

LESOTHO METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES

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Agro-Met Monthly Update:

February 2008

Date of issue: March 2006

<u>Highlights</u>

Low monthly rainfall experienced in most parts of the country
Above mean monthly temperatures experienced in most parts of the country
Crops stages range from flowering to tasselling stages

<u>Rainfall</u>

Monthly Actual Rainfall

Spatial distribution of rainfall during the month of February was very variable. Some parts of the country received normal monthly rainfall while others recorded below normal monthly rainfall. The highlands except Thaba-Tseka recorded normal rainfall while most parts of the lowlands had below normal monthly rainfall. Mohale's Hoek (134.3mm) recorded highest monthly rainfall while Mafeteng (39.7mm) had lowest monthly rainfall (see Map 1 & Table 1).

Rain days ranged from nine days to sixteen days. That shows that temporal distribution was poor Mafeteng and Qacha's Nek but satisfactory at Mokhotlong and Semonkong.

Cumulative Rainfall since September 2007

Cumulative rainfall since September 2007 remains normal to above normal countrywide. Map 2 and Table 1 show that the northern districts of Butha-Buthe and Leribe, Mohale's Hoek in the southwest and Semonkong in the central parts of the country have highest cumulative rainfall. On the other hand the northeastern region of the country especially Thaba-Tseka and parts of Mafeteng and Quthing have lowest accumulated rainfall since September 2007.





Temperatures

Mean monthly temperatures were slightly above normal during the month of February 2008. Only few areas experienced below normal monthly temperatures. Mean temperatures had consistently	been above normal during the dekads of the month under review.					
Crop Stage and Conditions						
Dry and hot weather that was predominant during the month of February put pressure on crops. Crop water requirement was critical since crops were in	permanently destroyed. However, most crops can recover when weather improves.					
their delicate flowering to tasselling stages. Signs of water deficits were observed in most crops. Dry weather coupled with poor crop management practices resulted in some crops being	Crop stages ranges from flowering to tasselling. Farmers that planted early are starting to get green maize from the fields.					

Weather Outlook (January – March 2008)

Much of the Lowlands including central and southern parts have a likelihood of receiving above average rainfall, while the northern parts including parts of the eastern Highlands have a possibility of receiving below normal rainfall. Temperatures are expected to be slightly above average with occasional cold spells.

REFER TO THE TABLE BELOW FOR A SUMMARY TABLE

Table 1

			Monthly Rainfall (mm)		Cumulative R/Fall since September 07			Temperatures		
Station	ALT.	Monthly	Monthly Normal		Actual Normal		%Dep.	Monthly Mean		
Name	(M)	R/Days	R/Fall	R/Fall	R/Fall	R/Fall	from	Actual	Normal	Deviation
							Normal			
Butha-Buthe	1770	12	60.0	96.0	756.1	587.7	29	19.8	19.5	0.3
Leribe	1740	13	64.8	108.2	682.0	519.0	31	20.1	20.1	0.0
Mafeteng	1610	9	39.7	94.5	573.8	460.1	25	20.5	20.2	0.3
Mejametalana	1530	13	53.4	92.6	578.5	467.7	24	20.9	21.0	-0.1
Mohale's Hoek	1600	15	134.3	102.6	714.0	486.4	47	20.3	20.7	-0.4
Mokhotlong	2200	16	96.8	83.2	514.8	455.2	13	17.6	17.1	0.5
inclucing					00					0.0
Moshoeshoe 1	1628	12	78.4	111.9	612.7	522.2	17	20.3	20.5	-0.2
OxBow	2660	*	*	139.3	*	530.9	26	*	12.3	*
Phuthiatsana	1750	10	98.1	101.0	678.8	576.5	18	20.7	20.4	0.3
Qacha's Nek	1970	9	119.5	120.0	586.6	530.9	10	18.5	17.8	0.7
Quthing	1740	15	101.1	97.0	684.7	450.3	52	20.5	20.4	0.1
Semonkong	2458	16	94 4	82.0	487.2	459 4	6	15.1	15.4	-0.3
Comonikong	2400	10	07.7	02.0		-00.4	, v	10.1	10.7	0.0
Thaba-Tseka	2160	15	46.8	94.0	487.2	459.4	29	17.2	16.7	0.5