



Hurricane Recovery Information for Agriculture

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Disasters have a devastating effect on agricultural crops and livestock, and it can take a farm or ranch months, to years, to recover from depending upon the severity and scope of the catastrophe. Although farming communities are well known to be extremely resilient, recovering from a disaster is never easy—and it is harder when access to information is limiting, found in a variety of locations, or even, inaccessible. It is hoped that the information below will assist in the recovery process. If you are reading this from a computer or smart phone, clicking on the underlined links below will take you directly to that specific information.

Indian River County Extension website

The extension website has a tremendous amount of information about hurricane preparedness and recovery for farmers and ranchers

http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/hot_topics/disaster_prep/hurricane_prep_ag.shtml

USDA-FSA

Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue has announced that farmers and ranchers affected by hurricanes Harvey and Irma, and that live in areas that have been declared disaster areas by the federal government and their contiguous counties will be granted extra time to document disaster losses and make claims to USDA. USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA), is authorizing emergency procedures on a case-by-case basis to assist impacted borrowers, livestock owners, contract growers, and other producers. Our local USDA-FSA office is located in Ft. Pierce.

<https://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?service=page/ServiceCenterSummary&stateCode=12&cnty=061>

Financially stressed FSA farm loan borrowers affected by the hurricanes who have received primary loan servicing applications may be eligible for a 60-day extension. Full details are available at <https://go.usa.gov/xRe8V>. A more complete listing of all of the special farm programs is posted at <https://go.usa.gov/xRe8p> and includes Marketing Assistance Loan (MAL) program, Farm Storage Facility Loan Program (FSFL), Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP), the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), and the Tree Assistance Program (TAP). Emergency grazing may also be authorized under the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) for up to 60 days. In addition, the deadlines to file a loss for the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP) have been extended https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/index?utm_source=landing&utm_medium=spotlight&utm_content=spot1&utm_campaign=fsadisasters

There is a very good Disaster Assistance Fact Sheet that explains all these programs at a glance:

[https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-](https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdafiles/FactSheets/2017/fsa_disaster_assistance_programs_at_a_glance_march2017.pdf)

[Public/usdafiles/FactSheets/2017/fsa_disaster_assistance_programs_at_a_glance_march2017.pdf](https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdafiles/FactSheets/2017/fsa_disaster_assistance_programs_at_a_glance_march2017.pdf)

Those who purchased crop insurance will be paid for covered losses. Producers should report crop damage by contacting their crop insurance agent within 72 hours of damage discovery and follow up in writing within 15 days. Farmers and ranchers affected by the hurricanes need to keep thorough records of all losses, including livestock death losses, as well as expenses for feed purchases, supplies lost during the hurricane and increased transportation costs.

There is a University of Florida document that helps explain about applying for USDA-FSA assistance "USDA Farm Service Agency Disaster Assistance" <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/dh201>

Citrus

An emergency hotline has been set up by UF/IFAS for citrus growers that have been impacted by hurricane Irma. The hotline is staffed Monday-Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm (863-956-8611); information and questions will be taken and the most appropriate specialist or agent will get back to you with answers. This EDIS document "Hurricane Preparedness for Citrus Groves" <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ch178> has a section on post-storm recovery that might still be useful.

Gov. Scott has activated a \$25 Million Citrus Emergency Loan Program to help citrus growers. /the program will be managed by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) and will provide interest-free loans to citrus growers that experienced physical or economic damage during the storm. The application period will begin 10/9/17 and be open through 11/30/17. To complete an application by the Nov. 30, 2017, deadline, or for more information on the program, visit www.floridadisasterloan.org. For questions regarding the \$25 Million Citrus Emergency Loan Program, contact the Florida Small Business Development Center Network at 850-898-3489 or email Disaster@FloridaSBDC.org. The phone line will be answered during regular business hours; all voice mails and emails will be responded to within 24 hours.

Crops

Floodwaters can contain pathogens like E. coli, Salmonella, Hepatitis A and norovirus so that inundated food crops might not be safe for human consumption. This website from FDA can help you evaluate if your crops can still be harvested for humans "Guidance for Industry: Evaluating the Safety of Flood-affected Food Crops for Human Consumption" <https://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/GuidanceDocumentsRegulatoryInformation/EmergencyResponse/ucm287808.htm#addit>

Flooding can also spread contaminants from a compost pile or other sources into the vegetable garden. This info sheet can help you determine what should be thrown out and what can be kept from the garden <https://foodsafetyinfosheets.files.wordpress.com/2011/08/8-30-11-garden.pdf>

Animals

Given the nature of hurricanes, it is not unlikely that you will lose an animal or two during the disaster or even a few weeks after due to stress or injury. It is important to promptly dispose of the carcasses in a sanitary manner that will protect humans and other animals. The next two documents explain why it is important to secure the carcasses and various disposal methods:

- "Disposing of Animal Carcasses" <http://disaster.ifas.ufl.edu/PDFS/CHAP04/D04-19.PDF>

- "Animal Disposal Following an Emergency" <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/animaldisposal.html>

Miscellaneous

FEMA-Disaster Recovery Centers are created in order to assist affected clients as quickly as possible after the danger has passed. You can register online at www.DisasterAssistance.gov or by calling 800-621-3362, Operators are multilingual and calls are answered seven days a week from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. CDT. This website has additional information about Disaster Unemployment Assistance <http://www.fema.gov/disaster/4337>

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is offering long-term, low interest loans for homeowners, renters, non-profits and businesses to rebuild, repair, replace or restore their lives after a disaster. For more information, contact SBA's Disaster Assistance Customer Service Center by calling (800) 659-2955, emailing disastercustomerservice@sba.gov, or visiting SBA's Web site at <http://www.sba.gov/disaster>.

Many disaster-related farm losses can be used as a deductible loss on your federal income tax. This article explains what losses are tax deductible and how to declare them http://ruraltax.org/files-ou/Disaster_Losses_and_Related_Tax_Rules.pdf

Farm Aid is partnering with Florida Organic Growers to distribute emergency relief grants of \$500 to help farmers meet household expenses in Florida and the U.S. Virgin Islands. You do NOT have to be an organic farmer to apply. If you are experiencing a hardship as a result of the storm, please fill out and application on line <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FLFARMAID>. It is also possible to complete it via a phone interview and you can email (david@foginfo.org) or call (352)377-6345 to set it up.

"Hurricane Preparation for Your Farm" <http://www.cattlenetwork.com/advice-and-tips/hurricane-preparation-your-farm>

"UF/IFAS The Disaster Handbook" Farm Recovery Section <http://disaster.ifas.ufl.edu/chap6fr.htm>

Florida Farm Bureau is setting up a disaster assistance relief fund for those farmers affected by Hurricane Irma. For more information visit <http://www.floridafarmbureau.org/hurricane-irma-relief-fund/>

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