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News Release

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SECRETARIAL DISASTER DESIGNATION DECLARED IN PENNSYLVANIA DUE TO EXCESSIVE RAIN, AFFECTS 2 OHIO COUNTIES

Decision Allows Farmers to Apply for USDA Assistance

COLUMBUS, Ohio -- Aug. 21, 2013 -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture designated two Ohio counties as agricultural natural disaster areas, making certain farmers and other agricultural producers in the counties eligible for low-interest emergency loans from USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA).

Mercer County was designated in Pennsylvania as primary natural disaster areas, caused by excessive rain that occurred July 3-13, 2013. **Mahoning and Trumbull counties**, in Ohio, are also eligible because they are contiguous.

The counties listed above were designated as natural disaster areas on **August 7, 2013**, making all qualified farm operators in the designated areas eligible for low-interest emergency loans from USDA's FSA, provided eligibility requirements are met. To qualify, farmers must be unable to obtain credit from commercial sources and meet eligibility requirements. Farmers in eligible counties have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for loans to help cover part or all of their actual losses. FSA will consider each loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability. FSA has a variety of programs, in addition to the emergency loan program, to help eligible farmers recover from adversity.

Additional programs available to assist farmers include the Emergency Conservation Program, Federal Crop Insurance, and the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program. Interested farmers may contact their local USDA Service Centers for further information on eligibility requirements and application procedures for these and other programs. Additional information is also available online at <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov>.