

News Release

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USDA Offers Disaster Assistance to Farmers in Arkansas, Indiana, Iowa and Wisconsin Impacted by Recent Storms and Tornadoes

INDIANAPOLIS, April 13, 2023 – Agricultural operations in Arkansas, Indiana, Iowa and Wisconsin have been significantly impacted by recent tornadoes and severe storms that caused widespread and extensive destruction across those states. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has technical and financial assistance available to help farmers and livestock producers recover in the wake of these disasters. Impacted producers should contact their local USDA Service Center to report losses and learn more about programs that may be available to assist in their recovery from crop, land, infrastructure and livestock losses and damages.

“Production agriculture is vital to the economy in these states and USDA stands ready to assist in the recovery from the recent severe weather event,” said Robert Bonnie, Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC). “USDA employees are working diligently to deliver FPAC’s extensive portfolio of disaster assistance programs and services to all impacted agricultural producers.”

Risk Management

Producers who have risk protection through Federal Crop Insurance or Farm Service Agency’s (FSA) [Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program](#) (NAP) should report crop damage to their crop insurance agent or FSA office. If they have crop insurance, producers should report crop damage to their agent within 72 hours of damage discovery and follow up in writing within 15 days.

For NAP covered crops, a Notice of Loss (CCC-576) must be filed within 15 days of the loss becoming apparent, except for hand-harvested crops, which should be reported within 72 hours. Producers who have not applied for NAP coverage may still be covered. FSA has updated NAP to remove barriers and establish procedures through which an underserved producer with a Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, Beginning and Veteran Farmer or Rancher Certification (CCC-860) on file prior to the applicable NAP application closing date will automatically receive basic coverage for any NAP-eligible crops. Like all NAP-covered producers, underserved producers will still need to file a notice of loss and apply for program benefits.

USDA Disaster Assistance

Producers who experience livestock deaths may be eligible for the [Livestock Indemnity Program](#) (LIP). To participate in LIP, producers will have to provide verifiable documentation of death losses resulting from an eligible adverse weather event and must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is apparent.

Meanwhile, the [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program](#) (ELAP) provides eligible producers with compensation for feed and grazing losses. For ELAP, producers will need to file a notice of loss within 30 days and honeybee losses within 15 days.

Additionally, eligible orchardists and nursery tree growers may be eligible for cost-share assistance through the [Tree Assistance Program](#) (TAP) to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes or vines lost. This complements [Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program](#) (NAP) or crop insurance coverage, which covers the crop but not the plants or trees in all cases. For TAP, a program application must be filed within 90 days.

Agricultural producers are reminded to contact their local FSA office to timely report all crop, livestock and farm infrastructure damages and losses. To expedite FSA disaster assistance, producers will likely need to provide documents, such as farm records, herd inventory, receipts and pictures of damages or losses.

FSA also offers a variety of direct and guaranteed [farm loans](#), including operating and emergency farm loans, to producers unable to secure commercial financing. Producers in counties with a primary or contiguous disaster designation may be eligible for low-interest [emergency loans](#) to help them recover from production and physical losses. Loans can help producers replace essential property, purchase inputs like livestock, equipment, feed and seed, cover family living expenses or refinance farm-related debts and other needs. Additionally, FSA has a variety of loan servicing options available for borrowers who are unable to make scheduled payments on their farm loan programs debt to the Agency because of reasons beyond their control.

The [Farm Storage Facility Loan Program](#) (FSFL) provides low-interest financing so producers can build or upgrade facilities to store commodities. Loan terms vary from three to 12 years. Producers who incurred damage to or loss of their equipment or infrastructure funded by the FSFL program should contact their insurance agent and their local USDA Service Center. Producers in need of on-farm storage should also contact USDA.

Conservation

FSA's [Emergency Conservation Program](#) (ECP) and [Emergency Forest Restoration Program](#) (EFRP) can assist landowners and forest stewards with financial and technical assistance to restore fencing, damaged farmland or forests. ECP can also cover costs associated with debris removal from cropland.

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is always available to provide technical assistance in the recovery process by assisting producers to plan and implement conservation practices on farms, ranches and working forests impacted by natural disasters. The [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) (EQIP) can help producers plan and implement conservation practices on land impacted by natural disasters.

Assistance for Communities

Additional NRCS programs include the [Emergency Watershed Protection](#) (EWP) program, which assists local government sponsors with the cost of addressing watershed impairments or hazards such as debris removal and streambank stabilization.

Eligible sponsors include cities, counties, towns or any federally recognized Native American tribe or tribal organization. Sponsors must submit a formal request (by mail or email) to the state conservationist for assistance within 60 days of the natural disaster occurrence or 60 days from the date when access to the sites become available. For more information, producers should contact their [local NRCS office](#).

More Information

On [farmers.gov](#), the [Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool](#), [Disaster Assistance-at-a-Glance](#) fact sheet, and [Loan Assistance Tool](#) can help producers and landowners determine program or loan options. For assistance with a crop insurance claim, producers and landowners should contact their [crop insurance agent](#). For FSA and NRCS programs, they should contact their local [USDA Service Center](#).

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