



MONTHLY AGRO-METEOROLOGICAL BULLETIN

OVERVIEW OF CONDITIONS FOR DECEMBER 2012

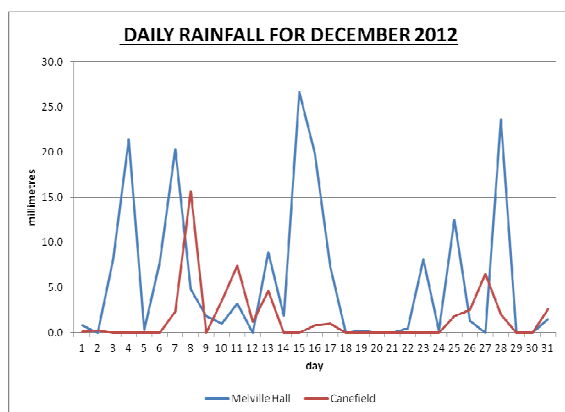


Figure 1: Daily Rainfall at Canefield and Melville-Hall Airports

During the month 52.2mm of rainfall was recorded at Canefield. The maximum daily total was 15.7mm recorded on the 8th. There were 19 dry days with the maximum dry spell length being 7days. The averaged air temperature was 27.4°C which is 0.5° greater than the monthly mean.

182.2mm of rainfall was recorded at Melville Hall. The maximum daily total was 26.7mm recorded on the 15th. There were 13 dry days and a maximum dry spell length of 5 days. The averaged air temperature was 26.5°C which is 0.2° below the monthly mean

A ridge of high pressure generated moderate trade winds throughout the month which resulted in flight interruptions at the Canefield Airport on certain days. These breezy conditions were even stronger on the northern and

eastern coasts. This would have increased the rate of evapotranspiration resulting in water stress in plants and created a favourable condition for the dispersal of *black sigatoka* spores. There were reports of root crops being burnt by sea spray, of tree crops and vegetables being battered by high winds and stripped off their leaves while some plantain and banana plants were uprooted. The west coast was reported to be dry which resulted in a reduction in production even on irrigated farms. Crops grown in greenhouses or covered with netting were spared. The dry conditions pushed some farmers to cultivate alternate crops such as pumpkin.

Parameter	Canefield Airport	Melville-Hall Airport
Rainfall Total	52.2mm	182.2mm
Normal	102.2mm	219.2mm
No. Rainfall days (>1.0mm)	12	18
Average Temperature	27.4°C	26.5°C
Normal	26.9°C	26.7°C
Maximum Temperature	32.3°C (7 th , 21 st)	30.1°C (4 th)
Minimum Temperature	20.8°C (14 th)	21.2°C (19 th)
Relative Humidity	64%	77%
Maximum wind gust	57km/h	56km/h

Table 1: Monthly Weather Parameters

CLIMATE SUMMARY FOR JANUARY

Canefield Airport:

Normally, 108.3mm/ 4.26in of rainfall and about 16 rainfall days are recorded. The highest rainfall for December was 228.2mm/ 8.98in in

2011 and the lowest was 31.3mm/ 1.23in in 2001. Average daily temperature is 26.4°C with an average maximum of 30.8°C and an average minimum of 20.0°C. Moderate to strong gusts are expected.

Melville-Hall Airport:

On average 136.0mm/ 5.35in of rainfall are recorded and about 19 rainfall days. The highest rainfall was 249.0mm/ 9.80in in 1998 and the lowest total is 68.6mm/ 2.70in in 1989. Average daily temperature is 26.1°C with an average maximum of 29.4°C and an average minimum of 19.6°C. Moderate to strong wind speeds are expected.

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

- Air temperature is forecast to be slightly above normal as sea temperatures are currently 0.5°C above average.

OUTLOOK FOR THE FARMING COMMUNITY

Pests and diseases thrive in wet conditions and farmers will have to be vigilant for any signs of increased infestations.

Best practices for the control of *black sigatoka* and other diseases need to be continued.

Baits for snails and slugs need to be applied.

Livestock farmers should de-worm their animals.

Hooves of ruminants need to be assessed regularly.

Farmers are encouraged to continue planting to meet market demand.

Ensure fields are well maintained to keep weeds at a minimum and contours are constructed for proper drainage.

Rainwater that is harvested should be kept covered to inhibit mosquito breeding.

REGIONAL OVERVIEW ON SEASONAL CLIMATE FORECASTS

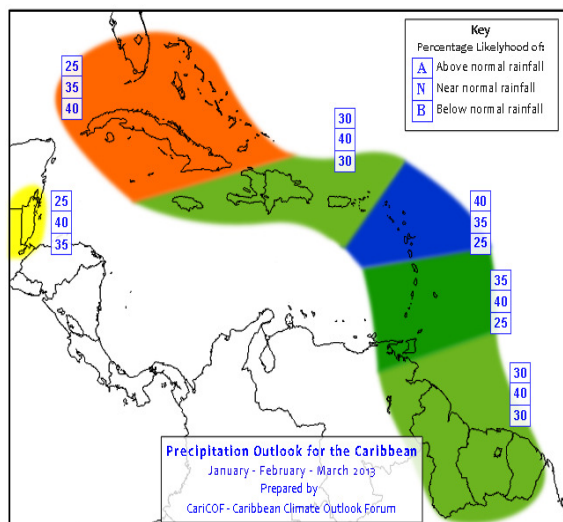


Figure 2: Precipitation outlook for the Caribbean: December 2012-February 2013 (colored areas represent sub-regions in which the probabilities fall)

- Normal to above normal rainfall is forecast from January to March 2013.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

****A PRODUCTIVE 2013 TO ALL FARMERS**** Despite forecast trends, January marks the start of the dry season so ensure that irrigation is managed and water is not wasted. The tripartite committee met in December to discuss how to better serve our farmers with relevant information and to provide feedback on the bulletins. Such feedback is also welcome from farmers and the wider agricultural community on this bulletin.

Moon Phases: ● **NM: Jan 11** ● **FQ: Jan 18** ● **FM: Jan 27** ● **LQ: Feb 3**

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