



MONTHLY AGRO-METEOROLOGICAL BULLETIN

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OVERVIEW OF CONDITIONS FOR MARCH 2013

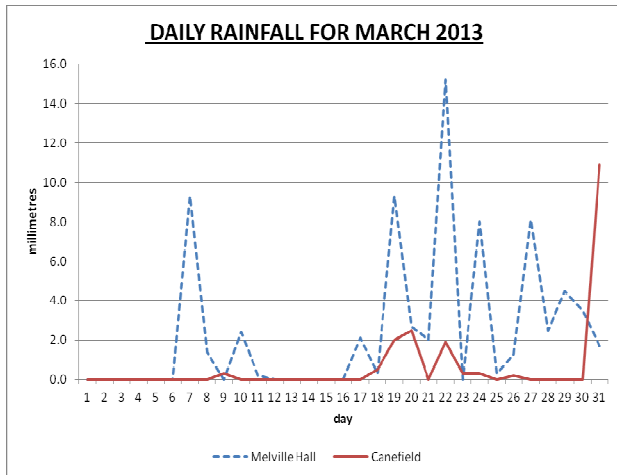


Figure 1: Daily Rainfall at Canefield and Melville-Hall Airports

18.9mm or about 39% of the normal March rainfall was recorded at Canefield. There were a total of 27 dry days which is above the mean. An 18 day dry spell was recorded during the beginning of the month resulting in a 27 day dry spell length continuing from February. An 8 day dry spell towards the end of March was broken on the 31st when the maximum monthly rainfall total of 10.9mm was recorded. The average air temperature of 27.4°C is 0.5° above the monthly mean.

74.8mm of rainfall was recorded at Melville Hall which is about 66% of the mean. The maximum rainfall amount was 15.2mm recorded on the 22nd. There were 16 dry days which is normal for March. A similar pattern with a 6 day dry spell occurring at the beginning of the month resulting in a 13 day dry spell from February. A 5 day spell was recorded during the middle of the month. The average air temperature was 26.6°C which is 0.2° above the monthly mean. Total sunshine hours recorded was above the monthly average.

The drought conditions resulted in bush fires particularly along the west and south-west areas. Farmers who had established crops experienced low production as crops got burnt and wilted. Others chose not to plant as they waited for the rains.

Parameter	Canefield Airport	Melville-Hall Airport
Rainfall Total	18.9mm	74.8mm
30 year average	49.0mm	112.8mm
No. of dry days (<1.0mm)	27	16
Temperature	27.4°C	26.6°C
30 year average	26.9°C	26.4°C
Maximum Temperature	32.6°C (27 th)	30.4°C (30 th)
Minimum Temperature	19.1°C (4 th)	17.6°C (14 th)
Relative Humidity	60%	70%
Maximum wind gust	48km/h	41km/h

Table 1: Monthly Weather Parameters

CLIMATE SUMMARY FOR APRIL

Parameter	Canefield Airport	Melville Hall Airport
Rainfall	54.8mm	171.8mm
-highest total	162.1mm (2003)	772.9mm (1981)
-lowest total	3.5mm (1983)	18.8mm (1997)
Temperature	27.9°C	27.2°C
-maximum	34.8°C (2005)	33.1°C (2005)
-minimum	18.6°C (2009)	18.0°C (1985)
Chance of 5 day dry spell	97%	67%
Chance of 10 day dry spell	66%	23%

Table 2: Climate summary for March

REGIONAL OVERVIEW ON SEASONAL CLIMATE FORECASTS

- Rainfall is forecast to be normal to above normal for April to June 2013.
- 45% chance that rainfall total will be above normal, a 30% chance of being near normal and a 25% chance of being below normal.
- Air temperatures are likely to be above normal and may increase surface evaporation.

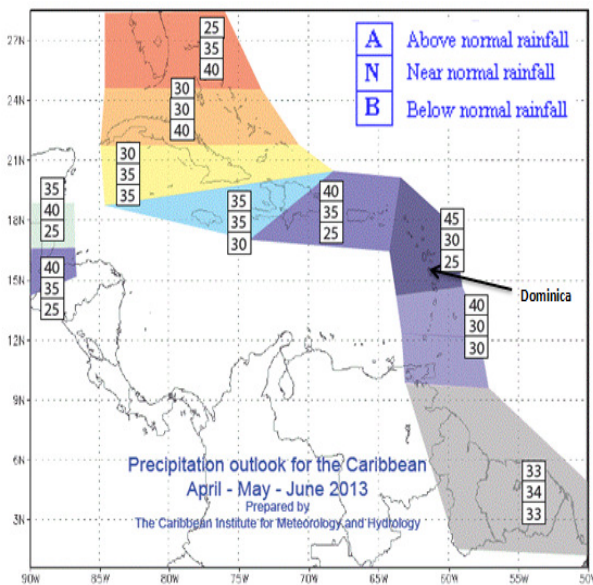


Figure 2: Precipitation outlook for the Caribbean: April-May-June 2013 (colored areas represent sub-regions in which the probabilities fall).

OUTLOOK FOR THE FARMING COMMUNITY

With models hinting at normal rainfall for April and above normal rainfall in the next 3 months, farmers are encouraged to prepare their farms for planting.

Towards the end of April as we transition into the rainy season productivity of farms should increase. The potential of agricultural productivity is related to the periods when the water needs of crops in their various stages of growth are matched by the amount of water that is available.

However, considering the probabilities of at least 5 day dry spell especially on the western coast of the island, farmers are encouraged to continue using water wisely and to stock up on water for irrigation purposes in the event of these dry spells. Additionally, farmers may undertake various mulching practices and the use of compost material to preserve soil moisture

Farmers need to remain vigilant for the infestation of snails and slugs as soil moisture increases. Reduction in the losses caused by pests and diseases by timely and effective control measures will considerably increase farm productivity. These include:

- manual removal of larvae and pupae
- the use of traps
- pesticide application

BE ADVISED:

Pesticides should be applied only when it is absolutely essential.

Recommendations on dosage and dilution rates and all safety measures for application should be followed.

Spray the approved insecticide, so that the minimum safe period (pre harvest interval) is always maintained.

Do not use pesticides which have expired.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Three-day forecasts can be found on the Met Office website and Facebook page. Like the Facebook page, Dominica MET, for updated information wherever you are. Agromet bulletins from across the region can be accessed via <http://63.175.159.26/~cimh/cami/>.

Moon Phases: ● NM: Apr 10 ● FQ: Apr 18 ● FM: Apr 25 ● LQ: May 2

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