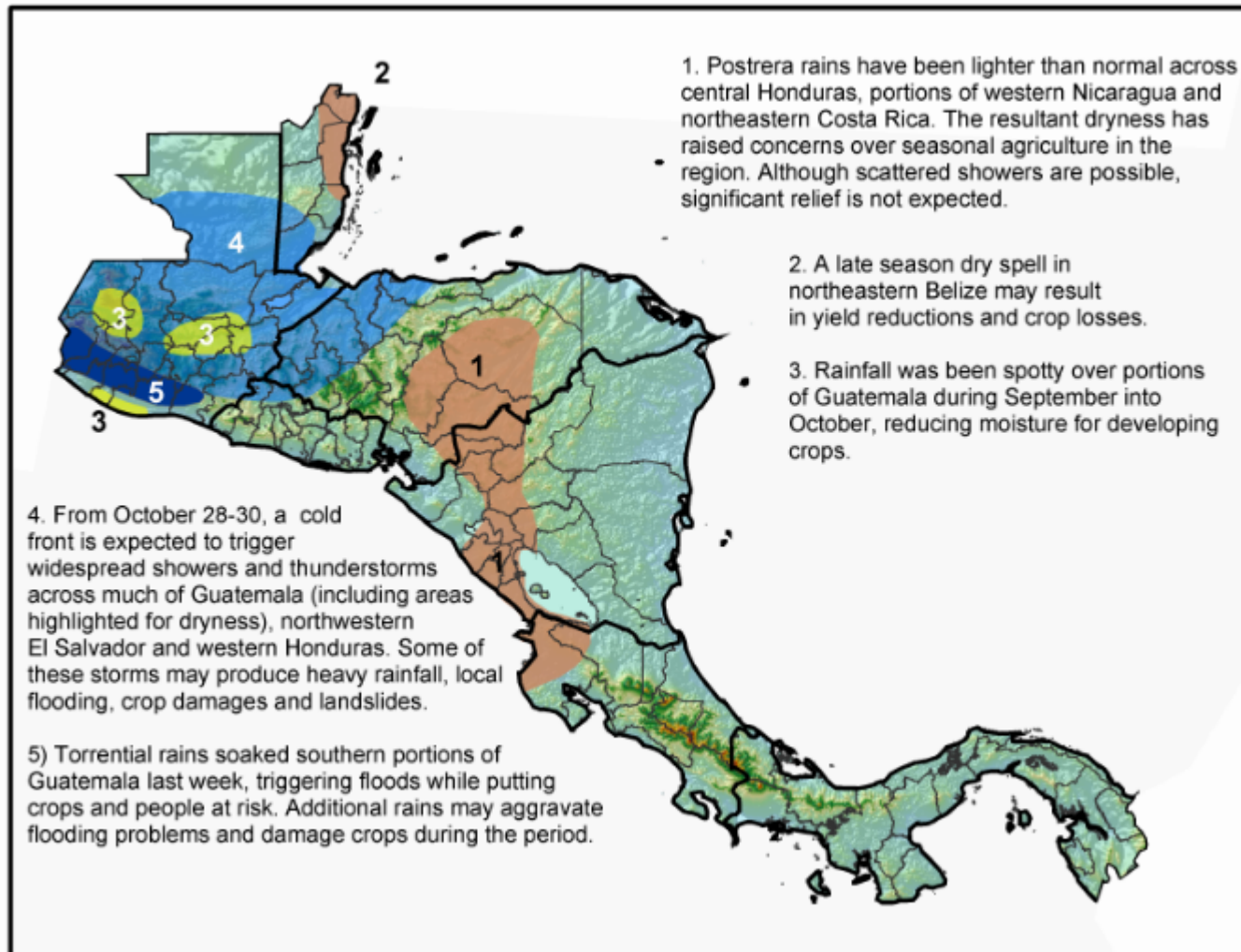


The MFEWS

Central America Weather Hazards and Benefits Assessment

October 25 - 31, 2006



- 1)** Rainfall during the latter half of the Primera season dropped off across portions of central Honduras, with dry conditions observed across parts of southwestern Nicaragua. Postrera rains have been much lighter than normal across these areas as well, with dryness extending into northwestern Costa Rica. Dry conditions have been observed spreading into northwestern Nicaragua as well. The current lack of rainfall has raised concerns over the quality of Postrera Crops. Without significant rainfall soon, crop losses are a possibility. The worst conditions have been reported in Honduras, with the departments of Olancho, Fransisco Morazan and El Paraiso most severely affected. Showers are expected during the period; however the benefits to agriculture are expected to be minimal at this time.
- 2)** Rainfall during August and September was lighter than normal across northeastern portions of Belize. This has reduced moisture for crop filling and may result, yield and crop quality losses. A cold front is expected to trigger showers and thunderstorms across the region, some of which will be heavy. However, these rains will likely come to late to have a significant impact on crops.
- 3)** Observations from Guatemala indicate that September rains have been lighter than normal across portions of central Guatemala and the southern coast, with totals that are one half to three quarters of normal. This trend has continued into October. The dry spell has raised concerns over Postrera beans, sesame and maize. Maize from the first season has not been harvested yet in the Altiplano in the northwest, and could be at risk since at higher altitudes the crops take longer to mature. Thus, they only have one harvest a year. A strong frontal system is expected to produce widespread rain across the region. These rains will ease dryness; however they may also result in some flooding and crop damage.
- 4)** A cold front is expected to trigger widespread showers and thunderstorms across Guatemala and adjacent parts of bordering countries from October 28 through 30. Heavy rains, local flooding, landslides and crop damages are possible.
- 5)** Torrential rains pelted southern Guatemala south of the Sierra Madre October 18 – 20. Additional rains fell thereafter. Early field reports indicate flooding has occurred in the department of Escuintla. Field reports also indicate that 15 to 18 thousand people are at risk, as well as maize, tomatoes, sesame, papaya and poultry. Additional rains are expected during the period. From the 27th through 29th, the potential exists for heavy rains once again, mainly in the mountains. Therefore, the risk for flooding and crop damage will continue, along with the potential for landslides.