



For Immediate Release: October 20, 2016

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Bristol/Norfolk/Suffolk Farm Service Agency Announces Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) Signup for Severe Drought

ECP Signup Period: October 20, 2016 to November 21, 2016

Taunton, Massachusetts, October 20, 2016 - A lack of moisture, over an extended period of time, has caused producers in Bristol and Norfolk counties to suffer from the effects of severe drought conditions. Farms experiencing severe drought conditions may be eligible for cost-share assistance under the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP). This disaster program is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency (FSA), which provides cost-share assistance if the damage is so severe that water available for livestock or orchards and vineyards has been reduced below normal to the extent that neither can survive without additional water.

A producer qualifying for ECP assistance may receive cost share not to exceed 50 percent of the cost of installing eligible temporary measures. Cost sharing for permanent measures is based on 75 percent of the total eligible cost. Cost-share assistance is limited to \$200,000 per person or legal entity per natural disaster. Approved practices and measures may include:

- installing pipelines or other facilities for livestock water or existing irrigation systems for orchards and vineyards
- constructing and deepening wells for livestock water
- developing springs or seeps for livestock water

Producers who have experienced severe drought conditions requiring outside assistance to provide supplemental emergency livestock water may contact the local FSA County Office at (508) 880-0185 or Julie.Viveiros@ma.usda.gov. Requests for assistance will be accepted at the Bristol/Norfolk/Suffolk County FSA Office from **October 20, 2016 to November 21, 2016**.

To be eligible for cost share, practices shall not be started until a request has first been filed at the FSA County Office and an onsite inspection of the problem area has been made by the local FSA County Committee (COC) or its representative. The County Committee will review the inspection findings when considering the request for cost share.