



# SOI FAX HOTLINES

(Southern Oscillation Index)

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this page is updated each Wednesday, usually by 5pm



## SOI MESSAGE - 20 January 1999

### SOI (a) AVERAGES / PHASE

|                  |   |        |
|------------------|---|--------|
| October 98       | * | +11.2  |
| November 98      | * | +13.3  |
| December 98      | * | +11.7  |
| -----            |   |        |
| Last 30 days     |   | + 13.4 |
| Last 90 days (b) |   | + 12.9 |

SOI trend (b) during November-December was Phase 2 (i.e. positive ▲).

**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.

### REVIEW OF CLIMATIC FORECASTS AND INFORMATION

The SOI Phase forecasting system indicates that median to above-median rainfall is likely in Queensland and NSW over the January to March period.

In Queensland the probabilities of exceeding median rainfall are 60-80% in much of central Queensland, the central coast, eastern parts of the central west and parts of the north of the State, In NSW the probabilities are 60-80% over about half of the State, particularly in the south-eastern quarter, coastal districts and far north-west. Conversely, there is only a 20-40% probability of exceeding median rainfall in south-western Victoria and parts of Tasmania. Remaining areas of eastern Australia have a rainfall probability little different from the 'normal' for this time of year.

A La Niña pattern is now firmly established in the Pacific Ocean. In general terms a La Niña pattern means reduced rainfall for our trade competitors in

south-western USA, Argentina and central Asia.

In summer-cropping areas, where there is good soil moisture, consider planting some crop into winter crop residues after harvesting. There is a strong probability of high potential yields from raingrown and irrigated cotton this year, providing effective insect and disease control is achieved.

*The average SOI over the last 30 days was +13.4 . The probabilities of exceeding median rainfall remain relatively high for much of Queensland, especially central Queensland, the central coast and eastern parts of the central west.*

### THE BOTTOM LINE

Colder-than-normal, equatorial sea-surface temperatures are now present from around the International Dateline to the eastern Pacific Ocean. In addition, temperatures are warmer than normal in waters off northern Australia.

The probabilities of above-average pasture growth during the January-March period are high (60-90%) for much of Queensland; this may result in pasture quality being poorer than usual . However, the favourable outlook may provide opportunities for burning native pasture, and sowing improved pastures.

The last passage of the 30- to 50-day Oscillation was during the fourth week of December, so the next one can be expected at the end of January.

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:**  
**27th January 1999**

### 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 extension officers at the DPI in Charters Towers, Emerald, Gympie, Kingaroy, Longreach, Mackay, Mareeba, Roma and Toowoomba.

Some information courtesy Bureau of Meteorology,  
CSIRO and National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, USA