



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

JUL 12 2012

The Honorable Robert Bentley
Governor
State of Alabama
Montgomery, Alabama 36130

Dear Governor Bentley:

With the publication of the final rule of the disaster designation on July 12, 2012, found at 7 CFR 759, I am designating 33 Alabama counties as primary natural disaster areas in accordance with 7 CFR 759.5(a), due to a recent drought. The primary counties included under this designation are:

Autauga	Chambers	Coosa	Escambia	Lowndes	Randolph
Baldwin	Chilton	Covington	Geneva	Macon	Russell
Barbour	Clay	Crenshaw	Henry	Montgomery	Talladega
Bibb	Cleburne	Dale	Houston	Perry	Tallapoosa
Bullock	Coffee	Dallas	Lee	Pike	Wilcox
Butler	Conecuh	Elmore			

These counties have suffered from a drought intensity value of at least D2 (Drought-Severe) for 8 or more consecutive weeks or D3 (Drought-Extreme) or higher at any time during the growing season according to the U. S. Drought Monitor (see <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>).

In accordance with section 321(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, 12 counties are named as contiguous disaster counties. The contiguous counties included under this designation are:

Calhoun	Clarke	Jefferson	Mobile	St. Clair	Tuscaloosa
Cherokee	Hale	Marengo	Monroe	Shelby	Washington

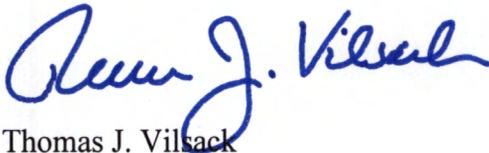
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A Secretarial disaster designation makes farm operators in primary counties and those counties contiguous to such primary counties eligible to be considered for certain assistance from the Farm Service Agency (FSA), provided eligibility requirements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

Local FSA offices can provide affected farmers with further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thomas J. Vilsack". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "T".

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary