

Farmers Urged To Record Losses From Hurricane Sandy

WASHINGTON (USDA) — Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator Juan M. Garcia today urged farmers and ranchers affected by Hurricane Sandy to keep thorough records of all losses, including livestock death losses, as well as expenses for such things as feed purchases and extraordinary costs because of lost supplies and or increased transportation costs.

FSA recommends that owners and producers record all pertinent information of natural disaster consequences, including:

- Documentation of the number and kind of livestock that have died, supplemented if possible by photographs or video records of ownership and losses;
- Dates of death supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts;
- Costs of transporting livestock to safer grounds or to move animals to new pastures;
- Feed purchases if supplies or grazing pastures are destroyed;
- Crop records, including seed and fertilizer purchases, planting and production records;
- Pictures of on-farm storage facilities that were destroyed by wind or flood waters; and
- Evidence of damaged farm land.

Producers with damaged farmland should contact their local FSA office. The Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) may be able to assist producer who need to repair farmland or remove debris due to Hurricane Sandy. FSA currently has \$15.5 million available for producers in counties that received a Major Disaster declaration pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. Producers located in counties that have not received a Major Disaster declaration should visit their local FSA office for information on ECP if funding becomes available in the future.

Producers with private forest land that was damaged should also visit their local FSA office for information on the Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP). EFRP provides assistance to landowners of private forest land to help carry out emergency measures to restore land damaged by a natural disaster. Currently no funding is available, however, producers should visit their local FSA office for information if funding becomes available.

USDA's Risk Management Agency reminds producers faced with questions on prevented planting, replant, or crop losses to contact their crop insurance agent for more information. Producers who need emergency credit due may receive

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assistance through the Emergency Loan Program if they need assistance recovering from production and physical losses due to natural disasters. Producers are eligible for these loans as soon as their county is declared a Presidential or Secretarial disaster county.

Agriculture Secretary Vilsack also reminds producers that the department's authority to operate the five disaster assistance programs authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill expired on Sept. 30, 2011. This includes SURE; the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP); the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP); the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP); and the Tree Assistance Program (TAP). Production losses due to disasters occurring after Sept. 30, 2011, are not eligible for disaster program coverage.

To deliver assistance to those who need it most, Secretary Vilsack effectively reduced the interest rate for Emergency Loans in July 2012, while streamlining the Secretarial disaster designations process, resulting in a 40-percent reduction in processing time for most counties affected by disasters. Among other administrative actions, USDA has also worked with crop insurance companies to provide more flexibility to farmers.

USDA will continue working with state and local officials, as well as our federal partners, to make sure people have the necessary resources to recover from this challenge.

Crops insured by federal crop insurance or by the Noninsured Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) are covered when floodwaters have rendered them valueless. USDA encourages all farmers and ranchers to contact their crop insurance companies and local USDA Farm Service Agency Service Centers, as applicable, to report damages to crops or livestock loss. More information about federal crop insurance may be found at www.rma.usda.gov [1]. Additional resources to help farmers and ranchers deal with flooding and other damage may be found at www.usda.gov/disaster [2].

To find the USDA Service Center nearest you, please visit <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=us&agency=fsa> [3].

Also visit:

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentidonly=true&contentid=HurricaneInfo.xml> [4]

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Links:

[1] <http://www.rma.usda.gov>

[2] <http://www.usda.gov/disaster>

[3] <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=us&agency=fsa>

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