Guam County Farm Service Agency is Accepting Emergency Conservation Program Applications for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

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Hawaii and Pacific Islands

Barrigada, Guam, February 5, 2024 - U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) Executive Director Ilene Iriarte today announced that Guam County is accepting applications for the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) to address damages from Typhoon Bolaven in Rota, Saipan and Tinian Counties. ECP signup is open now and will end on April 5, 2024.

The approved ECP practices under this authorization include debris removal to address high winds damage to eligible farmland, livestock fences and conservation structures and installations.

ECP assists producers with the recovery cost to restore the farmland to pre-disaster conditions. Approved ECP applicants may receive up to 75 percent of the cost of approved restoration activity. Limited resource, socially disadvantaged and beginning farmers and ranchers may receive up to 90 percent cost-share.

"Dealing with natural disasters is never easy, especially when you have to consider the health and safety of livestock, but it's important for producers to call our office before they take any action," said Iriarte.

Producers with damage from such events must apply for assistance prior to beginning reconstructive work. FSA's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and environmental compliance review process is required to be completed before any actions are taken. Submitting an application after reconstructive work has been completed may not qualify for ECP.

FSA county committees will evaluate applications based on an on-site inspection of the damaged land, taking into consideration the type and extent of the damage. An on-site inspection does not guarantee that cost-share funding will be provided.

The 2018 Farm Bill increased the payment limitation for ECP to $500,000 per disaster. The use of ECP funds is limited to activities to return the land to the relative pre-disaster condition. Conservation concerns that were present on the land prior to the disaster are not eligible for ECP assistance.

For more information on ECP, please contact the Guam County FSA office at 671-472-7590 ext. 2 or visit farmers.gov/recover.

For more information on government response and available resources visit https://www.usa.gov/hawaii-wildfires and https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4724.

Farm Service Agency:

1400 Independence Ave.
SW Washington, DC 20250

Contact:

FPAC Press Desk
FPAC.BC.Press@usda.gov