



USDA Expands Drought Assistance

CRP emergency haying and grazing to help farms and livestock affected by drought.

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Has drought hit your farm and livestock hard this year?

If you live in a county designated as having extreme drought, you may be able to receive assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

A recently approved measure under the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) expanded the assistance available to ensure livestock in drought-affected states have the hay and forage they need to survive.

The CRP areas eligible for emergency haying and grazing in Alabama, Indiana, Mississippi, Montana, Ohio, Oregon and Tennessee has been expanded. It now includes land in an area radiating 210 miles out from all counties previously approved for emergency haying and grazing.

CRP is a voluntary program that offers annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish long-term resource-conserving cover on eligible land.

The expansion permits approved CRP participants to cut hay or graze livestock on CRP acreage, providing supplemental forage to producers whose pastures have been negatively affected by drought.

Basic Eligibility Details

Here are some basic eligibility details, according to the USDA: To be approved for emergency haying or grazing, a county must be listed as a level "D3 Drought-Extreme" or greater according to the U.S. Drought Monitor, or have suffered at least a 40 percent loss of normal moisture and forage for the preceding four-month qualifying period. Only livestock operations located within approved counties are eligible for emergency haying or grazing of CRP acreage. CRP participants who do not own or lease livestock may rent or lease the grazing privilege to an eligible livestock farmer located in an approved county.