



NEWS RELEASE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE • FARM SERVICE AGENCY

USDA
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USDA Announces Assistance Program for Orchardists and Nursery Tree Growers Program Part of a Suite of Disaster Programs Offered in '08 Farm Bill

Indianapolis, May 11, 2010 – Julia A. Wickard, Executive Director of USDA’s Indiana Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced that orchardists and nursery tree growers can begin applying for benefits under the Tree Assistance Program (TAP), which was authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill. Signup began Monday, May 10, 2010, at local Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices.

“This program helps our orchardists and nursery tree growers replant and get back on their feet after natural disasters,” said Wickard. “TAP is one of many disaster programs offered by USDA to assist producers impacted by disaster.”

The Tree Assistance Program provides help to orchardists and nursery tree growers who produce trees, bushes and vines for commercial purposes to replant or rehabilitate trees, bushes and vines damaged or destroyed by natural disasters. The 2008 Farm Bill expanded eligibility to include Christmas tree and nursery tree growers that were ineligible under prior legislation. Trees grown for pulp or timber or not grown for commercial purposes are not eligible.

To be eligible for TAP, producers must have suffered more than a 15 percent death loss due to the natural disaster after adjustment for normal mortality. TAP is a cost-reimbursement program, with payments covering up to 70 percent of replant costs and 50 percent of pruning, removal and other costs for replacing or salvaging damaged trees.

Producers can receive assistance for up to 500 acres of trees, bushes or vines. Producers must also have purchased a policy or plan of insurance under the Federal Crop Insurance Act or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program, or for 2008, obtained a waiver of the risk management purchase requirement through the buy-in provision. Eligible losses must have occurred on or after Jan. 1, 2008, and before Oct. 1, 2011.

For more information on the new TAP program, please contact your county FSA office or the website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

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