The Agricultural Stress Index (ASI) combines vegetation condition and temperature variables to illustrate the level of stress experienced by crop areas. The compiled results are analysed longitudinally by comparing current values to the long-term minimum and maximum values and by spatially aggregating agricultural areas by administrative area.

Analysis

Precipitation during January 2017 was analysed and compared with the longitudinal average for January over the past 16 years. Rainfall totals in January 2017 were below the long-term average. Compared to the same month of last year, rainfall totals were also below average across much of Syria including agricultural areas.

Most farmers finished the planting of rain-fed wheat and barley, while the planting of winter vegetables continued for the rest of the month. Despite the overall moderate rains in November and December, crop growth showed signs of moderate moisture stress in parts of Idleb, Aleppo, Hama, Homs and Ar-Raqqa in the second and third dekads of January. However, it is still too early to predict an overall crop growth and development as most of the crops are still in the early vegetative stages. Due to relatively moderate rains in December in the southern and southwestern parts of Damascus, healthy crop development could be depicted throughout the month in Quneitra, Dar’a, Tartous and Lattakia. In Al Hasakeh and along the Euphrates River in Deir-ez-Zor, healthy vegetation cover also increased from December to January.