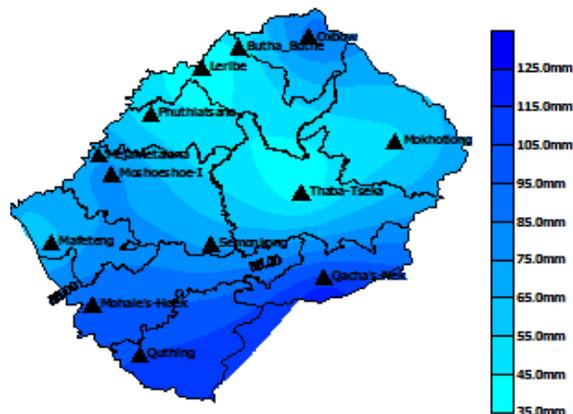


Figure 2: Maximum Temperatures during 01 -10 October 2017

Minimum Temperature

Botha-Bothe, Leribe and Mafeteng recorded above normal minimum temperatures while Mohale’s Hoek and Thaba-

Tseka recorded below with the rest recording normal minimum temperature (*See Figure 3 Below*).

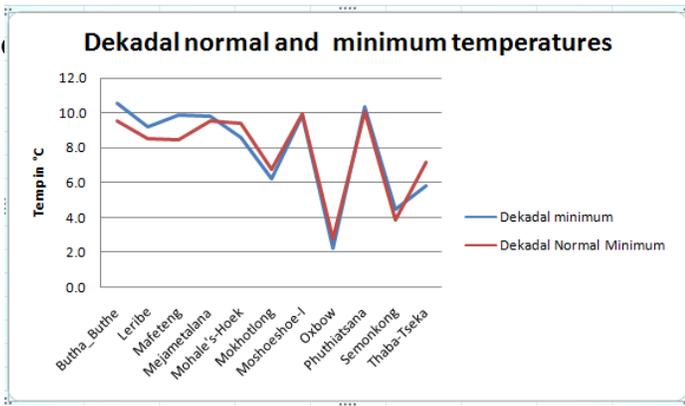


Figure 3: Minimum Temperatures during 01 -10 October 2017

RAINFALL OUTLOOK FOR 11TH – 21ST OCTOBER 2017

Dry conditions will prevail over almost the entire dekad with a signal of light showers (20% chance) over the northern parts of Buttha-Buthe at the end of the dekad on the 21st. Cold conditions and sometimes windy conditions may be experienced at times especially with a frequent passage of cold fronts around this transition period.

CROP STAGE AND CONDITIONS

Mountains

Maize Crop Stage and Condition

Farmers who were not waiting for the onset of rains were already but slowly starting to plant maize

Lowlands

Maize is slowly being planted.

RANGELAND CONDITIONS

Rangelands are poor due to the dry spell that prevailed.

SOIL MOISTURE

Soil moisture has improved after good rains that fell in the beginning of the month.

