What is CLIMATE VARIABILITY?

1. IT IS NOT CLIMATE CHANGE.

Change is...
A ‘Major Shift’ (More Permanent)

Variability is...
A ‘Rise and Fall Pattern’ (Temporary)

Climate Normal
Climate Change Trend
Climate Variability
Annual Climate
Decadal Climate Average

2. IT CAN BE MONTHLY, SEASONAL, DECADAL, OR LONGER.

Days  Weeks  Months  Seasons  Years  Decades  Centuries

WEATHER  CLIMATE  CLIMATE VARIABILITY

CLIMATE CHANGE

†Some short-term climate variability is forecasted and available at: cpc.noaa.gov

LOOK FOR OUR OTHER FACTSHEETS AND EDUCATIONAL MODULES ON DROUGHT.GOV AND AAES.AUBURN.EDU/WRC
What is CLIMATE VARIABILITY? (Continued)

3. IT IS COMPOSED OF MANY CLIMATE CYCLES.

Atlantic Multidecadal Oscillation (AMO)
El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO)
Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO)
North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO)

Other Variability Cycles (Not Pictured):
Madden Julian Oscillation (MJO)
North American Pattern (PNA)
Antarctic Oscillation (AAO)
Arctic Oscillation (AO)
And Many More...

4. IT IMPACTS WEATHER, CLIMATE, AND RESOURCES.

This education module was last updated October 2019