



MONTHLY AGRO-METEOROLOGICAL BULLETIN

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OVERVIEW OF CONDITIONS FOR MARCH

Normal to moderately wet conditions were experienced in Dominica for March 2016. The Atlantic High Pressure System dominated the weather conditions during the month. Weak unstable conditions generated by trough systems and a frontal boundary contributed to most of the monthly rainfall totals.

Canefield Airport: Above normal rainfall total was recorded at the Canefield Airport. A total of 116.4mm was recorded for the month. The highest daily rainfall total of 20.0mm was recorded on the 12th. There were 20 rainfall days and that is 10 days above the normal with no significant dry spell.

Douglas-Charles: Above normal rainfall total was recorded at the Douglas-Charles Airport. A total of 224.1mm was recorded for the month. The highest daily total was 44.0mm and was recorded on the 3rd. There were 22 rainfall days (7 days above normal) with no significant dry spell.

Parameter	Canefield Airport	Douglas-Charles Airport
Rainfall Total normal	116.4mm 31.6 to 56.0mm	224.1mm 74.2 to 130.3mm
Wet Days ($\geq 1.0\text{mm}$)	20 (above normal)	22 (above normal)
Temperature 30 year average	26.8°C 26.9°C	26.3°C 26.4°C
Maximum Temperature	32.0°C (17th)	29.8°C (20th)
Minimum Temperature	20.0°C (12th)	20.0°C (8th)
Relative Humidity	68%	77%
Maximum wind gust	59km/h	61km/h
Average daily sunshine hours	-	6hrs 36mins

Table 1 Monthly weather parameters

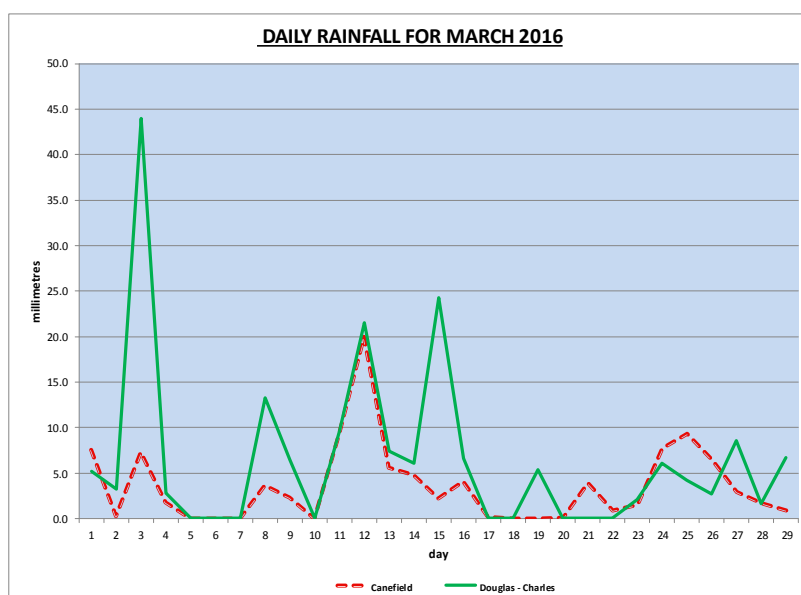


Figure 1 Daily Rainfall At Canefield and Douglas-Charles Airport

FARMING COMMUNITY

For the month of March the weather was wet in most of the agricultural regions with exception of the west coast which was relatively normal. March is usually a dry month in the agricultural communities however, all farmers interviewed mentioned that they received a lot of rain for the period.

Irish potato farmers have started harvesting their crops. There were different reviews on the performance of the crop. Some farmers have expressed their disappointment as a result of the poor performance of the crop, the problems of pest and disease, the low yields, die back of plants and different varietal characteristic of the crop. Other farmers expressed delight by the yield stating that the sizes of potatoes were good.



Irish potato crop (photo courtesy Division of Agriculture website)

Vegetable production has seen a slight increase for the past months. Root, banana and plantain crop farmers also took advantage of the weather and production of these crops are on the increase. Tree and fruit crop productions have been low for the period.



There was an occurrence of strong winds during the month which caused damages to young flowers and leaves of plants.

REGIONAL OVERVIEW ON SEASONAL FORECASTS

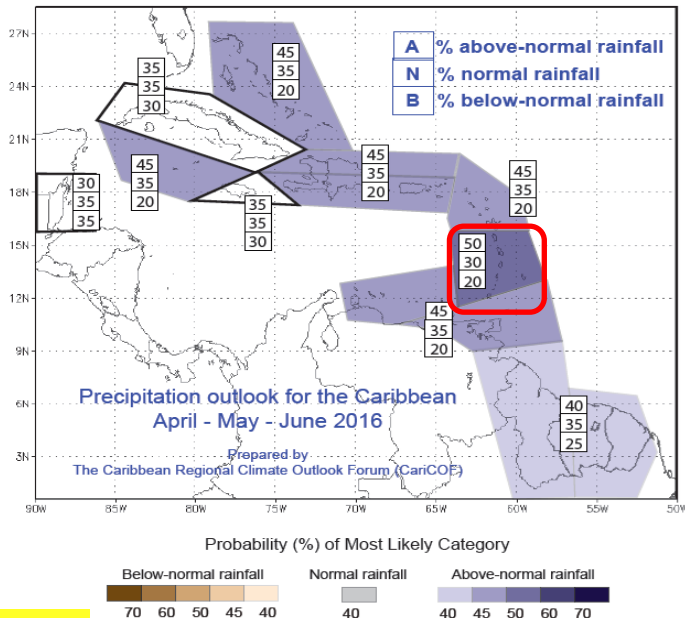


Fig. 2

Above to normal rainfall totals are expected for Dominica for the period April to June 2016.

Probability: 50 % chance of above normal, 30% chance normal and 20% chance of below normal. (Fig 2)

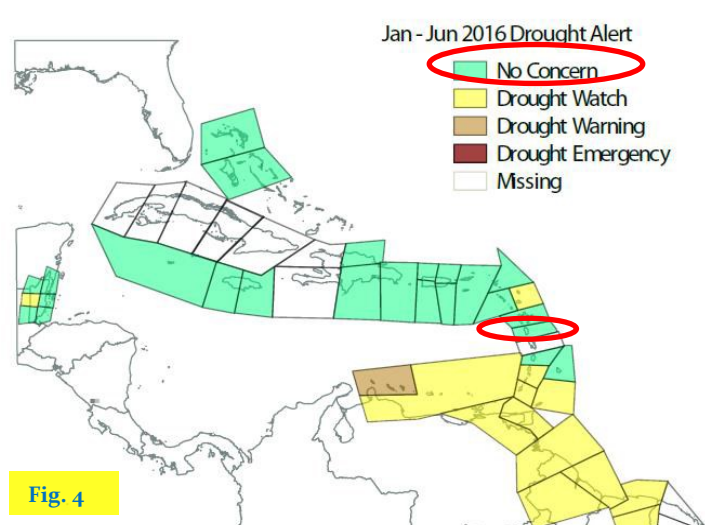


Fig. 4

There are no drought concerns for Dominica for the period April to June 2016. The wet season may start up to one month earlier than usual. There are the odds of increased flash flood potential. (Fig 4)

AMJ 2016 7 day Wet Spell Freq Shift

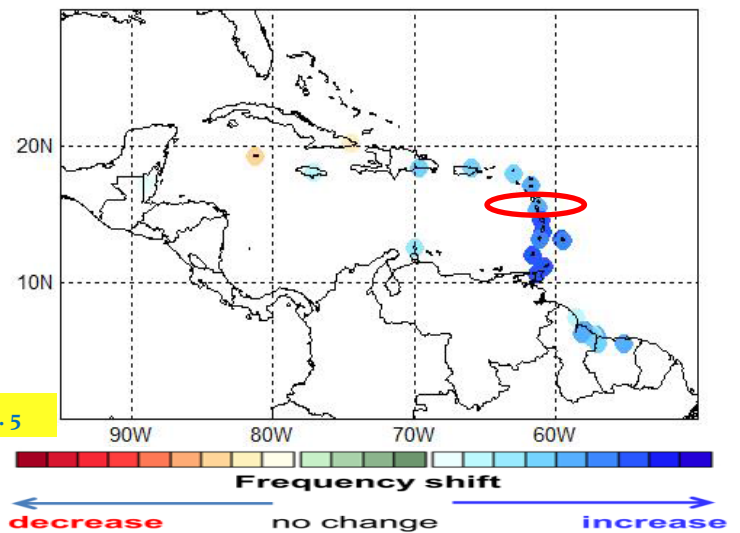


Fig. 5

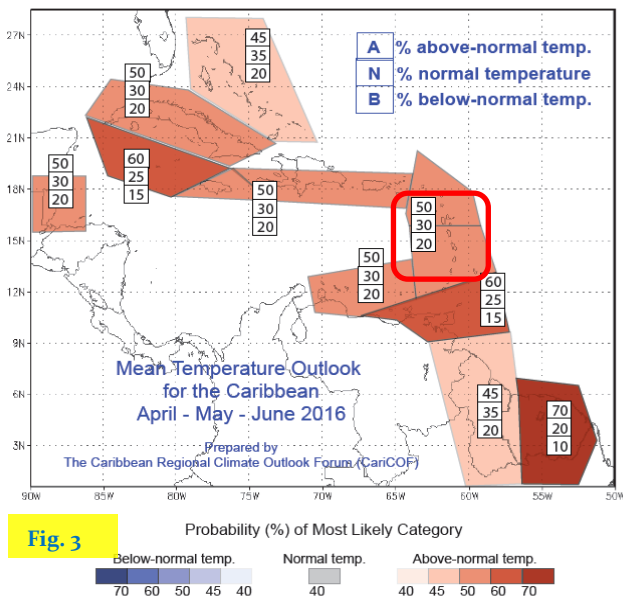


Fig. 3

Air temperatures are expected to be above to normal . Probability: 50 % chance of above normal, 30% chance normal and 20% chance of below normal. (Fig.3)

Forecast and Implications:

- Many wet days: (**wet days $\geq 1.0\text{mm}$**) more frequent disruptions of outdoor activities and decreasing surface dryness.
- Several wet spells: effective recharge of water reservoirs expected, especially in May & June.
- Up to 2 extremely wet spells in May & June: growing flash flood potential, especially in May & June. (Fig.5)

CLIMATE SUMMARY FOR APRIL

Parameter	Canefield Airport	Douglas-Charles Airport
Rainfall normal	30.1 to 58.2mm	92.2 to 162.9mm
-highest total	203.6mm (2013)	772.9mm (1981)
-lowest total	3.5mm (1983)	18.8mm (1997)
Temperature	27.9C	27.2°C
-maximum	34.8°C (2005)	33.1C (2005)
-minimum	18.6°C (2009)	18.0°C (1985)
Chance of 5 day dry spell	97%	67%
Chance of 10 day dry spell	67%	23%

● NM:
 7th
 ● FQ:
 14th
 ○ FM:
 22nd
 ● LQ:
 30th

FARMER'S OUTLOOK

Farmers are encouraged to take advantage of the return of rains. They can invest in water storage facilities. The West Coast Credit Union Corporative has set up a special facility for farmers who are willing to invest in water systems for their farms. This is a most noble gesture by the private sector in addressing the agro-meteorological concerns of our farmers on the west coast.



Water Storage Facility



Harvesting Irish Potatoes

Irish potato farmers are to be mindful that in the harvest season special care and timing must be in place for the tubers. With the rains, the harvest and post-harvest of the crop should be taken into consideration. The post-harvest treatment of the Irish potato is available on the Division of Agriculture website.

Agromet bulletins from across the region can be accessed via http://rcc.cimh.edu.bb/climate-bulletins/agriculture/http://63.175.159.26/cami/regional_bulletin.html.

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 metoffice@cwdom.dm or aictudaa@gmail.com. Tele: 767 4457878, 767 449 1990. Website: www.weather.gov.dm; Hotline: 4475555