



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

NOV 13 2013

The Honorable Chris Christie
Governor
State of New Jersey
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

Dear Governor Christie:

On October 30, 2013, the State Executive Director of the New Jersey Farm Service Agency (FSA), Department of Agriculture (USDA), requested a primary county disaster designation for eight New Jersey counties, due to losses caused by excessive rain, related flooding, high winds, and hail that occurred from May 1, 2013 through September 24, 2013. Those counties are:

| | | | |
|------------|----------|------------|-------|
| Atlantic | Camden | Cumberland | Ocean |
| Burlington | Cape May | Gloucester | Salem |

USDA reviewed the Loss Assessment Reports and determined that there were sufficient production losses to warrant a Secretarial natural disaster designation. Therefore, I am designating all eight New Jersey counties named above as primary natural disaster areas.

In accordance with section 321(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, Mercer and Monmouth Counties, New Jersey, are named as contiguous disaster counties.

A Secretarial disaster designation makes farm operators in primary counties and those counties contiguous to such primary counties eligible to be considered for certain assistance from the FSA, provided eligibility requirements are met. This assistance includes FSA emergency loans. Farmers in eligible counties have 8 months from the date of a Secretarial disaster declaration to apply for emergency loans. FSA considers each emergency loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of production losses on the farm, and the security and repayment ability of the operator.

Local FSA offices can provide affected farmers with further information.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary