



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

August 10, 2020

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

Under the provisions of 7 C.F.R. Part 759, I request a disaster designation for Texas counties impacted by Hurricane Hanna and for their contiguous counties. Texas agricultural producers continue to be greatly affected by the severe weather and flooding caused by Hurricane Hanna, which made landfall on July 25, 2020, and caused severe flooding, which presently continues. Hurricane Hanna produced damaging weather conditions which substantially affected producers and caused severe production losses. These producers are in need of this assistance to return to normal operations.

For example, early estimates made by Texas Citrus Mutual show Texas citrus sustained a minimum average of a 30 percent loss to the crop in Cameron, Hidalgo, and Willacy counties; Texas Citrus Mutual also reports cotton acres lost to Hurricane Hanna are estimated to be 138,680 acres in Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr, and Willacy counties. Total damage assessments are still being calculated, but daily agriculture operations have been slowed by both the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and by the severe flooding caused by Hurricane Hanna.

I declared a disaster in 32 Texas counties on July 25, 2020. I also requested that President Trump issue an emergency declaration under Section 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. § 5191. The President promptly granted Texas's request on July 26, 2020.

The State of Texas is requesting that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) expeditiously issue a disaster designation for the following counties: Brooks, Cameron, Hidalgo, Jim Hogg, Kenedy, Starr, Willacy, Zapata, and any other county that demonstrates a significant production loss as a result of Hurricane Hanna. A USDA disaster designation would make federal assistance, such as emergency loans, available to producers who have suffered losses in the above counties as well as in counties that are contiguous to a designated county.

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
August 10, 2020
Page 2

As we continue to assess production losses or losses to quality in the other affected counties, I reserve the right to request that USDA extend its disaster designation to additional counties in Texas.

Thank you for your continuous support of the Texas agriculture industry and your consideration of this request for a disaster designation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Greg Abbott". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Greg Abbott
Governor

GA:frk