



MEMA



Joint Information Center
502 Clinton Center Drive
Clinton, Mississippi

FEMA

Disaster News

June 7, 2011

DR-1972 / DR-1983-NR-024

Media Contact: 617-513-2582

State Contact: 866-920-6362

DISASTER GRANTS AND LOANS AVAILABLE FOR FARMERS AND RANCHERS

CLINTON, Miss -- In Mississippi according to the USDA, it is estimated that 300,000 acres of farmland, have been impacted by flooding this spring. Federal and state agencies have been working for weeks with local officials, as well as individuals, businesses, farmers and ranchers, as they begin the process of helping to get the rural Mississippi people back on their feet following two disasters this spring.

Those twin disasters were the storms, tornadoes and flooding in April followed by flooding of the Mississippi River and its tributaries in May.

Disaster assistance is available in many forms through many federal agencies:

- The USDA Farm Service Agency provides farmers and ranchers with Emergency Loans of up to \$500,000 to cover production and property losses, excluding primary residence. In addition, it coordinates disaster-related assistance under a half dozen USDA programs including the honeybees and farm-raised fish program.
- The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service through the Environmental Quality Incentive Program is available to assist farmers and ranchers on private lands with a suite of conservation practices such as fencing, grade stabilization structures, livestock watering facilities and certain other structures.
- The Natural Resources Conservation Service through the Emergency Watershed Protection Program-Floodplain Easement can further assist farmers and ranchers by the purchase of flood plain easements. The EWPP-FPE provides an alternative for farmers with frequently flooded and damaged farmland. The program's primary emphasis is to retire frequently-flooded bottomland from agriculture uses, allowing the unimpeded flow of floodwaters. It also eliminates the need for future disaster payments on frequently flooded cropland.

(MORE)

DISASTER GRANTS AND LOANS AVAILABLE FOR FARMERS AND RANCHERS

Page 2

- USDA Rural Development has grant and loan funds available to rural communities to provide housing and shelter, public safety, health care and community facilities and business recovery assistance. USDA Rural Development also administers the Rural Energy for America Program which is designed specifically for farmers and ranchers who are considering energy efficiency improvements and/or installation of renewable energy equipment to their farming operations. These loans (up to \$25 million) and grants (up to \$500,000) can assist farmers/ranchers in reducing their energy cost as they recover from these disasters.
- The Small Business Administration provides low-interest loans to cover residential losses not fully compensated by insurance. Loans are available up to \$200,000 for primary residence and \$40,000 for personal property, including renter losses.
- SBA also loans up to \$2 million for businesses of all sizes and private, non-profit organizations for Physical Disaster Loans to repair or replace damaged real estate, equipment, inventory and fixtures. Additionally, small businesses, small agriculture cooperatives and certain private, non-profit organizations of all sizes that have suffered disaster related cash flow problems and need funds for working capital to recover are eligible to apply with SBA for Economic Injury Loans. A small business does not need to have physical damage in order to apply for the Economic Injury Disaster Loans. These loans, in combination, cannot exceed a total of \$2 million. SBA cannot make loans to farmers and ranchers for agricultural losses. The exception is small enterprises engaged in aquaculture business can apply for Economic Injury Disaster loans.

Mississippi residents and business owners who sustained losses can register with FEMA online at www.DisasterAssistance.gov, by web enabled mobile device at m.fema.gov or by calling **1-800-621-FEMA (3362) or 1-800-462-7585 (TTY) for the hearing and speech impaired**. The toll-free telephone numbers are available from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. seven days a week. For additional information and updates about USDA's relief efforts please visit www.usda.gov or www.rurdev.usda.gov/ms.

###

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-FEMA (3362). For TTY call 800-462-7585.

FEMA's temporary housing assistance and grants for public transportation expenses, medical and dental expenses, and funeral and burial expenses do not require individuals to apply for an SBA loan. However, applicants who receive SBA loan applications must submit them to SBA loan officers to be eligible for assistance that covers personal property, vehicle repair or replacement, and moving and storage expenses.

###

