
News Release

U.S. SENATORS JEFF BINGAMAN AND TOM UDALL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Wednesday, July 13, 2011

BINGAMAN & UDALL: 16 COUNTIES DECLARED DROUGHT DISASTER AREAS, MAKING THEM ELIGIBLE FOR ASSISTANCE

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senators Jeff Bingaman and Tom Udall today announced that the Obama administration has declared 16 northern and central New Mexico counties disaster areas due to severe drought.

Today, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the following 16 counties are now eligible to apply for drought disaster assistance: Bernalillo, Harding, Rio Arriba, Taos, Cibola, Lincoln, San Miguel, Torrance, Colfax, McKinley, Sandoval, Union, Guadalupe, Mora, Santa Fe, and Valencia. Last month, USDA declared more than a dozen other counties drought disaster areas. *As a result, all New Mexico counties are eligible for assistance.*

A Secretarial disaster designation makes farm operators in both primary and contiguous counties eligible to be considered for assistance from the **Farm Service Agency**, provided eligibility requirements are met. This assistance includes FSA emergency loans and the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) Program. 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. SURE Program applications for 2011 crop losses will be accepted in 2012, when the 2011 farm revenue data required by statute becomes available.

“New Mexicans have been suffering from extraordinarily difficult drought conditions this year,” Bingaman said. “Farmers and ranchers have carried the brunt of this problem. I’m glad the Agriculture Department is stepping in to assist our state.”

“This summer has been a real struggle for New Mexico. We have seen extreme drought, record high temperatures and rampant fires that destroyed land and crops. I applaud the USDA for their continued efforts to ease some of the burden many people feel from these unfortunate disasters,” Udall said.

Earlier this summer, the U.S. Department of Agriculture also approved an emergency application that allows ranchers from Curry, Harding, Lea, Quay, Roosevelt, Union, De Baca, Torrance and Colfax counties to graze their livestock on lands not typically used for grazing.

**New Mexico FSA Office
6200 Jefferson NE, Ste 211
Albuquerque, NM 87109
(505) 761-4900**