



Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

July 21, 2023

THE HONORABLE PHILIP SCOTT
Governor
State of Vermont
109 State Street
Pavilion Office Building
Montpelier, Vermont 05609

Dear Governor Scott:

Thank you for your letter of June 19, 2023, requesting a primary county disaster designation for 14 counties in Vermont due to damage and losses caused by a freeze that occurred from May 17 through May 18, 2023.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (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 all 14 Vermont counties as primary natural disaster areas. In accordance with section 321(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, additional areas of your state and adjacent states are named as contiguous disaster counties. Enclosed you will find documentation that provides a detailed list of all primary and contiguous counties impacted by this disaster.

A Secretarial disaster designation makes farm operators in primary counties and those counties contiguous to such primary counties eligible to be considered for Farm Service Agency (FSA) emergency loans, provided eligibility requirements are met. 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.

USDA is aware that many farmers and ranchers in Vermont, as well as other parts of the country, are suffering from the effects of weather-related disasters. USDA will work expeditiously in the continued use of its available resources to provide relief to America's producers who have been affected by severe weather conditions.

THE HONORABLE PHILIP SCOTT

Page 2

USDA has a variety of disaster programs available to help eligible farmers recover from losses due to natural disasters without the need for a formal disaster declaration. The Tree Assistance Program (TAP) provides financial assistance to eligible orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes, and vines lost by natural disasters. The Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops to protect against natural disasters that result in lower yields, crop losses, or prevents crop planting.

Information on our disaster assistance programs is available at farmers.gov/recover. Producers interested in these programs are encouraged to contact their local USDA service center. To find the nearest service center, go to the “Find your Local Service Center” tool at farmers.gov.

Again, thank you for writing and for supporting disaster assistance for the producers in Vermont.

Sincerely,

THOMAS J. VILSACK
Secretary

Enclosure

Primary Counties:

Vermont	(14)		
Addison	Essex	Orange	Washington
Bennington	Franklin	Orleans	Windham
Caledonia	Grand Isle	Rutland	Windsor
Chittenden	Lamoille		

Contiguous Counties in Adjacent States:

Massachusetts	(2)		
Berkshire	Franklin		
New Hampshire	(4)		
Cheshire	Coos	Grafton	Sullivan
New York	(4)		
Clinton	Essex	Rensselaer	Washington