USDA FSA FARM SERVICE AGENCY

United States Department of Agriculture

Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services

Texas State Farm Service Agency
2405 Texas Ave. S
College Station, TX 77841
979-680-5151

August 21, 2009

In Reply
Refer to: 6- MDW

Mr. Todd Staples, Commissioner
Texas Department of Agriculture
1700 N. Congress Ave., 11th Floor
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Commissioner Staples,

The Texas State Farm Service Agency recently received a response from CEPD regarding the request to authorize Emergency Haying and Grazing of Conservation Reserve Program acreage in all counties within the State. This request for statewide relief was denied due to the lack of qualifying conditions on a county by county basis.

An approval for emergency haying or grazing of CRP acreage must meet two criterions. Both weather conditions and forage production impacts are required to be documented and must show at least the established minimum standards are met on a county by county basis. The weather conditions must reflect at least a 40% reduction in the normal precipitation levels in the most recent 4 month average. Likewise the current forage production levels must indicate at least a 40% below normal production level. Both of these conditions must be met on a county by county basis before authorization to implement emergency haying and grazing of CRP may be approved.

Due to the widespread effects of a drought disaster the FSA State Committee has been delegated the authority to approve requests submitted by a county that is identified as at least the D3 category level of drought on the current US drought monitor report.

For the 2009 drought based on these established implementation criteria, the National Office has approved Donley County to implement CRP emergency grazing only. The Acting Texas State Committee utilizing their delegated authority has approved Brooks, Duval, Frio, Hidalgo, Jim Hogg, Jim Wells, Uvalde, Kenedy, Kleberg, Kinney, La Salle, Medina, Starr, Williamson and Willacy Counties for implementation of CRP emergency haying and grazing.

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Your effort to provide needed relief to the agriculture producers of Texas is very much appreciated. I will continue to communicate the needs of Texas agriculture to my agency leaders and keep you updated with new information as it becomes available.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Juan M. Garcia
State Executive Director
Texas State FSA Office

JMG:ylr
STO File
Central File
Reading File