



SOI FAX HOTLINES

(Southern Oscillation Index)

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this page is updated each Wednesday, usually by 5pm



SOI MESSAGE - 25 August 1999

| SOI (a) AVERAGES / PHASE | | |
|--|---|-------|
| May 99 | * | + 0.9 |
| June 99 | * | - 0.5 |
| July 99 | * | +4.4 |
| ----- | | |
| Last 30 days | | + 3.0 |
| Last 90 days (b) | | + 2.8 |
| ----- | | |
| SOI phase (b) during June-July was 'rapidly rising'. | | |
| 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. | | |

This winter the sub-tropical ridge has been further north than normal, which appears to have reduced rainfall in Central Queensland. This type of pattern does not normally persist beyond spring.

Potential yields of late-planted crops in winter cropping areas of central and southern Queensland are slightly below average. The SOI Phase at the end of May indicates that frosts (-2 degrees C in the screen) can be expected to be later than normal in the winter-cropping season around Moree, and slightly late in winter-cropping areas of southern and central Queensland. However, the frost risk is generally very low for June plantings.

The likelihood of above-average pasture growth during the August-October period is high for much of Queensland, due to good rainfall prospects, and also due to excellent soil moisture levels in parts of the south-eastern corner.

The next passage of the 30-50 day oscillation is expected about the second week of September.

The average SOI over the previous 30 days has risen to +3.0 . The probabilities of exceeding median rainfall during the total August to October period are mainly 50-80% in Queensland, 50-70% in NSW and Tasmania, and around 50% in Victoria.

THE BOTTOM LINE

REVIEW OF CLIMATIC FORECASTS AND INFORMATION

Based on latest values and trends of the SOI, the probabilities of exceeding median rainfall during the August to October period are mainly 50-80% in Queensland, 50-70% in NSW and Tasmania, and around 50% in Victoria. These values represent an improvement over those for recent months.

Colder-than-normal, equatorial sea-surface temperatures are now present from around the International Dateline to the central Pacific Ocean, and in most of the eastern Pacific. However, temperatures now are mainly normal in waters off Queensland and the Northern Territory.

Sea-surface temperatures in the Pacific Ocean indicate the remains of a weak La Niña pattern, but some experimental models suggest re-strengthening of the pattern towards the end of the year. In general terms, such a pattern means reduced rainfall for our trade competitors in south-western USA, Argentina and central Asia.

It is important obtain more detailed information for your location, and 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:
1st September 1999

Climate Impacts and Natural Resource Systems - Department of Natural Resources
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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, Indooroopilly, Kingaroy, Longreach, Mackay, Mareeba, Roma and Toowoomba.
Some information courtesy Bureau of Meteorology,
CSIRO and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, USA