



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

AUG 25 2016

The Honorable Maggie Hassan
Governor
State of New Hampshire
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Dear Governor Hassan:

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

Hillsboro

Merrimack

Rockingham

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, (2) D3 (Drought-Extreme), or D4 (Drought-Exceptional).

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

Belknap

Cheshire

Grafton

Strafford

Sullivan

Also, in accordance with section 321(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, Essex, Middlesex, and Worcester Counties, in the adjacent State of Massachusetts are named as a contiguous disaster areas.

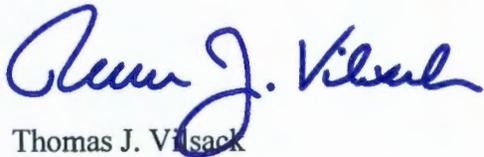
A Secretarial disaster designation makes farm operators in primary counties and those counties contiguous to such primary counties eligible to be considered for certain assistance from the Farm Service Agency (FSA), provided eligibility requirements are met. This assistance includes FSA emergency loans. 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

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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 "Thomas J. Vilsack". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "T".

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary