

FSA Offers Disaster Assistance

NJ has seen record rainfall for the month of August even before Hurricane Irene's arrival. The rain, coupled with the record heat waves in July and other extreme weather conditions dating all the way back to the beginning of the season have made the Farm Service Agency's Disaster Programs a hot topic among the farming communities. Here is an overview of the programs offered and how you can apply.

Emergency Loans

For 2011, qualifying farmers from all counties in NJ are eligible for Emergency Loans. Emergency loan funds may be used to restore or replace essential property; pay all or part of production costs associated with the disaster year; pay essential family living expenses; reorganize your farming operation and; and/or refinance certain debts.

Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

For those crops covered by NAP for 2011, producers must notify their local offices within 15 days from the disaster date to maintain eligibility. You will complete a "Notice of Loss" and a Loss Adjuster will be sent to appraise the damaged crops. It's imperative that the crops remain in the fields until they have been adjusted.

Tree Assistance Program (TAP)

TAP provides financial assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines. To be eligible for TAP, the crop must have been covered by Insurance or NAP.

Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)

LIP provides benefits to livestock producers for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality caused by adverse weather.

Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)

ECP provides emergency funding and technical assistance for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters and for carrying out emergency water conservation measures in periods of severe drought. County FSA committees determine land eligibility based on on-site inspections of damage, taking into account the type and extent of damage. Because of this, please don't hesitate to report damaged farmland to your local office.

For More information on these disaster programs, do not delay in calling your local office. Time is always of the essence when applying for disaster relief. Report your disaster before it becomes too late!

Warren, Morris & Sussex Counties: 908-852-2576

Salem & Gloucester Counties: 856-769-1126

Monmouth, Mercer & Middlesex Counties: 732-462-0075

Hunterdon & Somerset Counties: 908-782-4614

Cumberland, Atlantic & Cape May Counties: 856-205-1225

Burlington, Camden & Ocean Counties: 609-237-1639