



# agriculture, forestry & fisheries

Department:  
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## Press Release

October 2010

### **CLIMATE ADVISORY FOR THE FIRST HALF OF THE 2010/11 SUMMER SEASON**

The winter season brought normal to below-normal rainfall over the winter rainfall areas while it remained dry over the summer rainfall areas. Some winter crops are in poor condition as a result of low rainfall. Livestock and veld are reported to be in reasonable to poor condition. Veld fires were reported in all provinces except the Western Cape. Rift Valley Fever cases were recorded in the Northern Cape, Western Cape, Eastern Cape and Free State. The Eastern Cape and parts of the Central Karoo of the Western Cape are still being affected by drought. The level of dams is reasonable, above 70% in most provinces excluding the drought-stricken areas, where they are critically low.

According to the FEWS NET September 2010, food security conditions remain favourable across the SADC region and are expected to remain so throughout the outlook period, particularly in those areas that experienced good harvests. However, existing conditions of moderate food insecurity are expected to worsen as the lean season approaches in October/November.

In a forecast released by the South African Weather Service dated 16 September 2010, for the seasonal forecast climatology conditions can be expected for the first half of the season. This means farmers are advised to plan in accordance with climate conditions usually associated with that particular period/season in their areas and should stick to normal planting dates. Although adherence to disaster risk measures, including veld fire warnings, was encouraged, fires affected many provinces. The veld is still dry and this poses a fire risk until significant rain falls. Therefore, measures for veldfires in the summer rainfall areas should be maintained. As rain is ceasing over the winter rainfall areas, measures for veld fires should be put in place. Dam levels remain high in the majority of the provinces and are favourable for irrigation. In spite of this, water has to be conserved and farmers should observe the Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act, (Act No. 43 of 1983). Also, measures should remain in place to minimise evaporative loss of moisture as temperatures begin to rise during summer. Episodes of heat wave conditions in summer usually occur; therefore, contingency measure should be in place for these.

The Disaster Management Act (Act No. 57 of 2002) requires provinces, individuals and farmers to assess and prevent or reduce the risk of disasters using early warning information. The complete advisory can be accessed through provincial department of agriculture offices as well as DAFF and AGIS websites, i.e. [www.daff.gov.za](http://www.daff.gov.za) and [www.agis.agric.za](http://www.agis.agric.za) respectively.

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