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Farm Service Agency

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

U.S. Department of Agriculture Designates Twelve Additional Georgia Counties as Primary Natural Disaster Areas Due to Drought Conditions

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ATHENS, Ga., Dec. 6, 2023 – The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently designated an additional twelve Georgia counties as primary natural disaster areas due to drought conditions. The Secretarial natural disaster designation allows the Farm Service Agency (FSA) to extend much-needed emergency credit to producers recovering from natural disasters through [emergency loans](#). The additional primary Georgia counties are Bartow, Cherokee, Dawson, Fannin, Floyd, Forsyth, Gilmer, Gordon, Lumpkin, Murray, Pickens, and Whitfield. This announcement expands upon previous designations that declared nine Georgia counties as primary natural disaster areas due to recent severe drought conditions.

“Many of our producers in Georgia have faced the serious impacts of recent drought conditions,” said Arthur Tripp, State Executive Director for FSA in Georgia. “We are excited that producers in additional Georgia counties will now be eligible to apply for this emergency credit, which is critical to their recovery from severe drought conditions.”

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, the primary counties suffered from a drought intensity value during the growing season of 1) D2 Drought-Severe for more than 8 or more consecutive weeks, 2) D3 Drought-Extreme or, 3) D3 Drought-Exceptional. Producers in additional contiguous Georgia counties are also eligible for disaster relief coverage. Producers in the following eligible counties should contact their [local USDA Service Center](#) to learn more about deadlines and how to apply for FSA emergency assistance.

Complete List of Primary Counties Eligible

Bartow, Catoosa, Chattooga, Cherokee, Dade, Dawson, Decatur, Early, Fannin, Floyd, Forsyth
Gilmer, Gordon, Lumpkin, Miller, Murray, Pickens, Seminole, Union, Walker, Whitfield

Complete List of Contiguous Counties Also Eligible

Baker, Calhoun, Clay, Cobb, Fulton, Grady, Gwinnett, Hall, Mitchell, Paulding, Polk, Towns, White

FSA emergency loans allow producers to borrow up to 100 percent of actual production or physical losses, up to a maximum amount of \$500,000. These loans assist producers in meeting their various recovery needs, including the payment of essential family living expenses, reorganization of a farming operation, or to refinance certain debts. FSA considers each emergency loan application on its own merits, considering the extent of losses, security available, and repayment ability.

For more information about FSA's full suite of disaster recovery options, producers can visit farmers.gov, where the [Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool](#), [Disaster Assistance-at-a-Glance fact sheet](#), and [Loan Assistance Tool](#) can help you determine program or loan options. Producers can also contact their local [USDA Service Center](#) to file a Notice of Loss and learn more about programs fitting their operational needs.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under the Biden-Harris administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy, and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit? usda.gov.

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