

Missouri Well Program More Costly Than Anticipated

(KLZA) A Missouri program to improve the water supplies of drought-stricken farmers could end up costing nearly 15 times the original estimate.

Gov. Jay Nixon announced a \$2 million program a month ago in which the state would cover 90 percent of the cost for farmers to drill or deepen wells or expand their irrigation systems. But demand far exceeded expectations, and the governor expanded the program.

Nixon's office says 5,885 applications ultimately were approved for grants totaling about \$29 million.

The money could come from several sources, including the state Soil and Water Districts Commission, rural development funds in the Department of Economic Development and emergency management funds.

Nixon's office cites a budget provision that grants flexibility for agencies to use money to offer immediate relief in emergencies.

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