



JOHN R. KASICH

GOVERNOR • STATE OF OHIO

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Rob Nichols, (330) 760-7582, Rob.Nichols@governor.ohio.gov

USDA DESIGNATES 85 OHIO COUNTIES AS NATURAL DISASTER AREAS

Kasich sought assistance for Ohio farmers, agriculture industry hurt by severe drought, weather disasters

COLUMBUS – Today, the U.S. Department of Agriculture granted Governor John R. Kasich’s request for a Secretarial disaster designation for 85 of Ohio’s 88 counties following the severe heat, rainfall shortages and other weather-related disasters that struck large areas of the state over the spring and summer. The designation gives eligible Ohio farmers access to drought-related federal assistance such as emergency low-interest loans for crop losses, relief payments for non-insurable losses, the temporary deferral of payments on federal loans and permission to cut hay for livestock from acreage otherwise set aside for conservation.

“Agriculture is an essential component of Ohio’s economy and our heritage, and if our farmers and Ohio’s food industry are suffering, Ohio suffers. The federal declaration will help keep farmers on their feet and mitigate some of the damage caused by the bad weather,” said Kasich.

USDA Secretary Thomas Vilsack’s disaster declaration letter containing the full list of designated counties can be viewed [here](#). Ohio farmers in these counties are encouraged to contact their [local Farm Service Agency](#) (FSA) office for additional information.

In July, Kasich signed Executive Order 2012-11K which, among other things, instructed state agencies to help farmers reduce the negative impacts of the drought and to seek federal assistance. A copy of the EO can be viewed [here](#).

Additionally, the EO instructed state agencies to work with Ohio’s farmers to minimize the potential environmental and economic impact of an agricultural drought. To this end, the Ohio Department of Agriculture, Ohio State University Extension and FSA will host a series of meetings in September at which the public can speak with experts on drought mitigation practices. The public meeting schedule can be viewed [here](#).

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