



The weather in Germany in May 2011

An exceptionally warm, far too dry and very sunny May

Offenbach, 30 May 2011 – After a cool, wet and dull May last year, May 2011 showed another side of the weather in Germany. The initial analysis by the Deutscher Wetterdienst (DWD) of data from its around 2,000 weather stations shows that, despite getting off to a cold start, May 2011 was very dry with abundant sunshine and was ultimately much too warm.

Widespread overnight frosts in the early days of the month, but altogether much too warm

As in January, February, March and April before it, May 2011 again proved far too warm. At 13.9°C - compared with the normal temperature of 12.1°C - the mean temperature in Germany was too warm. The early part of the month was very chilly. Maximum temperatures of just 5 to 10°C were recorded on the 3rd in eastern and southern Germany, with light to moderate frosts between the 3rd and 5th right across the country. The lowest temperatures were reported on 4 May: -6.1°C at Deutschneudorf-Brüderwiese in the Ore Mountain range and -5.8°C at Bad Königshofen in Lower Franconia. Coming immediately after an unusually warm April, the low temperatures in early May were highly detrimental to crops which were forward for the time of year. Vines were damaged in many winegrowing areas. After this brief wintry intermezzo, temperatures shot back up to mid-summer heights. On 7 May the thermometer measured 30.0°C at Geldern-Walbeck on the Dutch border. The highest temperature in Germany of 31.3°C was recorded on 26 May at Regensburg.

Fourth excessively dry month in succession

With around 41 litres of precipitation per square metre (l/m²), rainfall in May 2011 was just 57 percent of the long-term average of 71 l/m². May was consequently the fourth successive month in Germany which was far too dry for the time of year. The driest conditions were reported across large parts of Hesse, in Lower Franconia, southern Thuringia and in some regions of North Rhine-Westphalia. In some areas rainfall was only ten per cent of normal. Geldern-Walbeck on the Dutch border, for example, recorded the lowest rainfall figures of all German stations with 9 l/m². On the other hand, there were some notable cases of extreme precipitation. On 3 May a passage of cold air brought solid precipitation to some lowland areas. Eisenach reported heavy snow at 7 a.m. and Görlitz reported 3 cm of snow by midday. The highest 24-hour rainfall in Germany was recorded on 22 May at Markt Erlbach-Mosbach in the western part of Middle Franconia during a severe thunderstorm with a downburst of 57.3 l/m². The normal rainfall for May was even exceeded at numerous stations on the immediate edge of the Alps. The highest rainfall total of 210 l/m² was recorded in Reit im Winkl.

High pressure areas again brought a great deal of sunshine

With 269 hours of sunshine in Germany in May 2011, sunshine amounts were well above the normal 196 hours. This was again largely due to the influence of numerous high pressure areas, such as "Uta", "Viktoria", "Wilma", "Xaveria", "Yasmina", "Zinia", "Ariane" and "Birgit". Southwest Germany was especially sunny. Tholey to the north of Saarbrücken came top of the table with 319 hours of sun.

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