



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 23, 2008

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Governor Rell Announces Emergency Loans Available to Farmers for Crop Losses

Governor M. Jodi Rell today announced that U.S. Agriculture Secretary Edward Schafer has granted her request to issue a natural disaster designation for several counties hit by severe storms this summer, allowing farmers across the state to apply for emergency aid to cover crop losses.

“Farmers are always at the mercy of nature and when it turns disastrous and threatens their livelihood, it is reassuring to know there is assistance available,” Governor Rell said. “This designation will help so many of our vegetable, fruit and tobacco farmers recoup their losses from a stormy stretch of summer.”

Between July 27 and August 12, farmland in Hartford, Middlesex, New Haven and Tolland counties sustained severe damage from abnormally high rainfall, high winds, hail, lightning and flooding. Governor Rell wrote USDA Secretary Schafer on October 24, asking him for a disaster designation in those counties.

The storms reduced production of some crops by least 30 percent, particularly through the fertile Connecticut River Valley. As part of the federal designation, farmers in the contiguous counties of Fairfield, Litchfield, New London and Windham may also apply for aid.

State Agriculture Commissioner F. Philip Prelli said eligible farmers can apply for the low-interest emergency loans through the USDA’s Farm Service Agency. The deadline for applications is July 13, 2009. The emergency aid is one of the many programs the FSA has available to help farmers recover from adversity.

“I am pleased the USDA has granted Governor Rell’s request to provide Connecticut farmers with relief,” Commissioner Prelli said. “Agriculture is a \$2 billion a year industry and an essential component to the state’s economy.”

For more information, contact the local USDA office at (860) 871-4095 or visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

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