



KATE BROWN
Governor

June 22, 2020

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue,

I am writing to you today requesting that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) declare a Secretarial Disaster Designation for Oregon's Jefferson, Deschutes, Crook, Hood River, Wasco, and Morrow counties. Oregon has a proud history of a vibrant and diverse agrarian culture that provides economic stability and opportunities to our local communities. Oregon's farmers and ranchers are experiencing hardships stemming from the COVID-19 public health crisis, unpredictable wildfires, and, recently, a devastating storm.

On May 30, 2020, a series of storms prompted the National Weather Service to issue a severe weather warning across parts of North Central, Central, and Eastern Oregon. This severe weather environment brought golf ball-sized hail, heavy rain, and winds of 70-100 mph. The damage sustained included severe crop impacts, the destruction of agricultural buildings, equipment, and irrigation systems, uprooted trees in fields, and damage to critical utility infrastructure.

Today, I am requesting a Secretarial Disaster Designation to seek federal assistance with the costly loss of agricultural production and damage to local property. In addition to the Secretarial Disaster Designation, I request that the USDA work closely with the state and local offices to expedite relief via:

- Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) to help with costly repairs to field roads, cross fencing, irrigation, and other impacts on the land's productivity capacity;
- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Emergency Haying and Grazing to authorize emergency haying and grazing acreage to provide relief livestock producers;

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- Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP); Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP); Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), as ranchers have experienced infrastructure damage that has potential to displace critical calving and grazing ground;
- Emergency Farm Loans to rebuild and recover losses to critical infrastructure; and
- Any additional USDA administered programs to assist in the relief efforts.

Our communities look to us for leadership and action in times of need. Thank you for your timely review of my request, and I look forward to continuing to work with the USDA to assist Oregon's rural communities during this difficult time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kate Brown" followed by a horizontal flourish.

Governor Kate Brown

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