



## **Starting Jan. 4, sign up for USDA's permanent disaster program**

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Washington, Dec. 24. The long-awaited regulations for USDA's permanent disaster 'fix,' the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) program, were released today with sign-up for producers who suffered losses in 2008 scheduled to begin on January 4, 2010 at local Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices.

Authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill, SURE was designed to be the successor to previous ad hoc crop disaster programs, even though congressional efforts are still underway to approve some form of ad hoc payments for losses incurred this year. Because SURE pays for qualified losses one year after a crop year has been completed, several farmers complain that the program will be insufficient to keep them in business.

Here's what we know about how USDA plans to implement the program:

- To be eligible for SURE, producers must have suffered at least a 10% production loss on a crop of economic significance. In addition, producers must meet the risk management purchase requirement by either obtaining a policy or plan of insurance, under the Federal Crop Insurance Act or NAP coverage, for all economically significant crops. For 2008 crops, producers had the opportunity to obtain a waiver of the risk management purchase requirement through a buy-in provision. Producers considered socially disadvantaged, a beginning farmer or rancher, or a limited resource farmer may be eligible for SURE without a policy or plan of insurance or NAP coverage.
- In addition to meeting the risk management purchase requirement, a producer must have a farming interest physically located in a county that was declared a primary disaster county or contiguous county by the Agriculture Secretary under a Secretarial Disaster Designation. Regardless of a Secretarial Disaster Designation, individual producers may also be eligible for SURE if the actual production on the farm is less than 50% of the normal production on the farm due to a natural disaster. For SURE, a farm is defined as all crops in which a producer had an interest nationwide.

- Producers will need to bring acreage and production records, if not already provided for crop insurance purposes to FSA, information to establish your farm (deeds or leases) if not already provided to FSA and possibly other information needed to apply.
- SURE provides assistance in an amount equal to 60% of the difference between the SURE farm guarantee and total farm revenue. The farm guarantee is based on the amount of crop insurance and Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage on the farm. Total farm revenue takes into account the actual value of production on the farm as well as insurance indemnities and certain farm program payments.
- Payments for SURE are capped at \$100,000. Under new payment rules for crops in 2009-2011, a farmer would not be eligible to receive a SURE payment if their non-farming adjusted gross income exceeds \$500,000 a year for the three taxable years preceding the most immediate preceding complete taxable year.
- Sign up for losses incurred in 2008 will begin January 4, 2010 at local FSA offices. Payments will begin immediately after sign up.
- Additional SURE program information such as a fact sheet, a map with 2008 disaster counties, a backgrounder as well as information for other USDA disaster programs can be found at FSA's website: [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)

Look for more information in future editions of the Agri-Pulse e-newsletter.