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## Press Release



### For Immediate Release

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### U.S. Department of Agriculture Grants Governor Hassan's Request for Secretarial Drought Disaster Designation for Three New Hampshire Counties

*Farmers in Hillsborough, Merrimack and Rockingham Counties, Five Contiguous Counties Eligible for Federal Assistance*

CONCORD – United States Department of Agriculture Secretary Thomas Vilsack today granted Governor Maggie Hassan's request for a Secretarial Drought Disaster Designation to support New Hampshire farmers and other local businesses in the agriculture industry responding to the crop losses caused by recent severe drought conditions.

Hillsborough, Merrimack and Rockingham counties were designated as primary natural disaster areas, and Belknap, Cheshire, Grafton, Strafford and Sullivan counties were designated as contiguous disaster counties. Farm operators in each of the eight counties are now eligible to apply for federal assistance, including Farm Service Agency (FSA) emergency loans.

"New Hampshire's agriculture industry is critical to our economy and our way of life, and this drought disaster designation offers an important opportunity for farmers dealing with the recent severe drought conditions in these counties to receive critical assistance," Governor Hassan said. "I thank Secretary Vilsack for his prompt attention to this emergency situation for a critical Granite State industry, and I will continue working with all stakeholders to support our farmers, who help drive our economy forward and maintain our high quality of life."

The Secretarial designation is in response to [Governor Hassan's request for a disaster declaration on August 5](#), and it follows last week's [natural disaster designation for farmers of perennial fruit crops in all 10 New Hampshire counties](#) responding to crop losses due to extreme cold in February and again in early April.

[Letter from Secretary Vilsack granting the request](#) 

**Farmers interested in applying for assistance should contact their local FSA office.**



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