



MONTHLY AGRO-METEOROLOGICAL BULLETIN

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OVERVIEW OF WEATHER CONDITIONS FOR SEPTEMBER 2012

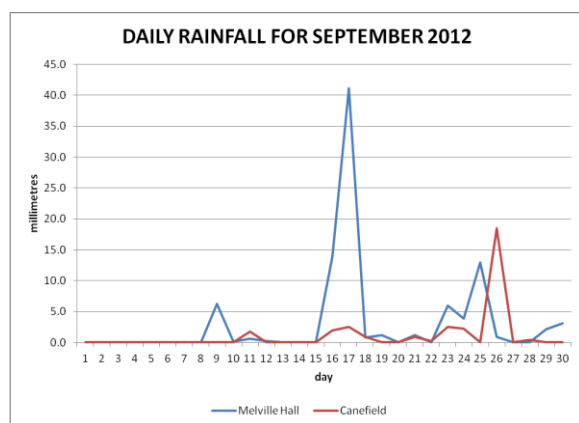


Figure 1: Daily Rainfall at Canefield and Melville-Hall Airports

This September, a record low rainfall amount was measured at both the Canefield and Melville Hall Airports. On average it is the wettest month at Canefield and thus far it is the driest for 2012.

31.9mm of rainfall was recorded at Canefield and represents approximately 13% of the monthly mean. The maximum daily total was 18.5mm recorded on the 26th as a low-level trough affected our area. There were 24 dry days with a maximum dry spell length of 10 days from the 1st to the 10th. On average there are 13 dry days at Canefield.

At Melville Hall, 94.3mm of rainfall was recorded which is approximately 30% of the monthly mean. The maximum daily total was 41.1mm recorded on the 17th as a result of a tropical wave affecting the area. 20 dry days

were recorded throughout the month which is twice the average amount. A maximum dry spell length of 8 days occurred during the first 10 days. The maximum temperature of 34.3°C was also a record high for September at Melville Hall.

Not much planting took place on farms around the island this month due to the dry conditions. Those who did faced losses as either germination did not occur or young plants wilted in areas with poor irrigation practices. The fight against *black sigatoka*, red palm mite, Giant African snails and citrus greening continues.

Parameter	Canefield Airport	Melville-Hall Airport
Rainfall Total	31.9mm	94.3mm
Normal	253.7mm	319.1mm
No. Rainfall days (>1.0mm)	6	10
Average Temperature	29.4°C	28.9°C
Normal	28.7°C	28.6°C
Maximum Temperature	34.3°C (3 rd)	34.3°C (2 nd)
Minimum Temperature	22.0°C (14 th)	22.1°C (14 th)
Relative Humidity	66%	75%
Maximum wind gust	35km/h	48km/h

Table 1: Monthly Weather Parameters

CLIMATE SUMMARY FOR OCTOBER

Canefield Airport:

Normally, 188.2mm/ 7.41in of rainfall and about 16 rainfall days are recorded. The highest rainfall total recorded for October was 439.1mm/ 17.29in in 1985 and the lowest was 27.6mm/ 1.09in in 1992. Average daily

temperature is 25.7°C with an average maximum of 33.3°C and an average minimum of 22.3°C.

Melville-Hall Airport:

Normally, 319.8mm/ 12.59in of rainfall are recorded and about 22 rainfall days. The highest rainfall total recorded for October was 644.9mm/ 25.39in in 1998 and the lowest total was 94.2mm/ 3.71in in 1991. Average daily temperature is 28.2°C with an average maximum of 31.8°C and an average minimum of 21.5°C.

REGIONAL OVERVIEW ON SEASONAL CLIMATE FORECASTS

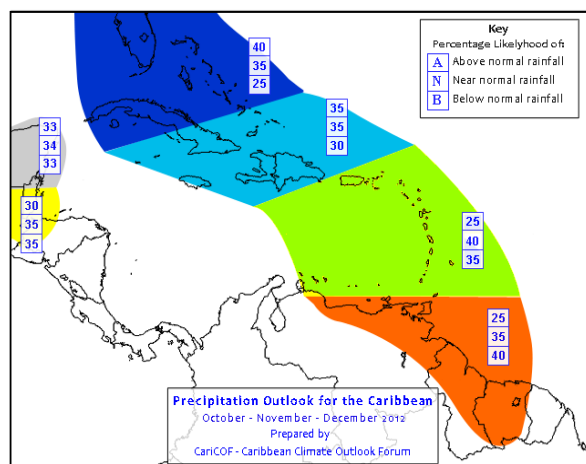


Figure 2: Precipitation outlook for the Caribbean: October-November-December 2012

- Consistent with typical El Nino conditions, the trend of normal to below normal rainfall is likely to continue in the period October-November-December in Dominica.

There is a 25% chance that rainfall total will be above normal, a 40% chance of being near normal and a 35% chance of being below normal.

- Currently sea and ambient temperatures hover around average.

OUTLOOK FOR THE FARMING COMMUNITY

With models indicating normal to below normal rainfall amount, soil moisture conservation methods such as mulching are being encouraged along with the harvesting of rainwater during rainfall events and the setting up of irrigation management systems. Vegetable farmers especially should be mindful. Livestock farmers should lookout for heat stress in animals and should keep the animals watered regularly and sheltered in order to avoid this.

There has been an outbreak of a complex pest disease in dasheen plants and farmers are asked to be vigilant for signs of infection. The incidence of the outbreak is being investigated by the Division of Agriculture.

The surveillance of pests such as red palm mite, Giant African snail and citrus greening should continue. As part of the Division's strategy against citrus greening, the natural enemies for the vector of the disease have been released into the environment.

Continue to develop good agricultural practices for the upkeep of farms.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rainfall this period is largely dependent on the strength and persistence of El Nino and somewhat warmer sea surface temperature. The online discussion on issues related to weather and climate influences on agriculture in the Caribbean can be accessed via <http://mail2.cimh.edu.bb/camionlineforum/>. Feedback is welcome from farmers and the wider agricultural community on this bulletin.

Moon Phases: ● NM: Oct 15th ● FQ: Oct 22nd ● FM: Oct 29th ● LQ: Nov 7th

This bulletin is prepared by the Dominica Meteorological Service with support from the CAMI project and the Ministry of Agriculture. Feedback on this bulletin should be forwarded to The Senior Meteorological Officer at metoffice@cwdom.dm Tele: 767 445 7878, 767 449 1990. Website: www.weather.gov.dm Hotline: 447 5555