

For Immediate Release

For more information
Luther Jones
State Public Affairs Specialist
706-546-2069
luther.jones@ga.usda.gov

Applications must be received by August 21, 2012

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS) PROVIDES DROUGHT ASSISTANT

ATHENS, GA, August 13, 2012 —James E. Tillman, Sr., State Conservationist for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Georgia today announced that the NRCS has financial assistance funds available for drought affected counties under Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), to help farmers. Applications for the EQIP drought assistance are due August 21, 2012.

This assistance is part of continuing steps by the Obama Administration to assist producers in response to the historic drought. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack highlighted that USDA will utilize nearly \$16 million in financial and technical assistance to immediately help crop and livestock producers in 19 states cope with the adverse impacts of the historic drought. In addition, USDA will initiate a transfer of \$14 million in unobligated program funds into the Emergency Conservation Program. These funds can be used to assist in moving water to livestock in need, providing emergency forage for livestock, and rehabilitating lands severely impacted by the drought. Together, these efforts should provide nearly \$30 million to producers struggling with drought conditions.

“President Obama and I continue to work across the federal government to provide relief for those farmers and ranchers who are affected by the severe drought conditions impacting many states across our nation,” said Vilsack. “This additional assistance builds on a number of steps USDA has taken over the past few weeks to provide resources and flexibility in our existing programs to help producers endure these serious hardships. As this drought persists, the Obama Administration is committed to using existing authorities wherever possible to help the farmers, ranchers, small businesses, and communities being impacted.”

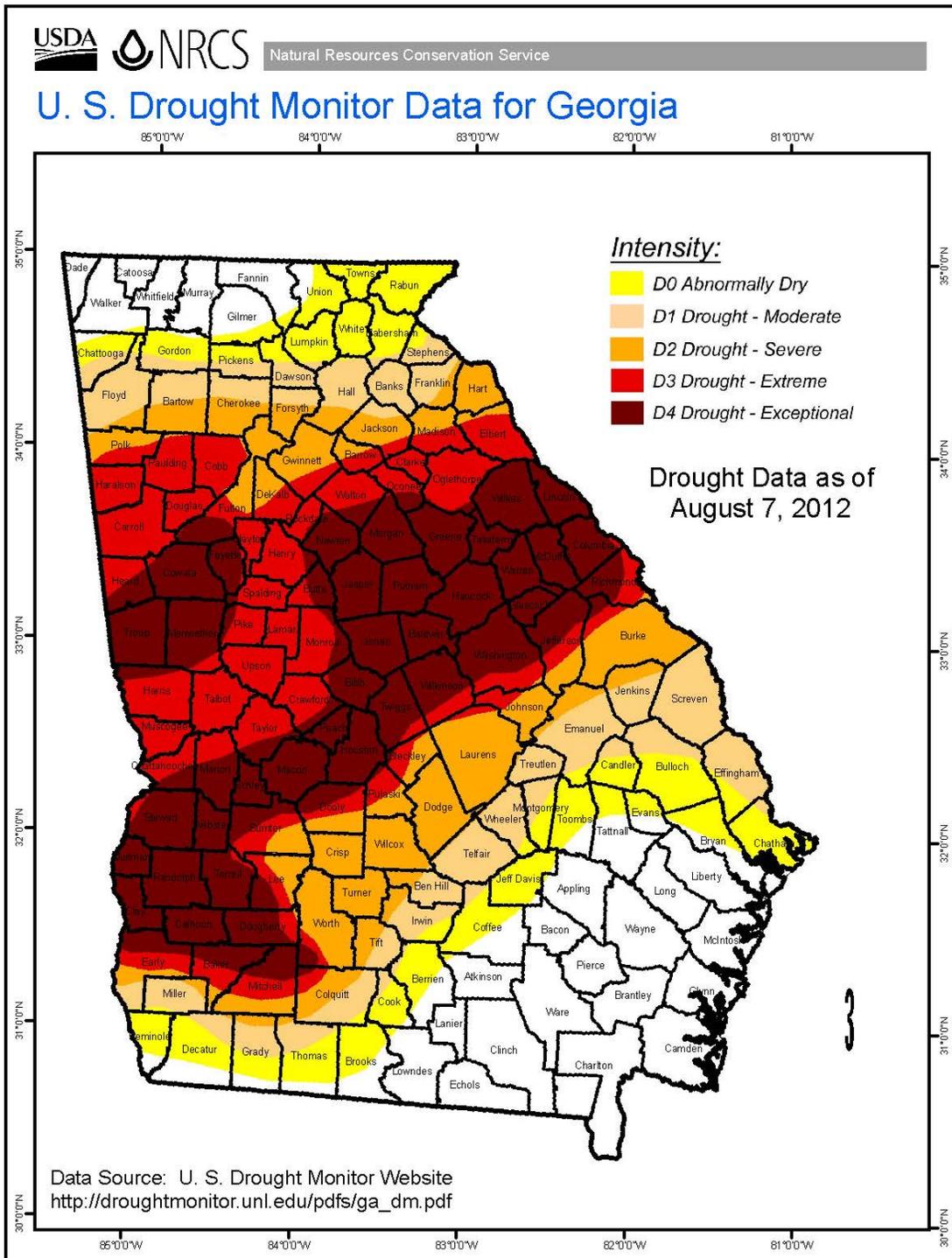
Through EQIP, farmers can apply for numerous practices designed to provide immediate drought relief.

Landowners with a current EQIP contract can also request a contract modification to re-schedule planned conservation practices such as prescribed grazing, livestock watering facilities, water conservation and other conservation activities on pasture and forest land until drought conditions improve.

****MORE****

Helping People Help the Land

Counties in Georgia receiving assistance are indicated by the U.S. Drought Monitor Data shown below on the attached map under D3 Drought – Extreme and D4 Drought – Exceptional.



#

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).