



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary  
Washington, D.C. 20250

July 13, 2016

The Honorable Nikki Haley  
Governor  
State of South Carolina  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Governor Haley:

In accordance with 7 CFR 759.5(a), I am designating three South Carolina counties as primary natural disaster areas due to a recent drought. The primary counties included under this designation are:

Abbeville

Anderson

McCormick

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor (see <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>), these counties suffered from a drought intensity value during the growing season of: (1) D2 (Drought-Severe) for 8 or more consecutive weeks; or (2) D3 (Drought-Extreme) or D4 (Drought-Exceptional).

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

Edgefield  
Greenville

Greenwood  
Laurens

Oconee  
Pickens

Also, in accordance with section 321(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, Columbia, Elbert, Hart, and Lincoln Counties, in the adjacent State of Georgia are named as contiguous disaster areas.

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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 8 months from the date of a Secretarial disaster declaration to apply for emergency loans. FSA considers each emergency loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of production losses on the farm, and the security and repayment ability of the operator.

Local FSA offices can provide affected farmers with further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom J. Vilsack". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary