



Fact Sheet

Revised October 12, 2004

Florida Hurricane Agricultural Disaster Assistance Programs

Overview

Three USDA programs will provide special disaster relief to producers who suffered from crop damage and tree losses and must perform related cleanup in certain areas from Hurricanes Charley, Frances and/or Jeanne during August and September of 2004. These three programs are the Florida Citrus Disaster Program; the Florida Nursery Crop Disaster Program; and the Florida Vegetable, Fruit and Tropical Fruit Disaster Program, consisting of plasticulture, other vegetables and tropical fruit.

Payments for this assistance are authorized under Section 32 of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of August 24, 1935, which allows the Secretary of Agriculture to implement programs to help restore producers' purchasing power. Losses due to reduced market prices or other adverse weather conditions are not covered under these programs.

Eligible Producers

Producers in Presidential disaster-declared counties may be eligible for payments depending on the type of losses due to Hurricanes Charley, Frances and/or Jeanne.

The following counties have received Presidential disaster declarations (if other counties receive the same declaration for these storms, they will also become eligible):

Counties Designated

Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Brevard, Broward, Charlotte, Citrus, Clay, Collier, Columbia DeSoto, Dixie, Duval, Flagler, Gadsden, Gilchrist, Glades, Hamilton, Hardee, Hendry, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Indian River, Jefferson, Lafayette, Lake, Lee, Leon, Levy, Liberty, Madison, Manatee, Marion, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Nassau, Okeechobee, Orange, Osceola, Palm Beach, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Putnam, Sarasota, Seminole, St. Johns, St. Lucie, Sumter, Suwannee, Taylor, Union, Volusia, Wakulla.

Sign-up Period

Florida Citrus Disaster Program: Sign-up began October 5, 2004.

Florida Nursery Crop Disaster Program: Sign-up begins October 20, 2004.

Florida Vegetable, Fruit and Tropical Fruit Disaster Program: Sign-up begins October 20, 2004.

The end of the sign-up periods will be announced at a future date.

Florida Citrus Disaster Program

Citrus producers will be reimbursed on a per-acre basis for each eligible grove. Payments will be based on the severity of destruction in four tiers as determined by the path of the storms and damage estimates. Each band was established at the national level and is being provided to each County Office. The delineations on the map provided shall be used to assist producers during the sign-up period.

The formula will take into account various levels of losses generally correlating to the distance from the eyes of the hurricanes, the average production loss, tree loss, and rehabilitation and cleanup costs. Fruit from the groves must have been marketed in both 2003 and 2004.

Eligible groves of approved citrus must be physically located within one of the four tiers, have a 35 percent or more loss of production or a 15 percent or more tree loss or associated damage, have been commercially marketed in both 2003 and 2004, and be fruit-bearing trees. See Table 1 for the payment rates.

Florida Nursery Crop Disaster Program: Sign-up begins October 20, 2004.

Applicants for the Florida Nursery Crop Disaster Program must certify the number of nursery or fernery acres eligible for cleanup assistance. Cleanup consists of debris removal and associated activity. Eligible acres are those in which a minimum of \$250 per acre in expenses are needed to restore the area.

The payment rate for producers covered by insurance or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) on any nursery or ferns in the county is 25 percent of the actual dollar value of inventory loss and a flat rate of \$250 per eligible acre for cleanup.

Florida Vegetable, Fruit and Tropical Fruit Disaster Program: Sign-up begins October 20, 2004. (Includes Plasticulture)

Plasticulture refers to production practices for fruit or vegetables where the soil has been bedded, fumigated, fertilized, drip tape or other irrigation systems installed, and covered with plastic mulch. Producers must have suffered a minimum of 50 percent loss to be eligible for payments.

The Florida Vegetable, Fruit and Tropical Fruit Disaster Program provides assistance for vegetable, fruit and tropical fruit producers. A producer must certify

to a minimum of 50 percent loss in production or plant population, as applicable, to be eligible for payments. Eligible disaster losses under this program are:

- plasticulture (fruit and vegetable)
- tropical fruit (carambola, longan, lychee, and mangos)
- vegetables (other than plasticulture).

Payments for plasticulture losses will be made in 3 categories (Practices I, II, and III), based on the amount of investment and require a minimum of a 50 percent loss in plastic/plant population. See Table 2 for the payment rates.

Payment Limitation

Each producer's payment is limited to one \$80,000 limitation for payments subject to limitation under these programs. Payment rates will be 5 percent less for producers who did not obtain Federal Crop Insurance, which is available from the Risk Management Agency, or on coverage under NAP, which is available from the Farm Service Agency. Similar to a number of other USDA programs, payments will not be available for producers whose adjusted gross income is \$2.5 million or higher, unless 75 percent or more is derived from farming and forestry. In addition, producers will be required to agree to purchase crop insurance or NAP coverage for next available coverage period for the crop. Other conditions will apply.

What Other FSA Disaster Programs are Available?

FSA also has the following programs to assist producers in the hurricane-ravaged areas of Florida:

- Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program;
- Disaster Debt Set-Aside Program
- Emergency Loans
- Emergency Conservation Program

Where Can I Get More Information?

Producers in any of the eligible counties are encouraged to visit their local Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Office to begin the sign-up process or to inquire about additional programs offering emergency assistance to agricultural producers. If you are unable to reach an FSA county office due to office closure, call the Florida State Office at 352-379-4500.

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Table 1 Florida Citrus Disaster Program - Payment Tiers

Tier 1 is associated with the most destructive weather and a producer is eligible to receive up to the highest payment rate per acre based on the grove's actual production losses and associated tree damage if the grove suffered 75 percent or greater crop loss.

Tier I: 75% or more crop loss and associated tree damage \$1,500 per acre
\$825 for production loss subject to payment limit and Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) (55%)
\$675 for tree damage, etc., not subject to payment limit or AGI (45%)

Tier 2 is associated with the second most destructive weather and a producer is eligible for up to the second highest payment rate per acre based on the grove's actual production losses and associated tree damage if the grove suffered 50 percent or greater crop loss.

Tier II: 50-74% crop loss and associated tree damage \$1,000 per acre
\$600 for production loss subject to payment limit and AGI (60%)
\$400 for tree damage, etc., not subject to payment limit or AGI (40%)

Tier 3 is associated with the third most destructive weather and a producer is eligible for only the third level payment rate per acre if the grove's production losses were at least 35 percent of actual production and associated tree damage if the grove suffered 35 percent or greater crop loss.

Tier III: 35-49% crop loss and associated tree damage \$600 per acre
\$384 for production loss subject to payment limit and AGI (64%)
\$216 for tree damage, etc., not subject to payment limit or AGI (36%)

Tier 4 is associated with the least amount of destructive weather and a producer is eligible for only grove clean-up benefits if the grove suffered 15 percent or greater tree loss or associated damage.

Tier IV: 15% or greater tree damage \$100 per acre
\$0 for production loss subject to payment limit and AGI (0%)
\$100 for tree damage, etc., not subject to payment limit or AGI (100%)

Table 2 Florida Vegetable, Fruit and Tropical Fruit Disaster Program: Payments for plasticulture losses will be made in 3 categories (Practices I, II, and III)

Practice I:	Plasticulture with plants with >50 percent loss of plastic \$2300 for production/plant loss subject to payment limit and AGI \$200 for cleanup not subject to payment limit or AGI
Practice II:	Plasticulture without plants with >50 percent loss of plastic Plasticulture with plants with >50 percent loss in plant population; no re-plants \$1,800 for production/plant loss subject to payment limit and AGI \$200 for cleanup not subject to payment limit or AGI
Practice III:	Double-crop Plasticulture without plants with 50 percent loss of plastic New plasticulture with 50 percent loss of plants and replanted \$800 for production/plant loss subject to payment limit and AGI \$200 for cleanup not subject to payment limit and AGI
Practice IV	50 percent loss in plant population for conventional row-cropped practices \$250 per acre, subject to payment limit and AGI
Practice V	Tropical fruit (carambola, longan, lychee, mango) with >50 percent production loss in Lee county or Citrus Bands I and II \$5,000 per acre subject to payment limit and AGI