

SEVERE DROUGHT ANNOUNCEMENT

A lack of moisture, over an extended period of time during the summer and fall of 2010, caused producers in Merrimack County areas to suffer from the effects of severe drought conditions. Farms and ranches that experienced severe drought conditions in 2010 may be eligible for cost-share assistance under the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP). This disaster program is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency (FSA), which provides cost-share assistance if the damage is so severe that water available for livestock or orchards and vineyards has been reduced below normal to the extent that neither can survive without additional water.

A producer qualifying for ECP assistance may receive cost shares not to exceed 75 percent of the cost of installing eligible temporary measures. Cost sharing for permanent measures is based on 50 percent of the total eligible cost. Cost-share assistance is limited to \$200,000 per person or legal entity per natural disaster. Approved practices and measures may include:

- installing pipelines or other facilities for livestock water or existing irrigation systems for orchards and vineyards;
- constructing and deepening wells for livestock water;
- developing springs or seeps for livestock water.

Producers who experienced severe drought conditions in 2010 and requiring outside assistance to provide supplemental emergency livestock water may contact the local FSA County Office. Requests for assistance will be accepted at the Merrimack FSA County Office from August 1, 2011 to August 30, 2011 at 223-6003.

To be eligible for cost shares, practices shall not be started until a request has first been filed at the FSA County Office and an onsite inspection of the problem area has been made by the County Committee (COC) or its representative. COC will review the inspection findings when considering the request for cost shares.