Disaster Assistance Program Loss Documentation
Wisconsin Farm Service Agency

Adverse weather conditions across the state and the ending of the disaster assistance programs in the 2008 Farm Bill has created numerous questions for producers potentially facing crop or livestock losses.

The USDA Wisconsin Farm Service Agency encourages producers with current or pending losses due to adverse weather conditions, natural disasters, disease or other conditions to document losses following the guidelines provided. Properly documenting losses may provide producers with the opportunity to participate in any new or continuing disaster assistance programs that may be authorized in the 2012 Farm Bill.

Producers need to also report all cropland and pastureland, even if they are not participating in other FSA programs as previous disaster assistance programs required producers to file crop reports to qualify.

Crop Loss Documentation
Producers who suffer crop losses due to natural disasters may need to provide verifiable types of records, if they exist, or reliable records.

Verifiable types of records may include:
• sale receipts from buyers;
• invoices from custom harvesting;
• truck or warehouse scale tickets;
• actual measurements or appraisals by FSA, RMA or reinsured companies, LA's, Feed Company representatives, or FSA State Committee approved consultants; or
• similar records that represent actual and specific production data.

Reliable types of records may include:
• ledgers of commodity sales volume or income;
• income statements of deposits;
• register tapes;
• records to verify production input costs;
• producer diaries, ledgers, or receipts;
• pick records;
• other USDA program data (FSA loans, etc).

If the crop was sold or disposed of through commercial channels, acceptable production records include:
• commercial receipts;
• settlement sheets;
• ledger sheets or load summaries from warehouse, process, or buyer; or
• appraisal information.

Livestock Loss Documentation
Producers who suffer livestock losses due to natural disasters, adverse weather conditions need to provide verifiable or reliable records. Verifiable documentation may include:
• rendering truck receipts or certificates;
• FEMA records;
• National Guard records;
• veterinary records;
• records assembled for tax purposes;
• private insurance documents;
• written contracts;
• bank or other loan documents;
• purchase records;
• production records; or
• property tax records.

Reliable documentation for livestock losses may include:
• contemporaneous producer records existing at the time of the event;
• pictures with a date;
• brand inspection records;
• dairy herd improvement records; or
• other similar reliable documents.

Livestock Stored, Harvested or Purchased Feed Loss Documentation
Producers suffering losses of stored harvested feed or purchased feed for livestock may need have the original receipts of purchase that includes:
• date of feed purchase;
• name, address, and telephone number of feed vendor;
Honeybee and Feed Loss Documentation

Documentation for honeybee purchased or harvested feed losses may include:

• original receipts for purchased feed;
• weight tickets;
• truck scale tickets;
• contemporaneous diaries verifying the crop was stored with intent to feed;
• custom harvest documents clearly identifying the amount of feed produced.

Documentation for honeybee losses may include:

• a report of acreage (colonies reported);
• loan records;
• private insurance documents;
• property tax records;
• sales and purchase receipts;
• State colony registration documentation (not in Wisconsin);
• chattel inspections;
• proof of good management practices, including adequate feed for colonies, preventative treatment for varroa mites and disease, and other proper maintenance practices;
• any additional documentation the producer may have, including State health certifications for varroa mite or nosema levels reflecting the lake of mites or disease.

Farm-Raised Fish and Feed Loss Documentation

Documentation for purchased and harvested feed losses or physical losses for farm-raised fish may include:

• acreage reports (surface acres of water);
• loan records;
• private insurance documents;
• property tax records;
• sales and purchase receipts;
• chattel inspections;
• sales receipts.

Additional Information

As always, producers are encouraged to report all cropland and pastureland in addition to maintaining documentation of losses. Producers who do not market crops nor have appraisals performed should be keeping contemporaneous records of production. Changes may occur to the reporting and documentation with the passage of the new Farm Bill, but by reporting crops and maintaining quality documentation, producers may be able to meet the proper reporting and documentation requirements for any new disaster assistance programs implemented.

Producers are also encouraged to report crop conditions to their county FSA office so that the information may be used to support the potential request for disaster declarations.

For more information or questions about disaster assistance programs, contact the local USDA Service Center or visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

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