



DISASTER ASSISTANCE Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)

Overview

The Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA), provides emergency funding and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate farmland and conservation structures damaged by natural disasters and implement emergency water conservation measures in periods of severe drought.

Program Administration

ECP is administered by FSA state and county committees and county offices. Producers should contact their local FSA county office regarding ECP enrollment periods and eligibility.

Land Eligibility

FSA county committees determine land eligibility based on on-site inspections of damaged land and the type and extent of damage.

Eligible land includes land used for:

- Commercial farming, ranching and orchard operations;
- Growing nursery stock and Christmas tree plantations;
- Grazing for commercial livestock production; and
- Conservation structures such as, waterways, terraces, diversions and windbreaks.
- Conservation problems existing before the applicable disaster event are ineligible for ECP assistance.

Cost-Share Payments

Cost-share payments are:

- Up to 75 percent of the cost to implement approved restoration practices;
- Up to 90 percent of the cost to implement approved restoration practices for producers who certify as limited resource, socially-disadvantaged or beginning farmers/ranchers;
- Limited to \$500,000 per person or legal entity per disaster; and
- Available as an advance payment of up to 25 percent of expected cost-share, for only the replacement or restoration of fencing.

Eligible Farmland Restoration Practices

To rehabilitate farmland, ECP participants may implement emergency conservation practices, such as:

- Removing debris from farmland (cleanup of wind- or water-deposited debris, such as woody material, sand, rock and trash on cropland or pastureland);



- Grading, shaping or leveling land (filling gullies, releveling irrigated farmland and incorporating sand and silt);
- Restoring fences (livestock cross fences, boundary fences, cattle gates, or wildlife exclusion fence on agricultural land);
- Restoring conservation structures (waterways, terraces, diversion ditches and permanently installed ditching system); and
- Providing emergency water during periods of severe drought (grazing and confined livestock and existing irrigation systems for orchards and vineyards).

What to do if a Disaster Occurs

- Producer or USDA Documents damage with dated photographs, videos and third-party verification.
- Producer reports to a local Service Center as soon as possible to request assistance (immediate restoration applies only to emergency situations such as putting up fencing to confine livestock).
- The county FSA office will provide guidance on the approval process and next steps.

For More Information

This fact sheet is for informational purposes only; other restrictions may apply. For more information about FSA disaster programs, visit <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov> or contact your local FSA office. To find your local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.