

THE WEATHER IN NEW ZEALAND IN OCTOBER 1985

General—October was drier and sunnier than usual, with below average temperatures in most places.

South-westerlies prevailed over the whole country and strong winds were less frequent than usual.

A heavy thunderstorm with large hailstones, up to 10 mm in diameter occurred in Auckland City during the afternoon on the 22nd. Hail was also reported throughout eastern districts of both the North and South Islands during the 26th.

Mean sea level pressures were up to 5 hectopascals above average over the southern half of the South Island.

Most farmers reported reasonable or good grass growth with stock in good condition this month, although in Canterbury grass growth has been slow due to drier whether and low soil moistures.

Rainfall—Rainfall was below average throughout the country, except for the Wairarapa where it was just above average. The driest regions in the North Island were the Bay of Plenty and the Manawatu, where rainfall was about 50 percent of average. Most eastern districts of the South Island received from 50 to 70 percent of average rainfall. On the West Coast as north-westerly and westerly winds were much less frequent than usual, rainfall for the month ranged from only 20 to 40 percent of average.

This month both Otira and Milford Sound recorded their lowest rainfalls for October, being 128 mm (24 percent of normal) and 162 mm (29 percent of normal) respectively. Records began at Otira in 1906 and at Milford Sound in 1930. Franz Josef recorded 184 mm (41 percent of normal), the second lowest for October since records began in 1928.

So far this year Oamaru Airport has recorded only 186 mm of rain (47 percent of normal), which makes this the driest year since records began in 1941.

Temperatures—Throughout the country mean daily temperatures were about 1°C below average. Kawerau experienced the coolest October on record. The mean daily temperature was 2°C below average. Records began in 1954. On the West Coast of the South Island the mean daily maximum temperature was between 1°C and 2°C above average, while the mean daily minimum was 1°C below average.

Some record maximum air temperatures for October were recorded this month at the following stations:

Date	Station	Start of record	Maximum temperature	Previous record
7 Nov.	Whakatane Airport	1975	26.4°C	23.8°C 1980/81
21 Nov.	Hokitika Airport	1953	24.0°C	24.0°C 1983
21 Nov.	Franz Josef	1963	23.8°C	22.9°C 1960

At Mount Cook Village on the 25th the temperature dropped from 18°C at 3.30 p.m. to 0°C at 8.30 p.m. The greatest drop in the temperature was between 3.30 p.m. and 4.30 p.m. when it fell 13°C.

Sunshine—Sunshine was near or above average over the whole country. The sunniest region in the North Island was the Bay of Plenty, where sunshine hours were 25 percent above average. On the West Coast of the South Island and in Southland it was particularly sunny, as most places recorded at least 30 percent more sunshine than average.

Among those stations which recorded the greatest departures this month are:

Station	Start of record	Departure from normal	Rank
Westport Airport	1937	+75 hours	equal highest with 1950
Hokitika Airport	1964	+68 hours	highest on record
Invercargill Airport	1932	+61 hours	second highest on record
Tauranga Airport	1933	+53 hours	
Rotorua Airport	1976	+41 hours	

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