STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR

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Governor Rell Seeks Federal Aid For Crop Losses By Connecticut Farmers

Six Counties Affected by Summer Storms, Flooding

Governor M. Jodi Rell today announced she is seeking federal relief for Connecticut farmers who suffered major crop losses due to severe rainfall, hail and flooding this past summer.

The Governor sent a letter today to U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack asking for a disaster declaration for six counties affected by rainstorms, hail and flooding from May 12 to June 4, 2009. A declaration would allow farmers to apply for low-interest emergency loans through the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).

"Our farmers need this help to recover from setbacks caused by the one thing that none of us can control – the weather." Governor Rell said. "The strength of agriculture in Connecticut is its diversity and we must do all we can to support our farmers and the jobs the $2 billion industry creates."

State Agriculture Commissioner F. Philip Prelli said above normal rainfall reduced as much as 30 percent the yield of major crops, including pumpkins, corn, tomatoes, peaches, grapes and tobacco.

The counties under consideration for the disaster designation are Fairfield, Hartford, Litchfield, New Haven, New London and Windham.

"Governor Rell's request for emergency aid will help so many of our farmers recover from their crop losses," Commissioner Prelli said. "I am very hopeful that the USDA will recognize this need and move swiftly to grant her request."

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