

## FSA to help livestock producers who suffered winter losses

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

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Trudy Kareus, State Executive Director (SED) for the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA), announced that permanent disaster assistance programs created in the 2008 Farm Bill allow FSA to offer relief to producers affected by adverse weather. The winter months brought much snow, ice and frigid temperatures across the state causing livestock and forage losses.

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides livestock producers with benefits for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality caused by adverse weather. The Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) provides emergency assistance to producers of livestock, honeybees, and farm-raised fish that have losses due to disease, adverse weather or other conditions, including blizzards and wildfires.

For livestock producers, ELAP assistance may be available for feed losses due to a major weather event. ELAP benefits paid are based on FSA's calculation of the value of feed lost compared to the feed needs of the livestock during the disaster period. Producers should document any additional costs associated with transporting feed to livestock.

"Many farmers and ranchers have faced a rough winter, and they need to know FSA has programs that offer relief when they need it most," said SED Kareus. "For LIP benefits, producers should document the number and kind of livestock that died due to the winter storms and notify our office as soon as possible," she said.

To meet eligibility requirements under LIP, producers must file a notice of loss within 30 days from when the loss is apparent to the producer. It is also important that the verification of death loss is verified by an unrelated third party.

Another disaster assistance program available to livestock producers is the Livestock Forage Program (LFP) which provides financial assistance to producers who suffer grazing losses due to drought or fire. LFP requires that producers obtain a policy or plan of insurance for the grazed forage crop under the Federal Crop Insurance Act (FCIA) or file the required paperwork and pay the administrative fee by the applicable state application closing date for the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP).

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“Although we don’t often think of drought and snow in the same context, it is very possible that both weather conditions are occurring at the same time and LFP is available to help alleviate the financial strain caused by drought,” said Kareus.

Kareus stressed that applications received for any of the livestock disaster assistance programs are considered on a case-by-case basis, and producers should be prepared to provide required information to determine eligibility and applicable benefits.

Producers who have questions regarding livestock disaster assistance program eligibility and the application process should contact Phillips County FSA office at 854-2812 or visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)