

Deadline Extended to Apply for Funds from USDA

Nebraska farmers and ranchers impacted by the “Bomb Cyclone” and raging flood waters this spring are working hard on cleaning up and assessing the damages to their ag operations.

One of the more significant losses experienced by landowners has been the death of livestock. The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has financial assistance available to help landowners cope with the aftermath of livestock losses.

Through NRCS’ Environmental Quality Incentives Program - commonly referred to as EQIP farmers and ranchers can apply for financial assistance to properly dispose of dead livestock. Applications are being accepted now through July 1. This is an extension of the original sign up periods announced immediately following the flooding/blizzard.

NRCS State Conservationist Craig Derickson said, “We want to ensure this assistance continues to be available to producers still dealing with the aftermath of this unprecedented and devastating event for Nebraska. NRCS conservationists are available to provide technical and financial assistance to help producers dispose of livestock carcasses in a safe manner.”

Producers who have not already disposed of livestock can apply for EQIP now. Producers can then get a waiver to allow them to begin working to dispose of deceased livestock before having an approved EQIP contract.

“Typically, producers cannot begin working on an EQIP practice before their EQIP contract has been approved. But since this situation is so time-critical, NRCS is encouraging producers to sign up for EQIP first, then submit a waiver to go ahead and begin animal disposal prior to having their EQIP contract approved,” Derickson said.

Producers in the area who suffered other damages due to the blizzard and flooding – such as damaged fencing, water sources, or windbreaks – may also seek assistance from NRCS through general EQIP funding. The sign-up period for general EQIP is continuous and has no cut off application date.

Derickson said, “NRCS is committed to helping producers get back on their feet after these extreme weather events while also ensuring Nebraska’s natural environment remains healthy and productive.”

For more information about the programs and assistance available from NRCS, visit your local USDA Service Center or www.ne.nrcs.usda.gov.