

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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USDA DESIGNATES 27 COUNTIES IN MISSISSIPPI AS PRIMARY DISASTER AREAS

Decision Allows Farmers and Ranchers to Apply for USDA Assistance

Jackson, MS, July 24, 2007 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture designated 27 counties in Mississippi as primary natural disaster areas because of losses caused by unseasonably low, freezing temperatures in early April 2007. Those counties are:

Alcorn	Grenada	Panola	Tishomingo
Benton	Itawamba	Pontotoc	Tunica
Bolivar	Lafayette	Prentiss	Union
Calhoun	Lee	Quitman	Webster
Chickasaw	Lowndes	Tallahatchie	Winston
Clay	Marshall	Tate	Yalobusha
De Soto	Monroe	Tippah	

Also eligible in Mississippi because they are contiguous are the following counties:

Attala	Kemper	Montgomery	Oktibbeha
Carroll	Leake	Neshoba	Sunflower
Choctaw	Leflore	Noxubee	Washington
Coahoma			

In addition, the counties listed below in the adjacent states of Alabama, Arkansas and Tennessee are also eligible because they are contiguous counties:

Alabama

Colbert, Franklin, Lamar, Lauderdale, Marion and Pickens counties

Arkansas

Chicot, Crittenden, Desha, Lee, Phillips counties

Tennessee

Fayette, Hardeman, Hardin, McNairy and Shelby counties

All counties listed above were designated natural disaster areas on July 19, 2007, making all qualified farm operators in the designated area eligible to apply for low interest 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 made other programs available to assist farmers and ranchers, including 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://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=diap&topic=landing>.

FSA news releases are available on FSA's Web site at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

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