Average to above-average and well distributed rainfall over most of the region except for parts of the west

KEY MESSAGES

• The 2019 rainy season that was characterized by mostly average to above average rainfall (Figure 1) has practically come to an end.
• The significant planting delays experienced during the first part of the season did not prevent Senegal from achieving an average harvest.
• The season’s agro-climatological conditions have been mostly favorable to crop and pasture growth and development in the region.
• Average to above average crop harvests are expected in the region, but pasture production is below average in the western part of the Sahel (Figure 2 and Figure 3).

UPDATE ON SEASONAL PROGRESS

• This season rains generally started on time. The monthly rainfall totals analysis showed that in June many areas experienced severe deficits, however, rainfall time distribution was very good. It was only the agro-pastoral areas of Mali, southern Mauritania and Senegal where severe deficits combined with long dry spells prevailed. In July the region received well distributed average to above average rainfall and while the combined deficits and poor time distribution persisted in the western part of the Sahel the area shrank to only northern Senegal and southwestern Mauritania. August rainfall was well distributed and above average except for the extreme western Senegal-Mauritania border area. In September rainfall was again mostly average to above average with good time distribution, except the agro-pastoral areas of southeastern Mali, central Niger and eastern Chad that suffered from dryness and poor time distribution. October rainfall was average to above average over the whole region.
• Most of the region had a timely onset of rains and received average to above average and/or well distributed rainfall. This resulted into favorable conditions for both crop and pastures.
• The western Sahel area (Senegal, Mauritania) experienced below average and poorly distributed rainfall during the first part of the season resulting into significant planting delays. It was only in early August that the area started receiving near average and well distributed rainfall. Significant rainfall

Figure 1. April-October total rainfall (RFE) anomaly in % of 2007-2016 average

Source: USGS/FEWS NET

Figure 2. October 1-10 Percent of Median NDVI – Pasture production deficit in Western Sahel

Source: USGS/FEWS NET

Figure 3. Current season vegetation performance (NDVI) in Senegal

Source: USGS/FEWS NET
continued until the end of October, extending the growing season by at least two dekads compared to average. The extension of the season until the end of October made it possible for farmers to achieve good harvests. The delayed onset of rains had a negative impact on pastures resulting in below average production in northeastern Senegal and southwestern Mauritania (Figure 2 and Figure 3).

FORECASTS

- According to the short and medium term forecasts from NOAA/CPC, rainfall is expected only over the bi-modal areas in the next two weeks.
- The December seasonal forecast NOAA-NCEP indicates below average rainfall during the period that is considered out of season rainfall from now on.

SEASONAL CALENDAR IN A TYPICAL YEAR

Source: FEWS NET