



Farm Service Agency
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

U.S. Department of Agriculture Designates 17 Georgia Counties as Primary Natural Disaster Areas Due to Severe Drought Conditions

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Contact: Jay Ivey
Jay.Ivey@usda.gov
706-510-5318

Producers in 18 Contiguous Georgia Counties Eligible for Emergency Relief

ATHENS, Ga., Mar. 28, 2024 – On March 25, 2024, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) designated 17 Georgia counties as primary natural disaster areas. 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](#).

“Our agency stands committed to providing support to our agricultural producers who are recovering from natural disasters,” said Arthur Tripp, State Executive Director for FSA in Georgia. “Drought conditions can be devastating for many agricultural operations. Through these designations, Georgia’s farmers and ranchers will have access to the emergency credit that 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 an additional nine contiguous Georgia counties are also eligible for disaster relief coverage. Producers in the following eligible counties will have until **November 25, 2024**, to apply for FSA emergency assistance.

Primary Counties Eligible

Georgia: Bartow, Chattooga, Cherokee, Dawson, Fannin, Floyd, Gilmer, Gordon, Habersham, Lumpkin, Murray, Pickens, Rabun, Towns, Union, White, Whitfield

Contiguous Counties Also Eligible

Georgia: Banks, Catoosa, Cobb, Forsyth, Fulton, Hall, Paulding, Polk, Stephens, Walker, Columbia, Elbert, Franklin, Hart, Lincoln, Dade, Carroll, Haralson

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.

Farm Service Agency:

1400 Independence Ave.
SW Washington, DC 20250

Contact:

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