Update on Crop Production

Department of AGRITEX
Overview of the season

- The 2021/2022 season started late in the 2nd and 3rd dekads of December 2021.
- Where it started early, (last week of October to mid-November 2021), it was a false start.
- Rainfall distribution was poor in both space and time across the country.
- Incessant rains in January followed by prolonged dry spell in the first week of February to end of March.
- Incessant rains caused excessive leaching of nitrogen and other crop nutrient.
- The false start resulted in failed crop establishment leading to replanting.
- The late onset caused late plantings later affected by prolonged dry spell at critical stage causing write offs especially in the central and southern parts of the country.
- Unusually heavy late rains have been received in April across the country.
- The positive/negative impact of these rains has not been evaluated but should generally result in a lower deficit for most crops.
Impact of the Season on Crop production

* A decrease in area planted and production for almost all crops

* Increased write off area for all crops especially for maize in most parts of the country.

* The late rains received in April may have a negative impact on the quality of produce for crops that have reached the maturity stage but may also have a positive impact on the late planted crops that are still at reproductive stage.
Impact of the season to Crop Production by Province
A prolonged dry spell of about 28 days was experienced during the period between 2nd week of February to second week of March, which resulted in wilting and write-off of crops.

The Southern districts (Chegutu, Ngezi and Sanyati) were affected the most.

Widespread rainfall is currently being received in most districts resulting in slight improvement in late planted crop condition.

Early planted maize has reached harvesting stage but harvesting being affected by the current incessant rains.

Some late planted maize and tobacco have been affected by hailstorm in the 2nd dekad of April in Zvimba district.
A prolonged dry spell of 28 to 38 days was experienced from the 2nd week of February to end of March, which resulted in wilting and write-off of some crops.

The Northern districts (Mbire, Lower Muzarabani, Lower Mt Darwin and Rushinga) were most affected.

Widespread rainfall is currently being received in most districts resulting in sprouting of legumes (cowpeas, groundnuts, sugar beans and soya beans). Stacked and lodged maize is rotting.

Late planted maize and tobacco have been affected by hailstorm in the 2nd dekad of April.
A prolonged dry spell of 23 to 33 days was experienced from the 1st week of February to mid-March, which resulted in wilting and write-off of crops.

The most affected districts were Chikomba, Hwedza, parts of Mudzi, UMP, Mutoko and Marondera.

Widespread rainfall is currently being received in most districts resulting in sprouting of legumes (cowpeas, groundnuts, sugar beans and soya beans). Stacked and lodged maize is rotting.

Current rains being received in most districts have resulted in improved condition in late planted crops.
Manicaland

- A prolonged dry spell of about 40 days was experienced from the 1st week of February to mid-March, which resulted in widespread write-off of crops.

- The most affected districts were Buhera, northern and southern parts of Makoni, Mutare West, Mutasa west, Lower Nyanga, lower Chimanimani, lowveld of Chipinge.

- The current wet spells in the eastern parts have improved condition (fair to good) of late planted maize, cotton, sweet potato and sugar bean.

- Late planted traditional grains at grain filling stage are currently being affected by quelea birds and armoured crickets. The bulk of the crop is at maturity stage.
A prolonged dry spell of about 23 to 35 days was experienced during the period between 1st week of February to third week of March, which resulted in wilting and write-off of crops.

Most affected districts were parts of Kwekwe, Zvishavane and Mberengwa districts.

Early planted maize has reached harvesting stage but harvesting is being affected by the current incessant rains.
Matabeleland North

- A prolonged dry spell of 30 to 40 days was experienced from the 1st week of February to 1st week of April, which resulted in wilting and write-off of cereal crops.

- The most affected districts were Binga, Hwange, parts of Lupane, Nkayi and Umguza.

- Patchy rainfall in all the districts is causing sprouting of legumes (cowpeas, groundnuts, sugar beans and soya beans).

- Stacked and lodged maize and traditional grains are rotting.

- Late planted maize and traditional grains in districts like Binga have benefited from the late rains.

- The bulk of the early planted crop is at harvesting stage.
A prolonged dry spell of 37 to 60 days was experienced from the 1st week of February to end of March, which resulted in severe write-off of crops.

The most affected districts were Matobo, Southern Gwanda, parts of Bulilima and Mangwe.

Widespread rainfall is currently being received in most districts resulting in sprouting of legumes (cowpeas and groundnuts).

Traditional grains and maize are lodging and rotting.

The bulk of the late planted crops are at maturity stage and are fair in condition.
A prolonged dry spell of 30 to 60 days was experienced from the 1st week of February to end of March, which resulted in write-off of crops.

All districts were affected except some parts of Bikita, Gutu, Zaka and Masvingo.

Widespread rainfall is currently being received in most districts resulting in sprouting of legumes (cowpeas and groundnuts).

The bulk of the late planted crops is at maturity stage and is fair to good in condition.