

Immediate Release

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USDA Grants Governor's 2nd Drought Declaration Request

Topeka – U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack notified Kansas Governor Sam Brownback today he has granted the Governor's second request for the USDA to issue a drought disaster declaration for 25 Kansas counties as well as 24 contiguous counties.

"This is welcomed news for farmers and ranchers in Kansas Counties experiencing production losses caused by drought, wildfires, and high winds. I appreciate the Secretary and USDA's quick response to my request," Gov. Brownback said. "This is worse than previous droughts I've seen and experienced during a lifetime in agriculture. This extreme weather already is affecting how farmers and ranchers are doing business – and that in turn is impacting the economies of local businesses and communities. It will take a great deal of time and rain to reverse the effects of this drought."

Declaring these county agricultural disasters makes qualified farmers in both primary and contiguous counties eligible for emergency loans administered by USDA's Farm Service Agency, as well as any other aid that may be available through the Supplemental Revenue Assistance payments (SURE) Program.

The 25 counties designated as primary natural disaster areas in the second federal declaration are: Barber, Barton, Butler, Clark, Comanche, Cowley, Edwards, Ellis, Ford, Graham, Gray, Harper, Harvey, Hodgeman, Kingman, Lincoln, Norton, Phillips, Reno, Rice, Russell, Sedgwick, Stafford, Sumner and Trego.

The 24 contiguous counties included in the second federal declaration are: Chase, Chautauqua, Decatur, Elk, Ellsworth, Finney, Gove, Greenwood, Haskell, Kiowa, Marion, McPherson, Meade, Mitchell, Ness, Osborne, Ottawa, Pawnee, Pratt, Rooks, Rush, Saline, Sheridan and Smith.

This brings the total number of Kansas counties designated as primary natural disaster areas to 46 counties.

The 21 counties included in the first federal declaration are Finney, Gove, Grant, Greeley, Hamilton, Haskell, Kearny, Lane, Logan, Meade, Morton, Ness, Scott, Seward, Sheridan, Sherman, Stanton, Stevens, Thomas, Wallace, and Wichita.

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The 18 contiguous counties included in the first federal declaration are Cheyenne, Clark, Decatur, Ellis, Ford, Graham, Gray, Hodgeman, Norton, Pawnee, Rawlins, Rush and Trego.

Kansas farmers who believe they may qualify for assistance should contact their local FSA offices for further information.

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