

NEWS

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CORRECTED RELEASE: Oct. 4, 2007, disaster designation date corrected to Oct. 2, 2007.

USDA DESIGNATES FIVE OREGON COUNTIES PRIMARY NATURAL DISASTER AREAS
Decision Allows Farmers and Ranchers to Apply for USDA Assistance

WASHINGTON, Oct. 4, 2007 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture designated five Oregon counties as primary natural disaster areas.

Baker and Wallowa counties were designated primary natural disaster areas because of losses caused by drought that occurred on May 1, 2007, and continuing. Farm operators in Grant, Malheur, Umatilla and Union counties, Ore., also qualify for natural disaster benefits because their counties are contiguous.

In addition, farm operators in the counties listed below in the adjacent states of Idaho and Washington, also qualify for natural disaster benefits because their counties are contiguous.

Idaho counties Adams, Idaho, Nez Perce and Washington

Washington counties Asotin, Columbia and Garfield

Harney County, Ore., is designated a primary natural disaster area because of losses caused by ongoing drought and wildfires that occurred on May 1, 2007, and continuing. Farm operators in Crook, Deschutes, Grant, Lake and Malheur counties, Ore., also qualify for natural disaster benefits because their counties are contiguous.

In addition, farm operators in Humboldt County, Nev., also qualify for natural disaster benefits because their county is contiguous.

Malheur County, Ore., is designated a primary natural disaster area because of losses caused by ongoing drought and wildfires that occurred on March 1, 2007, and continuing. Farm operators in Baker, Grant and Harney counties, Ore., also qualify for natural disaster benefits because their counties are contiguous.

In addition, farm operators in the counties listed below in the adjacent states of Idaho and Nevada also qualify for natural disaster benefits because their counties are contiguous.

Idaho counties Canyon, Owyhee, Payette and Washington

Nevada county Humboldt

Union County, Ore., is designated a primary natural disaster area because of losses caused by drought and frost that occurred on April 1, 2007, and continuing. Farm operators in Baker, Grant and Umatilla and Wallowa counties, Ore., also qualify for natural disaster benefits because their counties are contiguous.

All counties listed above were designated natural disaster areas on Oct. 2, 2007, 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 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.

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