Incoming

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

TODD STAPLES
COMMISSIONER

September 9, 2009

Mr. Jonathan Coppess
Administrator
Farm Service Agency
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Mr. Coppess:

As you are aware, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 allocated $50 million for U.S. aquaculture producers to offset the rise in feed prices in 2008. The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) received $1.687 million to distribute to aquaculture producers in Texas.

On Aug. 25, 2009, TDA allocated the entirety of this amount on a pro rata basis to all eligible applicants in the form of lines of credit with local feed mills. To provide the full amount for which the Texas aquaculture producers are eligible would require an additional $2,058,605.01. We have been made aware other states have or will return money to USDA as too many of their producers reached the $100,000 limitation on payments. We encourage FSA to redistribute that money to states that have eligibility remaining, like Texas.

Thank you for the work you do on behalf of America's farmers and ranchers. Please feel free to contact me for assistance on this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Todd Staples

Todd Staples

TS/CJF/me

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