



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

NOV - 2 2009

The Honorable Rick Perry
Governor
State of Texas
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Governor Perry:

This is in further response to your letter of March 6, 2009, requesting a disaster designation for the entire State of Texas due to losses caused by drought and other disasters that have occurred in 2009.

On April 27, 2009, I designated 70 counties as primary natural disaster areas due to drought, above-normal temperatures, and associated wildfires that occurred during the period of January 1, 2009, and continuing.

At that time, the Department of Agriculture (USDA) notified you there was not sufficient information to make an accurate determination of production losses for the remaining 184 Texas counties. Therefore, the decision to designate those counties as primary natural disaster areas was deferred.

USDA has now reviewed the Loss Assessment Reports, along with the additional information submitted by the State Executive Director, Farm Service Agency. Based on this review, USDA has determined that there were sufficient production losses in 69 additional counties to warrant a Secretarial natural disaster designation. Therefore, I am designating 69 Texas counties as primary natural disaster areas due to losses caused by drought, above-normal temperatures, and associated wildfires that occurred during the period of January 1, 2009, and continuing.

Those counties are:

Angelina	Crockett	Guadalupe	Kerr	Robertson
Atascosa	Crosby	Hale	Kimble	Somervell
Bailey	Deaf Smith	Hall	Lamb	Starr
Bandera	Denton	Hardeman	Lavaca	Swisher
Bexar	Dimmit	Harris	Leon	Trinity
Brazoria	Duval	Haskell	Lynn	Walker
Brazos	Edwards	Hidalgo	Madison	Ward
Briscoe	Fort Bend	Hood	Milam	Webb
Brooks	Frio	Houston	Mitchell	Wheeler
Burleson	Gaines	Jack	Montgomery	Willacy

Cameron	Galveston	Jackson	Palo Pinto	Williamson
Castro	Goliad	Jeff Davis	Parker	Zapata
Clay	Grayson	Jim Hogg	Parmer	Zavala
Colorado	Grimes	Jim Wells	Refugio	

In accordance with section 321(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, additional areas of your State are named as contiguous disaster counties. Those counties are:

Anderson	Cottle	Howard	McMullen	Stephens
Andrews	Crane	Hudspeth	Medina	Sterling
Aransas	Culberson	Irion	Menard	Stonewall
Archer	Dallas	Jasper	Montague	Sutton
Armstrong	Dawson	Johnson	Motley	Tarrant
Austin	De Witt	Jones	Nacogdoches	Terrell
Bastrop	Dickens	Karnes	Nolan	Terry
Baylor	Donley	Kendall	Nueces	Throckmorton
Bee	Eastland	Kenedy	Oldham	Travis
Bell	Ector	Kent	Pecos	Tyler
Borden	Erath	King	Polk	Upton
Bosque	Falls	Kinney	Potter	Uvalde
Brewster	Fannin	Kleberg	Presidio	Val Verde
Burnet	Fayette	Knox	Randall	Victoria
Caldwell	Fisher	La Salle	Reagan	Waller
Calhoun	Floyd	Lee	Real	Washington
Chambers	Foard	Liberty	Reeves	Wharton
Cherokee	Freestone	Limestone	Roberts	Wichita
Childress	Garza	Live Oak	San Augustine	Wilbarger
Cochran	Gillespie	Loving	San Jacinto	Wilson
Coke	Gonzales	Lubbock	San Patricio	Winkler
Collin	Gray	Martin	Schleicher	Wise
Collingsworth	Hays	Mason	Scurry	Yoakum
Comal	Hemphill	Matagorda	Shackelford	Young
Cooke	Hockley	Maverick		

We were unable to confirm that sufficient production losses occurred in the remaining 115 counties in Texas. Those counties are:

Anderson	Dallas	Hunt	Navarro	Shelby
Andrews	Dawson	Hutchinson	Newton	Sherman
Archer	Delta	Irion	Ochiltree	Smith
Armstrong	Ector	Jasper	Oldham	Sterling
Bell	El Paso	Jefferson	Orange	Sutton
Borden	Ellis	Johnson	Panola	Tarrant
Bosque	Erath	Kaufman	Pecos	Terrell
Bowie	Falls	Knox	Polk	Terry
Brewster	Fannin	La Salle	Presidio	Throckmorton
Camp	Franklin	Lamar	Rains	Titus
Carson	Freestone	Liberty	Randall	Tom Green
Cass	Garza	Limestone	Reagan	Tyler
Chambers	Gray	Llano	Red River	Upshur
Cherokee	Gregg	Loving	Reeves	Upton
Childress	Hansford	Marion	Roberts	Val Verde
Cochran	Hardin	Mason	Rockwall	Van Zandt
Coke	Harrison	Matagorda	Rusk	Wharton
Collin	Hartley	Menard	Sabine	Wichita
Comanche	Hemphill	Midland	San Augustine	Winkler
Concho	Henderson	Montague	San Jacinto	Wise
Cooke	Hockley	Moore	Schleicher	Wood
Crane	Hopkins	Morris	Scurry	Yoakum
Culberson	Hudspeth	Nacogdoches	Shackelford	Young

None of those counties sustained a 30-percent or greater production loss in a single enterprise due to the natural disaster. In addition, farmers in those counties who sustained qualifying losses were able to secure commercial financing to cover these losses and, therefore, are not qualified to receive emergency loans. Therefore, I am unable to approve your request for the designation of those 115 Texas counties as primary natural disaster areas.

However, 84 of those 115 counties will be eligible for FSA emergency loan assistance since they are or have been named as contiguous counties for this disaster in 2009.

Thirty-one counties will not be eligible as primary counties or as contiguous counties due to this disaster. Those counties are:

Bowie	Hansford	Kaufman	Panola	Shelby
Camp	Hardin	Lamar	Rains	Smith
Cass	Harrison	Marion	Red River	Titus
Delta	Henderson	Morris	Rockwall	Upshur
El Paso	Hopkins	Newton	Rusk	Van Zandt
Franklin	Hunt	Orange	Sabine	Wood
Gregg				

This designation makes farm operators in both primary and contiguous counties eligible to be considered for assistance from FSA, provided eligibility requirements are met. This assistance includes FSA emergency loans and the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program which was approved as part of the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008. FSA will consider each application on its own merit by taking into account the extent of losses, security available, and repayment ability.

Local FSA offices can provide affected farmers with further information.

Sincerely,



Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary