

# Cal OES Individual Assistance USDA/SBA Drought Information Sheet

**Local  
Proclamation**

**Is a Local Proclamation Required**  
A local proclamation is **not required** in order to request a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Designation; however, the local government may choose to proclaim a local emergency for their own purposes.

**USDA  
Designation**

**REGULAR process to request a USDA Disaster Designation**

- The county (typically the County Agricultural Commissioner) informs the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) Individual Assistance (IA) Division of a natural disaster causing severe physical property or production losses (of at least 30 percent of a single crop within the county) and submits a *California County Agricultural Commissioner Disaster Report* form(s).
- The Cal OES Individual Assistance (IA) Division will review the report and, if applicable, prepare a request signed by the Cal OES Director for a USDA Disaster Designation.
- Upon receipt of a disaster designation, IA prepares notification letters to the Board of Supervisors, County Agricultural Commissioner’s Office, County Office of Emergency Services, and Cal OES Regional Administrator, making them aware of the designation.

Additional information on the process can be found on the Cal OES/ Recovery/Individual Assistance website under **Agricultural Community** at <http://www.caloes.ca.gov/Recovery/Pages/Individual-Assistance.aspx>

**FAST TRACK process for a USDA Drought Designation**

A designation under the Fast Track process is based on the final rule for the USDA Disaster Designation Process and eliminates the need for a drought designation request from the County Agricultural Commissioner.

Title 7 CFR 759, which includes the nearly automatic approval for counties with drought intensity levels of D2 (for 8 consecutive weeks), D3, and D4 as reported on the U.S. Drought Monitor. USDA will automatically notify Cal OES IA of counties that are designated under the Fast Track process.

Note: A Fast Track drought disaster designation automatically includes eligibility for other drought related disasters, including high winds, excessive heat, and drought-related wildfires and insect damage.

**Assistance made available by a USDA Disaster Designation**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides emergency loans in areas designated a disaster by the Secretary of Agriculture to help producers recover from production and physical losses.

- Emergency farm loans for actual losses as a direct result of the disaster
- Up to a maximum of \$500,000

**U.S. Small  
Business  
Administration  
(SBA)  
Declaration**

<b>Primary county vs. Contiguous county designation</b>	Under a USDA Designation, a contiguous county receives the same benefit as a primary county. A county may prefer to receive a primary county designation in the event that any additional assistance becomes available through special legislation.
<b>Who may apply</b>	Farmers and ranchers who conduct family-sized farming operations.
<b>USDA Application Deadline</b>	Applicants have eight months from the date of the designation approval to apply for the loans to help cover their actual losses.  Note: Subsequent designations may extend the original application deadline.
<b>SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL)</b>	The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) makes Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) available following a disaster declaration by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. SBA's disaster declaration is automatic and does not require a request from the state.
<b>Assistance made available by an SBA Drought Declaration</b>	Small, nonfarm businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture and most private, nonprofit organizations of any size may qualify for Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDLs) of up to \$2 million to help meet financial obligations and operating expenses which could have been met had the disaster not occurred.
<b>Who may apply</b>	Small, non-farm businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture and most private non-profit organizations of any size. SBA eligibility covers both the economic impacts on businesses dependent on farmers and ranchers that have suffered agricultural production losses caused by the disaster and businesses directly impacted by the disaster. Businesses primarily engaged in farming or ranching <u>are not eligible</u> for SBA disaster assistance. Agricultural enterprises should contact the Farm Services Agency (FSA) about the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) assistance made available by the Secretary's declaration. However, in drought disasters nurseries are eligible for SBA disaster assistance.
<b>Application deadline EIDL</b>	Same deadline as USDA Designation
<b>SBA Notification Letters</b>	Cal OES IA sends notification letters to the County Board of Supervisors office, County Office of Emergency Services, and Cal OES Regional Administrator.
<b>Additional Resources</b>	California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Drought website: <a href="http://cdfa.ca.gov/drought/">http://cdfa.ca.gov/drought/</a>