

CARIBBEAN AGRO-CLIMATIC BULLETIN OF THE CARISAM



JULY 2020 • VOLUME 4 • ISSUE 2

A joint bulletin of the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) and the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH).

KEY MESSAGES

By the end of September 2020, short-term drought affecting surface soil wetness, and stream and river flow may be alleviated with the islands Dominica, Martinique, St. Kitts and Trinidad and Tobago recommended to continue monitoring of water resources and following monthly climate updates.

By the end of the 2020 dry season concerns for long-term drought, affecting larger reservoirs, large rivers or groundwater, may be a concern across the islands of the southeastern Caribbean, particularly St. Lucia, and Suriname.

Flooding will be a growing concern by September in Belize and the Islands, but decreasing in the Guianas from August onward.

Day (maximum) and night (minimum) time temperatures are likely to be as warm as usual across the region and, at times, are likely to be uncomfortably hot, especially during heat waves.

MAY IN REVIEW

Rainfall in the eastern Caribbean was predominantly below normal during the month of May. Trinidad was normal in the south to severely dry in the northeast; Tobago, St Vincent, Antigua and St Croix moderately dry; Grenada slightly dry; Barbados slight to moderately dry; Saint Lucia, St Maarten and St Thomas extremely dry; Martinique moderately dry in the south to extremely dry in the north; Dominica and Guadeloupe severe to extremely dry and St Kitts severely dry. In the Guianas conditions ranged from moderately dry in north-eastern Suriname and southeast French Guiana to exceptionally wet in north-eastern French Guiana, and to extremely wet in southern Guyana. Curacao was slight to moderately dry and Aruba severely dry.

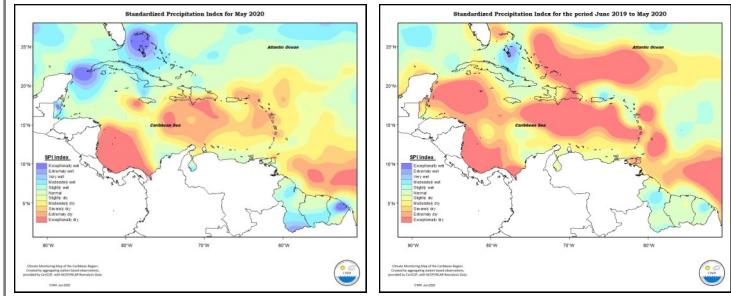
Puerto Rico ranged from slightly dry in the west to extremely dry in the northeast. Hispaniola ranged from exceptionally dry in the extreme south to slightly wet in the north. Jamaica ranged from extremely dry in the extreme west to slightly wet in the northwest, to slightly dry in the northeast and to normal in the extreme east. Grand Cayman was normal. Cuba ranged from exceptionally wet in the west to normal in the east.

ABOUT CARI-SAM

The Caribbean Society for Agricultural Meteorology (CariSAM) is an online platform that hosts forums, provided online weather and climate information for agro-meteorologists, and much more. Agricultural interests can register and access relevant information and be a part of future capacity building exercises, and more. Visit us at: www.carisam.cimh.edu.bb

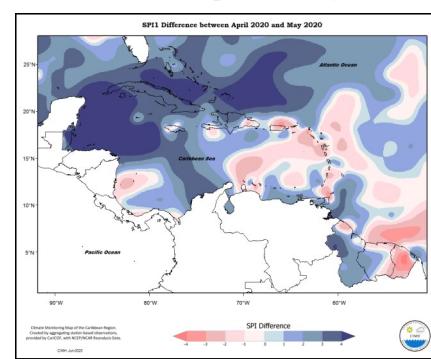
Northern Bahamas ranged from very to exceptionally wet, and Belize from exceptionally wet in central areas to moderately wet in the south and normal in the west and northern areas.

MAY 2020 SPI (left) and 12-month SPI JUNE 2019 TO MAY 2020 (right)



A 12-month review of rainfall across the region shows severely to exceptionally dry conditions across several territories.

SPI Difference (April and May 2020)



The month of May was wetter than April predominantly across Belize, Cayman Islands, Cuba, The Bahamas and parts of Hispaniola and the Guianas.

Read more at
<https://rcc.cimh.edu.bb/spi-monitor/>

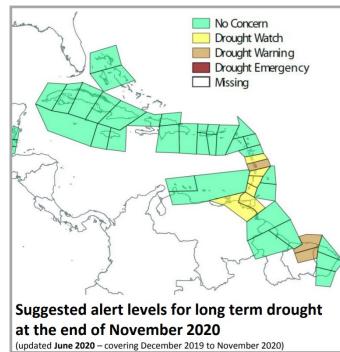
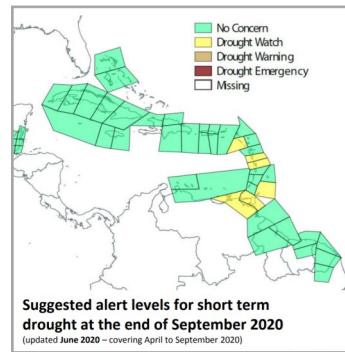
AGRI-NEWS

WEBINAR (*July 8, 2020*): Molecular Characterization of Sweet Potato. Learn more about various varieties of sweet potato and their tolerance to drought. Read more at <http://www.cardi.org/blog/webinar-molecular-characterization-of-sweet-potato-8-july-2020/>

REGIONAL OUTLOOKS

DROUGHT

As at the end of April 2020, severe (or worse) shorter term drought has developed in Aruba, Barbados, southern Dominican Republic, southern Haiti, Martinique, Saint Lucia, and western Trinidad. Severe (or worse) long term drought has developed in northern-most and eastern Bahamas, Barbados, northern and western Belize, the Dominican Republic, eastern Guadeloupe, Martinique, western-most Puerto Rico, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent, and Trinidad.



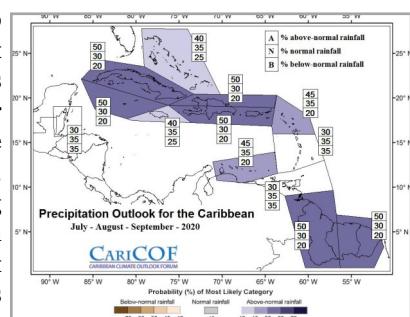
By the end of September 2020, there is likely to be no concern regarding surface soil wetness, and stream and river flow except possibly for Dominica, Martinique, St. Kitts and Trinidad and Tobago.

By the end of the 2020 dry season concerns for long-term drought could present a challenge in farming, especially where water supply is sourced from larger reservoirs, large rivers or groundwater, across Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent, and Trinidad.

Interests across the region should continue to monitor their water status.

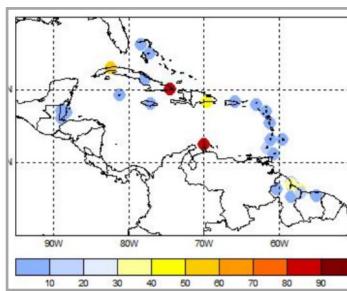
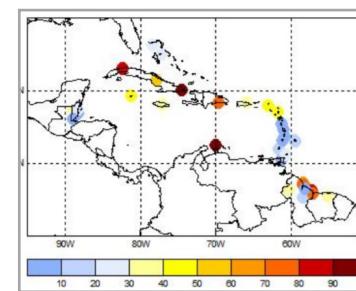
RAINFALL, WET/DRY SPELLS, TEMPERATURE and HEATWAVE DAYS (JULY–SEPTEMBER 2020)

Rainfall totals from June to August are likely to be at least as wet as usual across the ABC Islands, the Greater Antilles, the Guianas and the Leeward Islands. Moreover, flooding will be a growing concern by September in Belize and the Islands, but decreasing in the Guianas from August onward.



Probability of at least THREE 7-day dry spells in JAS

Probability of at least ONE 15-day dry spell in JAS



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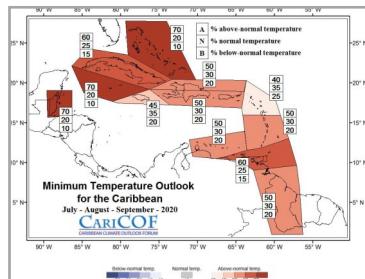
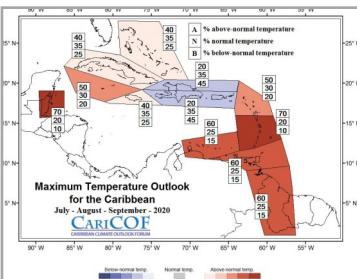
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Even though the region is advancing into its wet season the occurrence of 7-day dry spells remain favourable across some territories. This possibility is reduced for the occurrence of 15-day dry spells.



Day (maximum) and night (minimum) time temperatures are likely to be as warm as usual across the region and, at times, are likely to be uncomfortably hot, especially during heat waves. Caution against heat stress in the vulnerable population & small livestock through September (Bahamas and Greater Antilles) or October (rest of the region) should be taken.

Visit <http://rcc.cimh.edu.bb/climate-outlooks/> to access the latest climate outlooks.

CLIMATE-SMART ADVISORIES

- ◆ Hurricane preparations should be ongoing or completed. This is predicted to be an active season for tropical cyclone activity, particularly during the second half of the season.
- ◆ To enhance food security in the event of a tropical cyclone, farmers may want to consider planting more resilient crops (e.g. root crops)
- ◆ Provide shade and ample water for livestock during periods of heatwaves. Farmers should also pay attention to their health and protect from heat-stroke—consume lots of water; wear appropriate clothing; adjust times of field activities where necessary.
- ◆ With the possibility of flood producing rains, particularly from the month of August:
 - ⇒ Maintain drains around crop beds and/or plant crops on raised beds
 - ⇒ House animals on high ground and/or on raised pens
 - ⇒ Store fertilizer away from moisture and water sources

Please also keep updated and take into consideration your local weather and climate advisories.

Disclaimer

The information contained herein is provided with the understanding that the CARDI, and the CIMH make no warranties, either expressed or implied concerning the accuracy, completeness, reliability or suitability of said information. This bulletin provides a broad overview of climate conditions up to 6 months in advance. It is recommended that stakeholders should use this information in combination with nearer term weather forecasts to guide operational decision making. The bulletin may be freely used by the public with appropriate acknowledgement of its source but shall not be modified in content and then presented as original material.