

USDA implements new crop disaster assistance program

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Producers can apply for SURE Program at FSA offices on Jan. 4.

The USDA has implemented the new Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments program (SURE) in accordance with the 2008 Farm Bill.

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack also encouraged producers to visit their USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) county office beginning on Jan. 4, to participate in the program if they suffered crop production losses during the 2008 crop year.

“This program is an important component of the farm safety net and will provide financial assistance to producers who have suffered crop losses due to natural disasters,” said Vilsack. “Producers will receive payments beginning in January, in time to help them with planning for next year’s crop.”

SURE provides crop disaster assistance payments to eligible producers on farms that have incurred crop production or crop quality losses. The program takes into consideration crop losses on all crops grown by a producer nationwide.

SURE provides assistance in an amount equal to 60% of the difference between the SURE farm guarantee and total farm revenue. The farm guarantee is based on the amount of crop insurance and Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage on the farm.

Total farm revenue takes into account the actual value of production on the farm as well as insurance indemnities and certain farm program payments.

To be eligible for SURE, producers must have suffered at least a 10% production loss on a crop of economic significance. In addition, producers must meet the risk management purchase requirement by either obtaining a policy or plan of insurance, under the Federal Crop Insurance Act or NAP coverage, for all economically significant crops.

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For 2008 crops, producers had the opportunity to obtain a waiver of the risk management purchase requirement through a buy-in provision. Producers considered socially disadvantaged, a beginning farmer or rancher, or a limited resource farmer may be eligible for SURE without a policy or plan of insurance or NAP coverage.

In addition to meeting the risk management purchase requirement, a producer must have a farming interest physically located in a county that was declared a primary disaster county or contiguous county by the agriculture secretary under a Secretarial Disaster Designation.

Regardless of a Secretarial Disaster Designation, individual producers may also be eligible for SURE if the actual production on the farm is less than 50 percent of the normal production on the farm due to a natural disaster. For SURE, a farm is defined as all crops in which a producer had an interest nationwide.

For more information on the new SURE program, please visit your local FSA county office or go [on-line](#) .