



SOI FAX HOTLINES

(Southern Oscillation Index)

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this page is updated each Wednesday, usually by 5pm



SOI MESSAGE - 17 December 1997

SOI (a) AVERAGES / PHASE		
September 97	*	-14.1
October 97	*	-17.4
November 97	*	-13.9

Last 30 days		-18.4
Last 90 days (b)		-15.1

SOI trend (b) during October - November was Phase 1 (i.e. consistently negative ▼).		
NOTE : (a) SOI values calculated using mean barometric pressures from 1880 to 1992 - subject to revision by Bureau of Meteorology. * Preliminary value ** Revised value (b) See AUSTRALIAN RAINMAN for effects of SOI on rainfall at your location.		

The next passage of the 30- to 50-day Oscillation is due in about the fourth week in December.

A crop simulation model for the Darling Downs shows favourable prospects for a reasonable sorghum crop, especially where there are good soil moisture reserves. Higher yields are more likely with later planted crops (ie mid - December)

A pasture growth model indicates that the chances of exceeding median pasture growth during the November - January period are 30% or less in most of eastern Queensland, and 30-60% in most southern and western districts.

The average SOI over the last 30 days was -18.4. The probabilities of obtaining 'average' rainfall during the December - February period are 20-40% over most parts of the eastern States of Australia.

THE BOTTOM LINE

REVIEW OF CLIMATIC FORECASTS AND INFORMATION

"EL NIÑO ALERT"

It should be noted that while climate forecasts indicate a high probability of below average rainfall in some areas, this does not mean that they will miss out on all rainfall events.

The probabilities of obtaining median rainfall for the December - February period are 20-40% over most parts of the eastern States. The main exceptions are southern inland Queensland, far western Queensland, south-western Victoria and southern Tasmania where probabilities are 40-50%.

There is a very high probability of a late start to the wet season in North Queensland this year.

BMRC advises that sea-surface temperatures are continuing to warm in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean. There is now a large pool of cooler-than-normal water in the south-western Pacific Ocean and the Coral Sea, which is typical of an El Niño pattern.

In the current situation we recommend implementation of drought contingency plans, particularly in north-east Queensland, and caution when making property management decisions. We also advise regular monitoring of the SOI, sea-surface temperature patterns and published seasonal climate outlooks.

To obtain more detailed information for your location, we recommend combined use of the AUSTRALIAN RAINMAN package and the Bureau of Meteorology's Seasonal Climate Outlook. Also a lot of additional information is available on our SOI Fax Hotlines, our Internet World Wide Web service called 'The Long Paddock', and on BoM's fax and Internet information services.

NEXT UPDATE of the SOI MESSAGE:
24th December 97

Climate Impacts and Grazing Systems - Department of Natural Resources Compiled by Col Paull and Dr Roger Stone, QDPI.

If you would like any further information, please contact Col Paull on (07) 389 69587, or one of the Climate Risk Co-Ordinators located at Longreach (076) 584 418 Charters Towers (077) 872 155, Emerald (079) 828 801, Kingaroy (071) 600 717 and Roma (076) 229 999
Some information courtesy Bureau of Meteorology,
CSIRO and National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, USA