
Guam and CNMI County Farm Service Agency is Accepting Emergency Conservation Program Applications

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(BARRIGADA, Guam), June 27, 2023 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Executive Director Ilene Iriarte today announced that Guam and CNMI Counties are accepting applications for the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) to address damages from Typhoon Mawar. ECP signup will begin on June 20, 2023, and end on August 18, 2023.

The approved ECP practices under this authorization include removing debris from farmland and replacing or restoring permanent fences. 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.

“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.

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 eligible cost of restoration measures. Eligible socially disadvantaged and beginning farmers and ranchers can receive up to 90 percent of the eligible cost of restoration. No one is eligible for more than \$500,000 cost sharing per natural disaster occurrence.

Cost share assistance has now been authorized to:

- provide advance payments, up to 25% of the cost, for all ECP practices before the restoration is carried out, an option that was previously only available for fence repair or replacement. The cost-share payment must be spent within 60 days; and
- allow producers who lease Federally owned or managed lands, including tribal trust land, as well as State land the opportunity to participate.

To be eligible for assistance, practices must not be started until all the following are met:

- an application for cost-share assistance has been filed
- the local FSA County Committee (COC) or its representative has conducted an onsite inspection of the damaged area
- the Agency responsible for technical assistance, such as the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), has made a needs determination, which may include cubic yards of earthmoving, etc., required for rehabilitation

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.

For more information on ECP, please contact the Guam County FSA office at 671-300-8550/8551 or visit farmers.gov/recover.

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