



MONTHLY AGRO-METEOROLOGICAL BULLETIN

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OVERVIEW OF CONDITIONS FOR JANUARY

Dominica experienced normal rainfall amounts across the island during the month of January. The Atlantic High Pressure System which pushed patches of low level clouds across the area and weak unstable conditions generated by southward dipping of frontal boundaries both contributed to the monthly rainfall total.

DAILY RAINFALL FOR JANUARY 2017

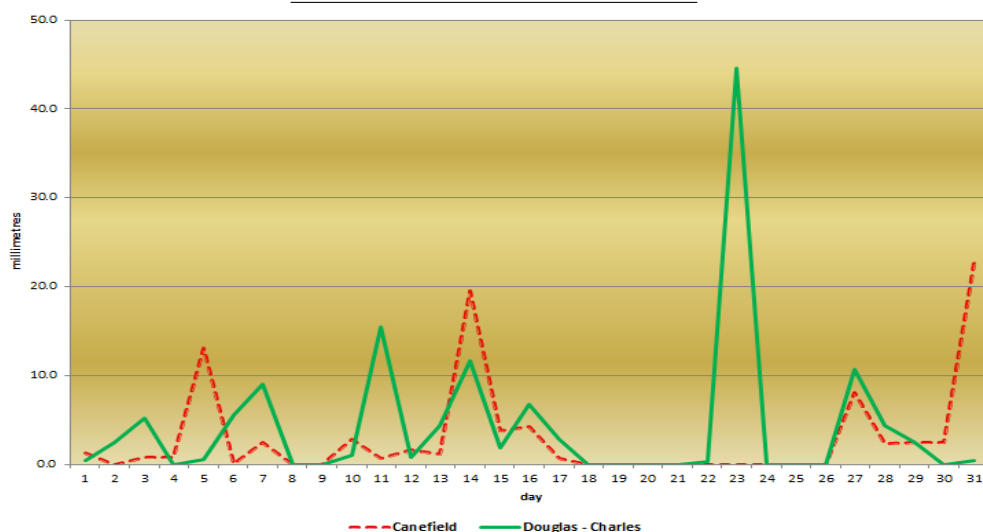


Figure 1 Daily rainfall at Canefield and Douglas-Charles Airports

SUMMARY FOR JANUARY 2017

Parameter (January 2017)	Canefield Airport	Douglas-Charles Airport
Rainfall Total	90.8mm (normal)	130.7mm (normal)
Normal	81.6 to 138.2mm	97.0 to 153.9mm
Wettest day	31st (22.6mm)	23rd (44.6mm)
Wet Days (≥ 1.0 mm)	14 days	15 days
Temperature	26.3°C	26.0°C
30 year average	26.4°C	26.1°C
Maximum Temperature	31.9°C (5th, 27th)	29.8°C (6th)
Minimum Temperature	18.8°C (13th)	18.5°C (22nd)
Relative Humidity	67%	75%
Maximum wind gust	67km/h (2nd)	63km/h (16th, 29th)
Average daily sunshine hours	-	6hrs 54mins
Normal		6hrs 36mins

Table 1 January 2017 weather parameters

DOMINICA'S CLIMATE

Rainfall received during the dry season are usually generated by the annual migration of the North Atlantic Subtropical High, low level clouds which move with the easterly trade winds, southward dipping of frontal boundaries and trough systems. The dry season runs from December to May when the seas are cooler and thunderstorms and rainfall activity are relatively low. On average approximately 40% of the annual rainfall is recorded in elevated and eastern areas and approximately 25% along the western coast.

IN THIS ISSUE

- Pg.1 January's Weather Summary
Dominica's Climate
- Pg.2 Farming Community Report
- Pg.3 Seasonal Outlook
- Pg.4 Farming Outlook

- Farmers continued the establishment of vegetables both by the open field and protected production methods. Prevailing weather conditions have resulted in a decline in production of certain vegetables like tomatoes. White yam establishments have begun decreasing because many farmers at lower elevations are moving to Ladies yam and other varieties which can withstand the expected dryer conditions.
- Root crops, pineapples and vegetables are the main crops currently being established. The main crops harvested for the month were: dasheen, yams, ginger, and string beans. Citrus is on the decline. The passionfruit season is now closing and the late avocado crops are being harvested.



- Farmers wishing to establish Irish potatoes for this planting season are informed of the availability of seeds and can now be purchased. An Irish potato Farmer's Field School is being conducted for farmers in the Central Agriculture Regions.
- The Ministry of Agriculture through the Banana Accompanying Measures (BAM) office has made available Agricultural equipment, machinery and tools to the farming community for use in land preparation such as ploughing, tilling and furrowing.

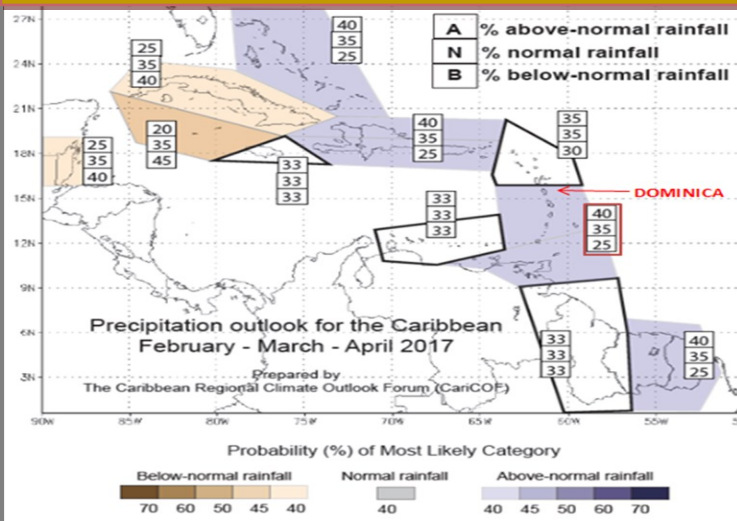


- The construction of a storage tank on the West coast is currently being undertaken and could bring much relief to farmers especially during the dry season. Some feeder roads like "Gros Genie" in Warner is currently being rehabilitated.
- There were reports of pest problems in vegetables for the month. Mite and Aphid infestations were observed. A farmer reported the loss of almost all his cucumber crops to ants. The Scale Insect infestation levels are on the decline as natural enemies are being released.
- The Giant African Snail Program experienced some setbacks due to the lack of slug baits. However, Quarantine Officers conducted manual collection of snails. The population and spread of the snail is of concern to officers.
- The Black Sigatoka Disease is showing increase signs of infestation in areas experiencing high rainfall and moisture levels.

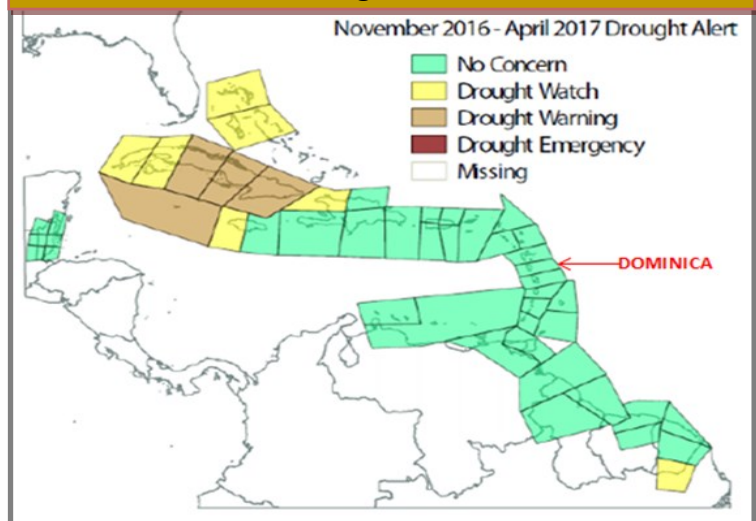


REGIONAL OVERVIEW ON SEASONAL FORECASTS FOR FEBRUARY-MARCH-APRIL 2017

Rainfall Outlook



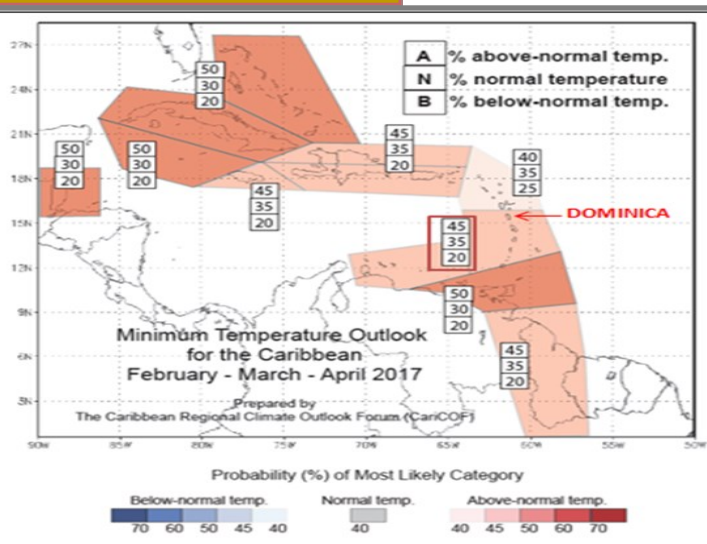
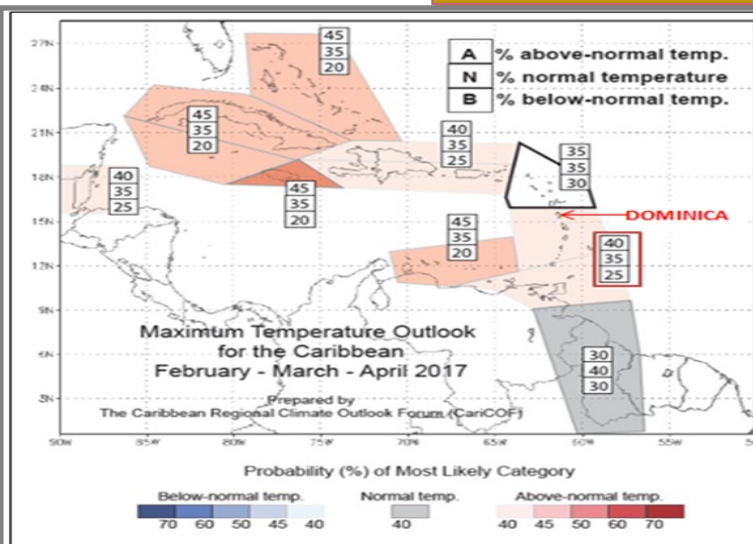
Drought Alert



Forecast:

- ⇒ Slightly above to normal rainfall totals can be expected for the season February to April 2017.
- ⇒ There is a 40% chance for above normal rainfall; 35% chance normal and a 25% chance for below normal.
- ⇒ The forecast indicated little change from the usual number of wet days (forecast range: 20 to 59 days), with a small increase from the usual amount of 7-day wet spells (forecast range: 0.1 to 2.9). The chances for 3-day extreme wet spells are low.
- ⇒ There are no drought concerns for Dominica for the season.
- ⇒ There may be a delay to the buildup of the usual dry season impacts on water availability.

Temperature Outlook



Temperatures across the Caribbean are forecast to rise but gradually become uncomfortable beyond April, with the chance of heat waves appearing in May and June for many. (Maximum temperature normal range: 28-30°C) (Mean temperature normal range: 25-27°C) (Minimum temperature normal range: 22-23°C)

Probability :

Maximum/ day-time temperature: 40% chance of above normal; 35% chance normal; 25% chance of below normal

Mean temperature: 50% chance of above normal; 30% chance normal; 20% chance of below normal.

Minimum/ night-time temperature: 45% chance of above normal; 35% chance normal; 20% chance of below normal.

CLIMATE SUMMARY FOR FEBRUARY

Parameter	Canefield Airport	Douglas-Charles Air-
Rainfall normal	45.8 to 81.7mm	77.2 to 106.7mm
-highest total	131.5mm (1982)	196.6mm (1989)
-lowest total	0.4mm (2010)	4.2mm (2010)
Temperature	26.4°C	25.9°C
-maximum	32.5°C (2010)	31.9°C (1998)
-minimum	18.0°C (2008)	17.0°C (1988))
Chance of 5 day dry spell	97%	40%
Chance of 10 day dry spell	37%	17%

Table 2 climate summary for February

FARMER'S OUTLOOK

- ◆ For the upcoming month, with rainfall projected to be above to normal, farmers are advised to keep their drains cleared.
- ◆ Ensure water storage containers are filled and properly secured and covered to prevent mosquito breeding.
- ◆ Farmers establishing their crops at this time need to ensure that plants receive adequate water as we approach the core of the dry season.
- ◆ Livestock farmers must ensure that their animals are properly protected from prevailing weather conditions.
- ◆ Farmers should remain vigilant in the fight against pest and disease.
- ◆ Farmers need to make certain that application of bait for slugs and snails are done. Slugs and snails reproduce quickly in areas favourable for their development. They can be very destructive as they crawl along the ground munching anything digestible, from decomposing plants to dead

- ◆ animals. They feed on tender young plants, bits of compost, fungi and all sorts of rotting matter. They even feed on paper and cardboard! Some species can live up to 5 years. Most slugs evolve from snails, losing all or part of their shell over time.



- ◆ Irish potato farmers should take note of the following as they are about to establish their crop. One of the diseases which affect the crop is late blight disease. Late blight causes the death of the potato vines and decay of the tubers resulting in a total loss of the crop.



- ◆ Potatoes grow best in deep to moderately deep, loose and well-drained soils. The soil should have a pH of 5.5 to 6.5. The best method to determine lime and fertilizer requirements is by soil testing. Some factors to consider in the fertility program are the method of fertilizer application, crop use, variety, length of the growing season and manure applications. Excess nitrogen fertilization delays maturity, while excess potassium greatly hinders the uptake of magnesium and reduces the firmness of the potato.

MOON PHASES

 FQ:04th
  FM:11th
  LQ:18th
  NM:26th

Agromet bulletins from across the region can be accessed via <http://rcc.cimh.edu.bb/climate-bulletins/agriculture/>

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