

2016

November

## Impact of El Niño on Palm Oil Production

AMIRUL HADI AZLAN<sup>1\*</sup>, LEE CHIN TUI<sup>1</sup>, SOH KIM YAW<sup>1</sup>, SUDHARSAN SELVARAJA<sup>1</sup>, ROSMAN ROHAN<sup>1</sup>, IZWANIZAM ARIFFIN<sup>2</sup> AND S PALANIAPPAN<sup>1</sup>

*Oil palm growth is significantly influenced by rainfall and for that reason, Crude Palm Oil (CPO) production is affected during El Niño events. The National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration (NOAA) website provides comprehensive climate and weather information which can be related to El Niño events and ultimately fresh fruit bunch (FFB) yields or CPO production. NOAA commonly uses the Oceanic Niño Index (ONI) to determine the strength of El Niño events where records over the last 50 years revealed that the current El Niño (2015/16) has proven to be as severe (categorised as 'very strong') as the events in 1997/98 and 1982/83. Past records show that very strong El Niño events (1982/83 and 1997/98) have resulted in significant drops in FFB yield and CPO production of 10-16 per cent and 8-14 per cent respectively. This paper will attempt to explain the definition of El Niño and review its historical impact on FFB production and yield pattern under irrigated and non-irrigated conditions during two El Niño events: strong El Niño (1997/98) and weak El Niño 2005/06.*

**Keywords:** *El Niño, yield, oil palm.*

SENTIASA MAJU

1919