



INSTRUCTIONS FOR REQUESTING A U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA) SECRETARIAL DISASTER DESIGNATION

Agricultural disasters caused by drought, flood, fire, freeze, winds, and other calamities substantially affect farmers and ranchers throughout California every year. A local proclamation of an emergency is not required to request an USDA Secretarial designation. The following sequence of events provides information for requesting a USDA Secretarial designation.

- A natural disaster causes severe physical property or production losses adversely affecting local farmers, ranchers, and/or aquaculturists.
- The county (typically the County Agricultural Commissioner) informs the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) Individual Assistance (IA) of the situation. The Cal OES IA will provide the county with a copy of the *California County Agricultural Commissioner Disaster Report* form, technical assistance, and follow up with any request for assistance, if necessary.
- The county has 60 days from the end of the incident to request a USDA disaster designation through Cal OES IA.
- The county submits a letter to the Director of Cal OES requesting the state to pursue a USDA disaster designation on behalf of the county, including a completed *California County Agricultural Commissioner Disaster Report* form(s).
- Cal OES IA will review the request and coordinate with the USDA State Office.
- If warranted, Cal OES IA on behalf of the Cal OES Director will send a request to USDA for a disaster designation.
- Requests to USDA must be submitted no later than three (3) months from the end of the incident.



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- USDA State office requests the local Farm Services Agency (FSA) office, in conjunction with the Agricultural Commissioner, to complete the LAR.
- FSA will work with local USDA agencies and other federal, state, and local agricultural agencies, as appropriate, to conduct an assessment of crop and production losses to complete the LAR.
- The LAR is submitted to the State FSA office. State FSA will review the LAR and then make a recommendation to the USDA Secretary.
- The USDA Secretary will either approve or deny the request.
- Cal OES IA will notify the County Board of Supervisors, County OES, and County Agricultural Commissioner of the decision.
- If the request is approved, the county FSA office notifies farmers, ranchers, and aquaculturists of the availability of the emergency loans and any other USDA assistance that may be available.