



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

July 15, 2015

The Honorable Alejandro García Padilla
Governor
Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00902

Dear Governor García Padilla:

In accordance with 7 CFR 759.5(a), I am designating four Puerto Rico municipalities as primary natural disaster areas due to a recent drought. The primary municipalities included under this designation are:

Caguas Gurabo Juncos San Lorenzo

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor (see <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>), these municipalities suffered from a drought intensity value during the growing season of: (1) D2 (Drought-Severe) for 8 or more consecutive weeks; or (2) D3 (Drought-Extreme) or D4 (Drought-Exceptional).

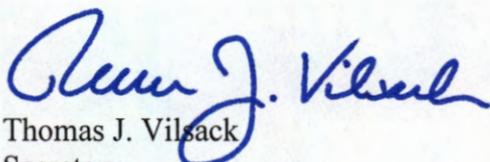
In accordance with section 321(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, 10 municipalities are named as contiguous disaster areas. The contiguous areas included under this designation are:

Aguas Buenas Carolina Cidra Patillas Trujillo Alto
Canovanas Cayey Las Piedras San Juan Yabucoa

A Secretarial disaster designation makes farm operators in primary areas and those areas contiguous to such primary areas eligible to be considered for certain assistance from the Farm Service Agency (FSA), provided eligibility requirements are met. This assistance includes FSA emergency loans. Farmers in eligible municipalities have 8 months from the date of a Secretarial disaster declaration to apply for emergency loans. FSA considers each emergency loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of production losses on the farm, and the security and repayment ability of the operator.

Local FSA offices can provide affected farmers with further information.

Sincerely,



Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary