



NEWS RELEASE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE - FARM SERVICE AGENCY

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USDA Designates 10 Counties in South Dakota as Primary Natural Disaster Areas

Decision Allows Farmers and Ranchers to Apply for USDA Assistance

WASHINGTON, Oct. 16, 2009 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture designated 10 counties in South Dakota as primary natural disaster areas because of losses caused by the combined effects of severe storms with hail, high winds, flooding and grasshopper infestations, which occurred during the period of Jan.1,2009, and continuing. The ten counties designated are Aurora, Brown, Custer, Fall River, Gregory, Hutchinson, Jackson, Marshall, Mellette and Yankton.

"President Obama and I understand these conditions caused severe damage to the area and serious harm to the farms in South Dakota and we want to help," said Secretary Tom Vilsack. "This action will provide help to hundreds of farmers who suffered significant production losses to forage and pasture, corn, oats, sorghum, soybeans, sunflowers and wheat."

Farm operators in the counties listed below in South Dakota also qualify for natural disaster assistance because their counties are contiguous. Those counties are:

Bennett	Davison	Haakon	McCook	Shannon
Bon Homme	Day	Hanson	McPherson	Spink
Brule	Douglas	Jerauld	Pennington	Todd
Charles Mix	Edmunds	Jones	Roberts	Tripp
Clay	Faulk	Lyman	Sanborn	Turner

Farm operators in the counties listed below in the adjacent states of **Nebraska**, **North Dakota** and **Wyoming** also qualify for natural disaster assistance because their counties are contiguous.

Nebraska: Boyd, Cedar, Dawes, Keya Paha, Knox and Sioux

North Dakota: Dickey, Richland and Sargent

Wyoming: Niobrara and Weston

All counties listed above were designated natural disaster areas Oct. 13, 2009, making all qualified farm operators in the designated areas eligible for low interest emergency (EM) loans from USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA), provided eligibility requirements are met. Farmers in eligible counties have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for loans to help cover part of their actual losses. FSA will consider each loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability. FSA has a variety of programs, in addition to the EM loan program, to help eligible farmers recover from adversity.

USDA has also made other programs available to assist farmers and ranchers, including the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE), which was approved as part of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008; the Emergency Conservation Program; Federal Crop Insurance; and the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program. Interested farmers may contact their local USDA Service Centers for further information on eligibility requirements and application procedures for these and other programs. Additional information is also available online at: <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov>.

FSA news releases are available on FSA's Web site at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov> via the "News and Events" link.