

SAINT LUCIA AGROMET REPORT – DECEMBER 2018

The monthly averages for the Hewanorra and George F L Charles airport stations for December 2018 are shown in the table below:

AVERAGE MONTHLY DATA FOR HEWANORRA (H) and GEORGE F L CHARLES (GFLC)													
Stn	Cloud Cover (oktas)	Wind Dir (o from N)	Wind Speed (kt)	Air Temp. (°C)	RH (%)	Rainfall Mean (mm)	Rainfall Total (mm)	Max Temp (°C)	Min Temp (°C)	Daily Sunshine (Hrs)	Daily Evap (mm)	Soil 5cm (°C)	Soil 10cm (°C)
Hew	4	90	18	26.7	73	101.6	97.2	29.5	24.3	9.0	6.6	25.3	25.7
GFLC	4	100	8	26.7	73	132.0	101.1	28.8	23.0				

December is the transitioning month between the wet and dry season and for the month normal precipitation totals were recorded in Saint Lucia. Rainfall at Hewanorra Airport and George F. L. Charles were 97.2 mm and 101.1 mm, respectively. There were 13 rainy days at Hewanorra with 2 3-day and a 5-day dry spell whilst at George F. L. Charles, there were 14 rainy days with 2 3-day and a 4-day dry spell.

Rainfall generally decreases in January as the dry season continues. Thus, the climatological mean for Hewanorra Airport is 86.8 mm and at George F. L. Charles, 114.4 mm (*using base period 1981 – 2010*). At this time of year, precipitation is usually caused by isolated moisture surges within the easterly trade winds and occasional shear lines associated with decaying cold fronts. As such, the January to March 2019 (**JFM**) seasonal outlook indicates the probability of **below normal** precipitation which could range from 95.7 mm to 155.3 mm at Hewanorra and 150.5 mm to 210.1 mm at George F. L. Charles.

Alternatively, the extended precipitation outlook for April to June 2019 (**AMJ**) suggests **above normal** precipitation. In this regard, rainfall totals could range from 305.8 mm to 499 mm in Vieux Fort and 430.3 mm to 563.2 mm in Castries.

Moreover, the maximum and minimum temperatures at Hewanorra were normal whereas at George F. L. Charles, these temperatures were below normal. For the **JFM** and **AMJ** seasonal temperature outlooks however, maximum and minimum temperatures are expected to be **above normal**.

Generally, the 1, 3 and 6-month drought index highlighted normal to moderately dry SPIs at Hewanorra whilst for George F. L. Charles SPIs were normal. In the short term, there is some concern for drought in Saint Lucia as the dry season progresses. This is due to the expected strengthening of a weak El Niño which may cause a reduction in rainfall until at least the end of the JFM season. Therefore, farmers should keep

updated, practice conservation measures and should continually monitor their resources.