“The USDM and Agricultural Drought Disaster Assistance”
Brad Rippey, USDA Meteorologist, Washington, D.C.
Primary Uses of the U.S. Drought Monitor for Agricultural Drought Assistance

• **1. Declaration of a primary drought disaster area.** This usage came into existence during the Drought of 2012 and is called the “fast-track” process. The governor of each state/territory still retains the ability to request a drought declaration, pending approval by the Secretary of Agriculture. This type of secretarial declaration leads to the availability of low-interest loans, to help producers affected by drought. (Note: contiguous counties also qualify for assistance, per federal law.)

• **2. Payments under the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP).** Payments are determined by the size of the livestock operation, the type of forage, and the severity of the drought. This usage came into existence with the passage of the 2008 Farm Bill and was re-enacted, with modifications, in the 2014 Farm Bill. For more information, see: https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/livestock-forage/index
“Fast Track” Secretarial Disaster Designation Process

• The streamlined process provides for nearly an automatic designation for any county in which drought conditions, as reported in the U.S. Drought Monitor (http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/), when any portion of a county meets the D2 (Severe Drought) drought intensity value for eight consecutive weeks. A county that has a portion of its area in a drought intensity value of D3 (Extreme Drought) or higher at any time during the growing season also would be designated as a disaster area.
Sep. 25, 2012: USDMA record, with 65.45% of CONUS in drought.
2015 Secretarial Drought Designations - All Drought

Secretarial Drought Designations for 2015
Disaster Incidents as of April 6, 2016

- State Boundary
- County Boundary
- Tribal Lands
- Primary Counties: 780
- Contiguous Counties: 334

Based on official request for help

USDA Farm Service Agency
Production, Emergencies and Compliance Division
Washington, D.C.
April 8, 2016

Alaska
1:60,000,000

Puerto Rico
1:4,000,000

Virgin Islands of the U.S.
St. Croix
1:1,500,000

Based on USDM
2017 Secretarial Drought Designations - All Drought

Secretarial Drought Designations for 2017
Disaster Incidents as of March 8, 2017

- State Boundary
- County Boundary
- Tribal Lands
- Primary Counties: 464
- Contiguous Counties: 206

USDA Farm Service Agency
Production, Emergencies and Compliance Division
Washington, D.C.
March 8, 2017
United States: Cattle & Calves (All)

Note: Counties shaded in gray contain data that are not published by NASS, and thus were not used in delineating the major and minor agricultural areas. Additional information on these agricultural data can be found at: http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/.

- Major areas combined account for 75% of the total national inventory.
- Major and minor areas combined account for 99% of the total national inventory.
- Major and minor areas and state inventory percentages are derived from NASS 2012 Census of Agriculture data.

Yellow numbers indicate the percent each state contributed to the total national inventory. States not numbered contributed less than 1% to the national total.
Uses of U.S. Drought Monitor for Agricultural Drought Assistance

- USDM was a one-time trigger for drought relief in 2002-03 (non-fat dry milk) and 2006 (grants).
- During the drought of 2012, expanded use of the USDM opened conservation land to grazing.
- Regarding direct payments, primary use has been for U.S. livestock producers through the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP).
  - LFP was initiated by the 2008 Farm Bill but expired on September 30, 2011.
  - LFP was renewed and enhanced by the 2014 Farm Bill, bridging the gap between 2011 and 2014.
Previous U.S. Drought Monitor Usage by FSA:

- **2003 Surplus Non-fat Dry Milk (NDM) Sales for Feed Program** – Producers in counties must have met one of the two following criteria to be eligible:
  - County was included in D4 as determined on March 13, 2003
  - County has been located in D4 at any time between September 1, 2002, and March 13, 2003, and was located in a D3 category on March 13, 2003.

- **2006 Livestock Assistance Grant Program** – $50 Million in state block grants - County must have experienced D3 or D4 during March 7, 2006, to August 31, 2006.
Sep. 10, 2002: summer peak, with 54.63% of CONUS in drought.
NDM Counties Approved, April 3, 2003

Non-Fat Dry Milk Program
Counties APPROVED
As of April 3, 2003

USDA

Non-fat Dry Milk Counties

Raymond Milwaukee, EPPO
July 25, 2006: summer peak, with 49.95% of CONUS in drought.
Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP)

- The popular Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) was enacted by the 2008 Farm Bill, and re-enacted by the 2014 Farm Bill. LFP replaced a patchwork disaster assistance program for U.S. livestock producers. Earlier efforts, using the USDM as a payment trigger, were used in 2003 and 2006. Current information on the LFP can be found at: https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/livestock-forage/index
• U.S. Drought Monitor Usage by FSA

• Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 ("Farm Bill") authorizes the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP)
  – Grazing loss because of drought on owned or leased grazing land or pastureland that is physically located in a county experiencing:
    • D2 intensity for at least 8 consecutive weeks during normal grazing period will be eligible to receive payment equal to 1 monthly payment
    • D3 intensity during the normal grazing period will be eligible to receive a payment equal to 2 monthly payments
    • D3 intensity for at least 4 weeks or a D4 intensity any time during the grazing period will be eligible to receive a payment equal to 3 monthly payments
2008 “Farm Bill” Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) Payouts (financial assistance to producers who suffered grazing losses due to drought or fire on or after January 1, 2008, and before October 1, 2011, during the calendar year in which the loss occurred):

- 2008 calendar year: $165,540,837
- 2009 calendar year: $98,739,950
- 2010 calendar year: $33,334,458
- 2011 calendar year: $180,950,088
- LFP total, 2008-11: $478,565,333
U.S. Drought Monitor Usage by FSA

Agricultural Act of 2014 (“Farm Bill”) re-authorizes the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP)

- Grazing loss because of drought on owned or leased grazing land or pastureland that is physically located in a county experiencing:
  - D2 intensity for at least 8 consecutive weeks during normal grazing period will be eligible to receive an amount equal to 1 monthly payment
  - D3 intensity during the normal grazing period will be eligible to receive an amount equal to 3 monthly payments
  - D3 intensity for at least 4 weeks or a D4 intensity any time during the grazing period will be eligible to receive an amount equal to 4 monthly payments
  - D4 intensity for at least 4 weeks during the normal grazing period will be eligible to receive an amount equal to 5 monthly payments
2014 “Farm Bill” Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) Payouts (financial assistance to producers who suffered grazing losses due to drought or fire on or after October 1, 2011, during the calendar year in which the loss occurred):

- 2011 calendar year: $279,385,590
- 2012 calendar year: $2,579,048,343
- 2013 calendar year: $1,621,573,768
- 2014 calendar year: $908,782,296
- 2015 calendar year: $531,763,126
- 2016 calendar year: $247,314,535 (updated through 3/2/2017)
- LFP total, 2011-16: $6,167,867,657
“The 2014 Farm Bill contains permanent livestock disaster programs including the Livestock Forage Disaster Program, which will help producers in California and other areas recover from the drought. At President Obama’s direction, USDA is making implementation of the disaster programs a top priority and plans to have the programs available for sign up in 60 days. Producers will be able to sign up for the livestock disaster programs for losses not only for 2014 but for losses they experienced in 2012 and 2013. While these livestock programs took over a year to get assistance out the door under the last Farm Bill, USDA has committed to cut that time by more than 80 percent and begin sign-up in April.”
Based on USDM

Special consideration
Livestock Forage Program
Full Season Improved Pasture - 2016 Program Year

Eligible County Payment Months

- Green: 1
- Yellow: 2
- Orange: 3
- Brown: 4
- Red: 5

Map Scales Vary
Data Update - 12/29/16

Special consideration

USDA FSA

Based on USDM
Livestock Forage Program
Forage Sorghum - 2016 Program Year

Based on USDM

Eligible County Payment Months

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

Special consideration

Map Scales Vary
Data Update - 12/29/16

USDA FSA
Livestock Forage Program
Long Season Small Grains - 2016 Program Year

Based on USDM

Special consideration

Eligible County Payment Months
- Green: 1
- Orange: 3
- Brown: 4

Map Scales Vary
Data Update - 12/29/16

USDA FSA

Hawaii

Alaska

Puerto Rico

U.S. Virgin Islands
Comments? Questions?

• Contact info:
  - e-mail: brippey@oce.usda.gov
  - phone: (202) 720-2397

USDA

Photo by B. Rippey
Saline Co., Nebraska
April 18, 2013