
COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF KIRINYAGA

In partnership with the Agriculture Sector Development Support Program (ASDSP) and Stakeholders



CLIMATE ADVISORY FOR KIRINYAGA COUNTY FOR OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2016 RAINS

Introduction

This advisory has been developed based on the seasonal weather outlook and is intended for use by farming community and other stakeholders.

Weather outlook for Kirinyaga County

The Kenya Meteorological Services weather forecast for Kirinyaga County's for October to December 2016 presents a scenario of below-normal to near normal rainfall in the highlands and upper middle altitude zones and a depressed rainfall in the lower zones.

The highlands and upper midlands zones include areas like Kabare, Baragwi, Njukiini, Ngariama, Karumandi, Mukure, Kiine, Mutira, Kanyekini, Kerugoya, Inoi while the lower zones covers areas like Thiba, Wamumu, Nyangati, Murinduko, Gathigiriri, Rukanga and Tebere being more severely affected.

EXPECTED ONSET AND CESSATION DATES

Rainfall onset is expected from the 3rd to 4th week of October 2016. The rains will continue and cease in the 2nd to 3rd week of December 2016.

For the lower zone, cessation will be in the 1st and 2nd week of December 2016.

The rains will be poorly distributed both in time and space.

CLIMATE SMART PRACTICES IN SELECTED SECTORS

A. Crop management

1. Prepare your land early & plant before the onset of the rains. For those in sloppy land use the contour method of cropping and integrate cover crops.
2. Use of terraces/retention ditch, Zai pits, tie ridges to harvest run off for crop production is encouraged.
3. Apply adequate amounts of good quality manure to enhance soil moisture retention.
4. Adopt minimum tillage farming methods e.g use of herbicides, crop mulching & cover cropping
5. Avoid planting a crop in the same plot that you planted last season. You can also introduce new crops on your farm. Rotate the crops that you planted in various plots in your farm last season. The following crop varieties are recommended for your area.

Lower zone: Maize; Duma 43, DH 04, DH 01, DH 02, KCB, Dekalb.

- a. Beans; Mwitmania and Mwezi moja.
- b. Others are Pigeon peas (njugu), green gram (ndengu), cowpeas (thoroko) and Dolicos (Njahi).

Middle zones Maize varieties H513, H514, H515, Duma 43, Pioneer 3253,

- c. Others: local vegetables, sorghum (muhia), millet (mwere), cassava, sweet potatoes and yams.
6. Use water efficient irrigation methods e.g. drip irrigation.
 7. Plant and utilize more of foods such as cassava, sweet potatoes, bananas sorghum, local vegetables
 8. Store adequate grains (maize & beans) harvested or even purchase for storage.
 9. Prepare to harvest rain water from roof catchments using tanks and surface runoff to water pans for use in dry spell which is expected earlier than in other years.
 10. Establish Multi-storey Kitchen gardens
 11. Consider insuring your high value crops.

B. Rice Production

1. Use of water rice saving culture (WSRC) methods such as
 - Alternate wetting and drying method of rice production
 - Planting rice in line
2. Promote NERICA rice which utilizes less water for production
3. Use of rotavators to achieve early land preparation (for those who are yet to plant).
4. Prepare for water rationing in the rice paddy fields.

C. Livestock Management and health

1. Plant appropriate fodder crops & shrubs such as napier grass, (French cameron, bana, Kakamega) Sudan grass, bracharia, Calliandra, and Leucena, and Rhodes.
2. Adopt feeding strategies (e.g. homemade rations, cut 'n carry, hydroponic fodder production)
3. Fodder conservation e.g. Silage making, Hay baling
4. Feed and water your bees to avoid absconding
5. Be on the look out for diseases (such as respiratory) and parasites especially fleas which are associated with reduced rainfall and warm conditions
6. Normal deworming and vaccination should continue
7. Farmers are advised to report any cases observed to the relevant authorities.
8. Consider livestock insurance for your high yielders.

D. Forestry Sector

1. Harden off seedlings early.
2. Plant seedlings that can tolerate drought
3. Early land preparation for tree planting
4. Be Fire alert & vigilant especially those who border forested areas

E. Water Resource Sector

1. Store water from roof catchment
2. Use better water and agricultural management practices that reduce nitrogen and phosphorus in the aquatic system (conserve soils, use of manure)
3. Use water efficient irrigation technologies and Water rationing
4. On farm activities e.g. terracing to increase water infiltration
5. Avoid using domestic water to irrigate your farm during dry spells
6. Construction of water -conservation structures

F. Health Sector

1. Due to anticipated suppressed rains and increased heat intensity community to avoid working out door for long hours due to heat intensity especially lower and middle zones of Kirinyaga
2. Treat water by boiling or chlorine tablets due to slow flow in streams
3. Stock health facilities with drugs due to water borne related diseases
4. Food and water to be covered to avoid blown dust which can cause Cholera outbreaks

G Environment Sector

1. County authorities and the community to ensure appropriate disposal of solid waste such as plastic bags which result in clogging of rivers, drainage systems, destruction of fish and wildlife habitat.
2. Recharge of ground water to mitigate against low water levels in reservoirs, lakes, and ponds.
3. Communities are encouraged to plant trees in order to increase forest cover.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact the following:

- 1) The County Directorate of Agriculture, Livestock and Veterinary Offices in Kerugoya.
- 2) The nearest Sub County Agricultural and Livestock Offices at Kerugoya, Baricho, Kianyaga, Ngurubani and Kandongu
- 3) ASDSP Kerugoya at the Veterinary premises
- 4) County Meteorological Office, Kerugoya