



USDA Designates 18 Iowa Counties as Primary Natural Disaster Areas

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Emergency Loans, Increased Flexibilities, and Other Disaster Assistance Programs Available

RADCLIFFE, Iowa, Sept. 3, 2020 - Today, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue designated 18 Iowa counties as primary natural disaster areas, enabling producers who suffered losses because of the recent Derecho, that occurred on August 10, 2020, to be eligible for [emergency loans](#). Additionally, Perdue reminded producers about the suite of disaster assistance programs available through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), including program flexibilities and a special signup through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

"The extent of damage to crops, equipment, facilities, and the ag sector as a whole from this storm is devastating," said Secretary Perdue. "President Trump has already demonstrated his support for Iowa by immediately approving Iowa's disaster declaration. He is committed to ensuring Iowa's farmers get back on their feet and continue to produce the food and fuel America needs to thrive. The recovery process is in full swing, and USDA is working diligently to expedite financial and technical support for Iowa farmers and livestock producers who have suffered unprecedented losses. We are standing by to expand this designation as we learn more about the full impacts of the Derecho."

Emergency Loans

These natural disaster designations allow the Farm Service Agency (FSA) to extend much-needed emergency credit to producers recovering from natural disasters. [Emergency loans](#) can be used to meet various recovery needs, including the replacement of essential items such as equipment or livestock, reorganization of a farming operation, or the refinancing of certain debts.

Iowa Counties - Primary Designation

Benton, Boone, Cedar, Clinton, Dallas, Guthrie, Hamilton, Hardin, Jasper, Johnson, Jones, Linn, Marshall, Polk, Poweshiek, Scott, Story, and Tama may be eligible to apply for emergency loans.

Iowa and Illinois - Contiguous Designation

Producers in the contiguous counties listed below are also eligible to apply for emergency loans:

- Iowa: Adair, Audubon, Black Hawk, Buchanan, Butler, Carroll, Cass, Delaware, Dubuque, Franklin, Greene, Grundy, Iowa, Jackson, Keokuk, Louisa, Madison, Mahaska, Marion, Muscatine, Warren, Washington, Webster, and Wright.
- Illinois: Carroll, Rock Island, and Whiteside.

The deadline to apply for these emergency loans is May 3, 2021.

FSA will review the loans based on the extent of losses, security available, and repayment ability.

Flexibilities on Environmental Compliance Reviews

To assist producers in Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and other states impacted by the Derecho, FSA has streamlined the environmental compliance review process for the [Emergency Conservation Program](#), [Emergency Forest Restoration Program](#), [Emergency Loan Program](#), [Farm Storage Facility Program](#), and [Tree Assistance Program](#). Implementation of these programs has been determined to have potentially low impact to protected resources.

These program flexibilities are meant to address work required to restore existing crops, fields, orchards, barns, storage facilities, fences, equipment, and general debris removal. Work required on previously undisturbed ground, new land clearing, or work that would impact any water body, wetland, riparian buffer, or wetland would not be covered by the streamlined environmental review process.

EQIP Special Signup

Additionally, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is making available \$4 million in recovery assistance through a [special EQIP signup](#) in parts of Iowa impacted by the Derecho. Applications will be accepted through Oct. 2, 2020. Eligible applicants will receive higher than normal EQIP practice payments rates during this signup.

These EQIP funds can be used for:

- Seeding cover crops on impacted fields;
- Replacing roofs, covers, or roof runoff structures previously funded through NRCS; and
- Replacing damaged high tunnel systems previously funded by NRCS.

More Information

In addition to emergency loans and EQIP, other available programs include the [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program](#); [Emergency Conservation Program](#), [Livestock Forage Disaster Program](#), [Livestock Indemnity Program](#), and [Operating and Farm Ownership Loans](#). These programs and other available recovery assistance do not require a disaster

designation.

Producers and landowners can use the online [Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool](#), answering five questions to identify USDA programs that will help meet disaster recovery needs.

For more information on all USDA disaster assistance programs, visit farmers.gov/recover, or contact your local USDA Service Center, which can be found at farmers.gov/service-center-locator. For assistance with a crop insurance claim, please contact your [crop insurance agent](#).

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