

Grenada December 2016 Agro-Met Summary

December was a very eventful month as various elements battle for supremacy in the transition phase from wet to dry season.

Numerous troughs system both surface and mid/upper level made their presence felt as they did in November. These systems were responsible for almost all the months' rainfall and most definite for the significant rain events. Rainfall for the month totaled 187.2mm making this month the 4th wettest December on record. This total was significantly above both the long term and 30yr averages of 105 & 103.8mm respectively. The highest 24hr rainfall occurred on the 21st when 102.9mm was collected. There were five (5) days of insignificant or no rainfall. Other significant days were the 23rd when 18.6mm was collected and 9mm on the 9th. Flood and or landslides warnings were issued on the 6th, 7th, 22nd, 23rd & 27th as soil moisture levels became a grave concern.

The temperature on the other hand was fairly constant. The mean max was 30.3°C which is compatible with the long term and 30yr average of 30.1°C, the hottest day was the 7th when the temperature soared to 31.6°C. Night times were a little warmer than usual with a mean of 24.6°C, which is almost one degree above both the long term and 30yr term mean of 23.8°C. The coolest night was the 22nd when the temperature fell to 22.4°C.

The Northern Atlantic and especially the North-Western Atlantic was particularly active during the month under review. Numerous mid- latitude cyclones were propagated off the North American continent into the western Atlantic while others were formed over the ocean itself. For most of the month cold fronts entered the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean sea as these air masses were pushed by the various continental highs which migrate southwards seasonally. Many of these fronts produced higher than normal swells which reach our coast lines. Additionally the Bermuda/Azores high pressure system was able to reach a high of 1041mb on both the 18th & 23rd. towards the middle of the month as it was building, a ridging pattern in the direction of the Caribbean was established.

This resulted in fresh to moderate trades being funneled into our location. This agitated the sea surface producing large waves which pounded our shores. With both these unusual waves and swells the met office issued marine advisories from the 8th through to the 31st and a high wind warning on the 18th.

With the above average rainfall our farmers reaped good harvests in pumpkins and citrus and seasonal sorrel. Water melon has diminished drastically while avocado has disappeared. Breadfruit is slowly making its presence felt, while there is still no sign of pigeon peas.

Due to unfavorable sea conditions the fishermen had a reduced catch. As to be expected mainly the bigger species were caught eg Barracuda, Marlins, Ocean Gar and King Fish.

