



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary  
Washington, D.C. 20250

MAR 20 2013

The Honorable Terry E. Branstad  
Governor  
State of Iowa  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Dear Governor Branstad:

In accordance with 7 CFR 759.5(a), I am designating Kossuth County, Iowa, as a primary natural disaster area due to a recent drought.

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor (see <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>), Kossuth County has 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, seven counties are named as contiguous disaster counties. The contiguous counties included under this designation are:

Emmet	Humboldt	Pocahontas	Wright
Hancock	Palo Alto	Winnebago	

Also, in accordance with section 321(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, counties in an adjacent State are named as contiguous disaster areas. That State, counties, and numbers are:

<b>Minnesota</b>	(2)
Faribault	Martin

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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 black ink, appearing to read "Tom Vilsack", written over a circular stamp or seal.

Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary