



DISASTER RELIEF RESOURCES

FOR FARMERS & PRODUCERS

Hurricanes and other weather events can be especially devastating for farmers and producers, both economically and emotionally. While government programs can never fully relieve losses, there are a number of resources that are available to help farmers recover from disaster.

First Steps

COLLECT DOCUMENTATION

Prior to starting any cleanup activity, make sure to take pictures of damage and losses that have occurred.

CONTACT YOUR INSURANCE AGENT

If you have crop insurance, contact your crop insurance agent to report losses or damages. **It is important to do this before starting any cleanup activities so that everything can be documented properly.** Furthermore, farmers need to notify their crop insurance agent within 72 hours of discovery of a loss. Farmers should provide a signed, written notice within 15 days of the loss.

CONTACT THE FSA FOR ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE

If you may be eligible for the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) or other disaster assistance programs, contact the local U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) office. **It is important to do this before starting any cleanup activities so that everything can be documented properly and a waiver can be issued prior to cleanup.**

WHAT YOUR COUNTY AGENT NEEDS TO KNOW

County Extension agents are responsible for helping collect data to report crop loss estimates which are compiled and reported to state and federal agencies and elected officials. For this purpose, **producers are asked to rapidly report all estimated losses to their local agriculture agent, including photos, videos, and/or GPS coordinates of those areas hardest hit.** Many of the FSA disaster programs require a letter from a secondary expert once an adjuster verifies losses. Extension agents are often asked to write a letter to confirm the findings.

Common Questions

What are the next steps after experiencing crop damage?

Depending on the program, contact either your crop insurance agent or local FSA office. Take pictures of the damage and do not burn any debris. An adjuster or FSA representative will need to survey the damage, so it is important to delay cleanup until damage has been assessed or cleanup permission has been granted.

Note certain crop insurance deadlines. You must notify your crop insurance agent within 72 hours of a loss before abandoning a crop. Farmers must draft and sign a written declaration of loss within 15 days.

In addition to documenting the damage and losses, track expenses related to cleanup. It is advisable to keep records of all activities related to the disaster.

In certain situations, do farmers have to pick the crop?

This is a difficult question that depends on individual circumstances. Some issues that need to be considered are whether there is any salvage value of the crop and the quality of anything that can still be harvested. If it is a good crop, then it should be harvested. The farmer's crop insurance agent can help make a determination of how to proceed.

DISCLAIMER: The information provided in this document does not represent a specific recommendation. Producers should make disaster assistance decisions in consultation with their crop insurance agent, local USDA Farm Service Agency or other government entity responsible for program administration.

Originally written and compiled in 2018 by Adam N. Rabinowitz; revised in 2024 by Maria Bowie, Jennifer Miller, Camp Hand, Tim Coolong, Guy Hancock and Amanda Tedrow.

If a farmer doesn't pick the crop, how badly will it hurt the established yield?

If there is crop available to pick and you choose not to, then it will count against the loss.

What if a farmer has an FSA loan on a structure that was damaged?

Contact the local FSA office immediately to report this damage.

What additional disaster relief may become available and when?

After many natural disasters that result in widespread damage, additional programs often become available to aid with agricultural losses. This is not guaranteed, however, and requires processing time for a special appropriation from the U.S. Congress and the president's approval. While a special allocation may not be immediately available, it is important to document losses and to illustrate to your legislators the impact that the storm has had on your farming operation. This information will help drive policy decisions and additional allocations that may become available.



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Important Disaster Assistance Resources

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) website for storm-related disaster information can be found at usda.gov/topics/disaster-resource-center, where you will find information about Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) aid and other disaster programs. A resource directly related to agriculture can be accessed at disasterassistance.gov/information/moving-forward/your-business-or-farm.

CROP INSURANCE



Provides financial assistance to producers of insurable crops to protect against natural disasters that impact revenue or yield, depending on coverage. Producers must be enrolled in this program prior to a loss.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR LIVESTOCK, HONEYBEES, AND FARM-RAISED FISH (ELAP)



Provides financial assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish for losses due to natural disasters. Losses under this program may not be covered under other disaster assistance programs that are part of the 2014 U.S. Farm Bill.

NONINSURED CROP DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (NAP)



Provides financial assistance to producers of noninsurable crops to protect against natural disasters that result in lower yields or crop losses. Producers must be enrolled in this program prior to a loss.

LIVESTOCK INDEMNITY PROGRAM (LIP)



Provides assistance to eligible livestock owners or contract growers for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality caused by eligible loss conditions, which include hurricanes.

TREE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP)



Provides financial assistance to eligible orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines lost by natural disasters.

EMERGENCY CONSERVATION PROGRAM (ECP)



Provides funding and technical assistance to rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters.

EMERGENCY FOREST RESTORATION PROGRAM (EFRP)



Provides payments to eligible owners of nonindustrial private forest land (timber) to carry out emergency measures to restore land damaged by a natural disaster.

EMERGENCY WATERSHED PROTECTION PROGRAM (EWP)



Provides technical and financial assistance to help local communities relieve imminent threats to life and property caused by natural disasters that impair a watershed.

EMERGENCY LOAN PROGRAM



Provides emergency loans to help producers recover from production and physical losses due to natural disasters.

DISASTER SET-ASIDE PROGRAM



Provides eligible FSA borrowers in a designated disaster area the ability to defer payment to allow operations to continue.

UGA WEATHER RESOURCES



Producers and Extension agents require access to real-time and post-event scientific evidence in support of disaster damage reporting and documentation.



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