Livestock producers with CRP contracts may hay or graze CRP acres one out of four years as part of a managed haying and grazing plan in their CRP contracts. Approval is done at the local FSA office with no disaster designation needed. A 25 percent payment reduction does apply. The FSA Haynet, found at **www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet**, connects producers who have a need for hay with those that have hay available.

Under the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP) program, **www.bitly.com/WA-ELAP** producers may be able to receive compensation for expenses related to hauling water when a normal water source for the livestock is not available due to drought at the D3 (extreme) level on the U.S. Drought Monitor during the normal grazing period.

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), **www.bitly.com/LIP-WA**, reimburses livestock producers for a portion of the value of livestock for deaths in excess of normal mortality. In drought situations, FSA only reimburses producers when anthrax, which is exacerbated by drought, is the cause of death. Otherwise, drought is not considered an adverse weather event because feed can be purchased or otherwise obtained. FSA's livestock programs do not provide assistance for pets or recreational livestock.

USDA Agency Contacts in Washington

Farm Service Agency
State Office 316 W. Boone, Ste. 568
Spokane, WA 99201
Phone: (509) 323-3000
Web: www.fsa.usda.gov/wa
(includes county office locator)

National Agricultural Statistics Service
State Office P.O. Box 609
Olympia, WA 98507
Phone: (360) 902-1940 or (800) 435-5883.
Website: www.nass.usda.gov/wa

Natural Resources Conservation Service
State Office 316 W. Boone, Ste 450
Spokane, WA 99201
Phone: (509) 323-2900
Web: www.wa.nrcs.usda.gov
(includes county office locator)

Risk Management Agency
Spokane Regional Office
11707 E. Sprague Avenue, Suite 201
Spokane, WA 99206
Phone: (509) 228-6320
Email: rsowa@rma.usda.gov
Web: www.rma.usda.gov

State Contacts

Department of Ecology
PO Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600
Phone: (360) 407-6000.
Website: www.ecy.wa.gov/drought

Washington State Department of Agriculture
P.O. Box 42560
Olympia, WA 98504-2560
Phone: (360) 902-1800.
Website: agr.wa.gov

WSU Extension

Washington State University Extension
Drought Coordinator, Gerrit Hoogenboom
Director of the WSU Ag Weather Network
Email: gerrit.hoogenboom@wsu.edu
WSU AWN and Drought Alert web sites:
weather.wsu.edu and www.drought.wsu.edu

United States Department of Agriculture
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May 2015

Help in the midst of DROUGHT

Drought Assistance

Programs and services available through the U.S. Department of Agriculture

In collaboration with United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) agencies, you can mitigate drought damage on your land.

Drought poses challenges from minor economic loss to survival for farms and ranches in the West. U.S. Department of Agriculture agencies offer a range of services and programs to help anticipate, survive and recover from drought. USDA coordinates efforts to provide information to others assisting with drought relief efforts.

Disaster Designations–Different types of disaster designations prompt different types of assistance. A Governor's drought declaration initiates assistance from state agencies. This brochure covers federal assistance but includes state contacts, also.

Increasingly, federal drought relief programs are initiated by the **U.S. Drought Monitor**, **droughtmonitor.unl.edu**, which is a weekly map of drought conditions and is produced jointly by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the National Drought Mitigation Center. Also, the Secretary of Agriculture or the President may make disaster designations which trigger program eligibility. The Secretary makes designations on a county basis and for natural disasters only. A Presidential designation is rarer and usually is not restricted to agricultural loss. However, federal agricultural assistance may be activated by Presidential disaster designations.

Dry land due to drought can cause major soil erosion.

USDA can help with feed and grazing loss due to drought.

Pre-Drought Preparation

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) annually monitors the State's snowpack. The data gathered is combined with other weather data to predict volumetric streamflow and water availability throughout the growing season. This information is useful for reservoir management and crop planning and can be accessed through **www.bitly.com/waterprods**.

Washington State University (WSU) Extension provides real-time weather, climate and crop water use data through the Ag Weather Network (AWN). AWN is available for free and is accessed through **weather.wsu.edu**.

The Risk Management Agency provides crop insurance through the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation to help producers recover from production or quality losses. RMA lists crops covered and details related to coverage here: **www.bitly.com/WA-RMA**. To find a crop insurance agent, visit: **www.rma.usda.gov/tools/agent.html**

For uninsurable crops, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) has a Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program that provides financial relief, but requires producers to apply for the program prior to a disaster and by specific dates (see Help with Crops section).

Weathering the Drought

Washington Agricultural Statistics Service (WASS) issues a report each Monday, from April through November, covering the current weather conditions and effects on crops; planting and harvesting progress; crop development progress and weather data for selected points throughout the state. Reports may be accessed at **www.bitly.com/WAReports**.

WSU Extension faculty can provide guidance on crops, irrigation, livestock, tree fruit, gardens and landscapes directly or through the web at **www.drought.wsu.edu**.

NRCS conservation specialists can assist with irrigation water management planning, soil moisture monitoring, soil moisture conservation and cover crop planning assistance. NRCS also administers the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), **www.bitly.com/WA-EQIP** which provides cost-share funds for irrigation water management practices and other soil and water conservation activities. These services are not dependent on a disaster designation.

Help with Crops

The Risk Management Agency (RMA) operates and manages the Federal Crop Insurance Program. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) administers the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance (NAP) that covers crops for which crop insurance is not available. Both Multiple-Peril Crop Insurance (MPCI) and NAP may provide financial compensation if a producer is prevented from planting due to natural disaster and has a crop insurance policy. Producers must demonstrate intention to plant the crop and inability to plant due to drought. For dryland crops, soil moisture must be insufficient for seed germination or crop maturity. For irrigated crops, sufficient water must be unavailable on the final planting date, and the reduced water is due to drought during the insurance period. If a producer plants a crop, only acreage with enough water to carry out good irrigation practices can be insured. RMA provides information about prevented planting on irrigated acres at: **www.bitly.com/PreventedPlanting** and **www.bitly.com/PPBulletins**.

Producers should contact their insurance agent as soon as they may be in a prevented planting situation and their USDA Farm Service Agency office for uninsurable crops. Crop insurance and NAP coverage must be purchased by set dates in advance of a loss. No Secretarial disaster designation is needed to trigger eligibility. NAP, **www.bitly.com/NCDAP**, covers most crops not eligible for Federal Crop Insurance. NAP provides financial compensation for production loss due to natural disasters. NAP has been expanded to include buy-up protection, similar to buy-up provisions offered under the Federal Crop Insurance program. Producers may elect coverage for each individual crop between 50 and 65 percent, in 5 percent increments, at 100 percent of the average market price. Producers also pay a fixed premium equal to 5.25 percent of the liability. Service fees are waived for limited resource, beginning and traditionally underserved farmers. The premiums for buy-up coverage are reduced by 50 percent for those same farmers. Grazing land is not eligible for buy-up coverage. NAP purchase dates are posted on **www.fsa.usda.gov/wa**

Through the Tree Assistance Program (TAP), **www.bitly.com/WA-TAP**, FSA can help commercial growers with the costs of re-establishing trees, bushes or vines or salvaging damaged plants. Payments are made when losses exceed 15 percent mortality, adjusted for normal mortality. The program includes Christmas and nursery trees but not trees grown for pulp and paper.

FSA administers the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), **www.bitly.com/WA-ECP**. ECP makes available cost-share dollars for developing or enhancing irrigation water efficiency in orchards and vineyards. The program does not depend on a disaster designation but must be approved by FSA county and state committees when a county experiences a 40 percent moisture loss over the prior four months, or reaches the D3 (extreme) designation on the U.S. Drought Monitor.

FSA offers low-interest emergency loans when a Secretarial or Presidential disaster designation is declared and a producer suffers a 30 percent or greater loss. These loans are available when commercial financing is not available.

Check the U.S. Drought Monitor for conditions in your area: droughtmonitor.unl.edu.

Help with Livestock

FSA administers programs that can help with feed during drought conditions or recover costs incurred because of drought. The Livestock Forage Program, **www.bitly.com/LivestockForage**, provides financial compensation for grazing or feed losses when the U.S. Drought Monitor reaches D2 (severe) in a county for eight consecutive weeks.

On a county basis, FSA may allow emergency haying or grazing on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres in a drought situation. There is no reduction in annual rental payments. Producers must obtain an approved grazing conservation plan prior to grazing the acreage. FSA county committees may request emergency haying and grazing when hay and pasture productions falls 40 percent or more. Loss must be due to four consecutive months of precipitation at less than 60 percent of normal. The Secretary of Agriculture approves emergency haying and grazing of CRP. The FSA State Committee also may approve requests if a county reaches the D2 (severe) designation on the U.S. Drought Monitor.