



STATE OF ARKANSAS
ASA HUTCHINSON
GOVERNOR

September 16, 2016

Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

As you are well aware, the recent flooding in counties of Northeast Arkansas has been detrimental to the State of Arkansas. Although structural damage to buildings, roadways and bridges has not been a concern, the damage done to crops in Northeast Arkansas has been devastating.

Agriculture is Arkansas's largest industry, contributing billions to our economy annually. As Governor, I take pride in our state's agricultural success, and I will continue to provide any assistance I can to those farmers who help our economy flourish. In efforts to further support the Arkansas farmers who are experiencing oppression from the flooding, I am asking that the Northeast Arkansas counties below be declared a disaster, in terms of crop loss, in order to ensure support for these farmers.

Carroll
Clay
Craighead
Independence
Jackson
Lawrence
Lincoln
Madison
Prairie
Randolph
White
Woodruff

Many crops in these counties were in or near the harvest stage when they were submerged by water, severely damaging or destroying crop output and quality. Physical damage includes field losses of sprouting, mold, stalk rot and lodging, pod splitting and grain shatter. Post-harvest losses include quality discounts and rejection at delivery and will continue throughout this harvest season.

Over a four-week period, Northeast Arkansas suffered from an accumulated total of 8 to 12 inches of rainfall. The University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture published a report that estimated the damage to Arkansas crops to be in the range of \$45.6 to \$50 million.

Rice crops suffered an immense economic loss that is estimated to be over \$7,000,000 with nearly 40,000 acres covered by floodwater. Randolph, Craighead, Lawrence and Clay County sustained a majority of this damage.

Soybean crops are estimated to potentially reach a total economic loss of \$10,000,000 due to being submersed by floodwater. Clay, Jackson, Lawrence, Randolph and White County have suffered the brunt of this loss. Counties across eastern Arkansas are continuing to report yield damage as well.

Due to sprouting, the value of the sorghum crop has been reduced by approximately \$5,600,000. This is a result of nearly 80% of sorghum crops being damaged by floodwater.

Although crops such as corn, cotton, peanuts and other specialty crops suffered from less economic depression than rice, soybeans and sorghum, they are still a vital part of Arkansas's agriculture. The flooding in Northeast Arkansas counties has put a burden on agricultural businesses that the State of Arkansas cannot afford. As Governor, I would like to express my full support for Arkansas's State USDA Office in requesting a disaster declaration in terms of crop losses. With the sensitivity of time at hand, I encourage you to carefully consider my request.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Asa Hutchinson