February 26, 2015

TO: Farm Operators in Baker County, FL
SUBJ: Drought Designation and Farm Assistance

To Whom It May Concern:

On February 10, 2015 the Georgia State Director of the USDA Farm Service Agency requested a primary disaster designation for counties in Georgia. After USDA review, there were sufficient losses due to drought to designate an area in Georgia as a primary disaster area. In addition, Baker County, Florida was named as a contiguous disaster area for this designation.

This disaster designation makes farm operators in Baker County eligible to be considered for certain assistance from the FSA, provided that eligibility requirements are met. This includes FSA emergency loans. Farmers within the disaster area have 8 months from the declaration to apply for emergency loans. Please contact the FSA Service Center in Baldwin, FL ((800-243-9912 or 904-266-0088, ext.2) or the FSA State Office in Gainesville, FL (352-379-4500) for additional information.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Davis, Ph.D.
Director / Agriculture Agent
UF | IFAS Extension, Baker County
The Honorable Nathan Deal  
Governor  
State of Georgia  
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Dear Governor Deal:

On February 10, 2015, the Georgia State Executive Director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) requested a primary county disaster designation for Atkinson, Coffee, and Ware Counties in Georgia due to damages and losses caused by excessively dry weather and drought that occurred from June 1 through December 31, 2014.

USDA reviewed the Loss Assessment Reports and determined that there were sufficient production losses to warrant a Secretarial natural disaster designation. Therefore, I am designating Atkinson, Coffee, and Ware Counties in Georgia as primary natural disaster areas.

In accordance with section 321(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, additional areas of your State are named as contiguous disaster counties. Those counties are:

- Bacon  
- Ben Hill  
- Berrien  
- Brantley  
- Charlton  
- Clinch  
- Irwin  
- Jeff Davis  
- Lanier  
- Pierce  
- Telfair

Also, in accordance with section 321(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, Baker County, in the adjacent State of Florida is named as a contiguous disaster area.

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 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,

Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary