



The weather in Germany in spring 2011
2011 sunniest spring on record

Offenbach, 30 May 2011 – "Germany enjoyed summery weather in spring 2011: sunshine amounts were higher this spring than in any other spring since records began and only spring 2007 was warmer. On the other hand," explained Deutscher Wetterdienst (DWD) press officer Uwe Kirsche, initial analysis of the data from around 2,000 weather stations shows that "rainfall was lower in the months of March, April and May than it has been at any other time since 1893."

At 10.1°C second warmest spring since 1881

The average temperature of 10.1°C in spring 2011 was 2.4°C higher than the 7.7°C long-term average determined in series for the whole of Germany since 1881 and, as such, it was the second warmest spring after 2007 (10.6°C), despite frequent overnight frosts in May. A minimum temperature of -14.3°C was measured on 7 March at Carlsfeld in the Ore Mountains and a maximum temperature of 31.3°C was recorded by the DWD at Regensburg on 26 May. While only seven summer days of 25°C occurred in spring 2010, this number increased in 2011 to 23 in Rheinau-Memprechtshofen near Baden-Baden. The warm weather conditions also influenced vegetation: the strawberry harvest, for example, began two weeks earlier than usual. Rather than ushering in the summer months as it usually does, the large-leaved lime blossomed in the last ten days of May in the Upper Rhine, Neckar, Main areas and in Westphalia.

Extremely dry, particularly in central Germany

With mean rainfall of just 88 litres per square metre (l/m²) - the average rainfall figure is 186 l/m² - it was the second driest spring in Germany since records began 130 years ago. Most rain fell on the edge of the Alps. The highest rainfall total of 319 l/m² was recorded in Reit im Winkl. The highest 24-hour rainfall total in Germany was 57.3 l/m² which fell during a severe thunderstorm in Markt Erlbach-Mosbach in Middle Franconia on 22 May. The driest areas of Germany were the southern Rhineland-Palatinate, northern Baden-Württemberg, Hesse, Lower Franconia and southern Thuringia. The DWD recorded just 33 l/m² of rainfall, or 16 percent of normal precipitation, in Wiesbaden-Auringen.

Farmers suffered most from the drought conditions. Although meadows were ready to be cut very early on they actually produced relatively low yields of hay and silage. Cereal growth was slow and there were clear signs of premature ripening of grain. The water level of most German rivers was lower in May than in any other spring in the last 100 years.

Sunniest spring since beginning of records in 1951

With 699 sunshine hours, spring 2011 was a good 50 percent sunnier than the long-term average of 459 hours, making it the sunniest spring since 1951. The south west in particular easily exceeded the previous climate average. The highest seasonal sunshine record at 802 hours was for Rheinau-Memprechtshofen near Baden-Baden. The sun shone somewhat less in the north.

The least sunny place was Kiel-Holtenau where the sun shone for 591 hours.

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