

# DROUGHT AID AVAILABLE TO FARMERS AND RANCHERS IN SEVERAL BRAZOS BASIN COUNTIES

The drought has been hard on countless people across the Brazos River basin. Especially hard hit have been the farmers and ranchers who depend on regular rainfall to sustain their livelihood. However, the federal government has announced it is making available low interest loans to help with agricultural recovery efforts in several Texas counties, including in the Brazos basin.

On Jan. 3, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) named 40 Texas counties as primary disaster areas due to the drought and related factors, such as last year's devastating wildfires. People who live in those counties, as well as in many that surround them, may be eligible for low interest emergency loans of up to \$500,000 from the USDA's Farm Service Agency.



In the Brazos basin, four counties were named disaster areas, including Falls, Hill, Terry and Williamson. People in these counties and 23 others that neighboring them in the basin can apply for the loans. These neighboring counties include Austin, Bell, Bosque, Brazoria, Burnet, Cochran, Fort Bend, Freestone, Garza, Hockley, Jack, Johnson, Lee, Limestone, Lubbock, Lynn, McLennan, Milam, Nolan, Parker, Robertson, Scurry and Taylor.

According to the USDA, these loans can be used to replace or restore essential property, pay production costs from the disaster year, pay essential family living expenses, reorganize the farming operation and refinance certain debts. To be eligible for the loan, farmers and ranchers must be established family farm operators who suffered at least a 30 percent loss to their crop production or livestock and have an acceptable credit history, among other factors.

The low-interest loan offer for these counties expires in 8 months, according to the USDA. To learn more about the emergency loan requirements, please click [here](#). For more on the emergency declaration and other types of agricultural assistance, please click [here](#).