



NEWS RELEASE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE • FARM SERVICE AGENCY

USDA
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USDA Clarifies Extension of Emergency Grazing Through Nov. 30th

COLUMBUS, Ohio -- Sept. 18, 2012 -- The Ohio Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced a two-month extension for emergency grazing on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres, freeing up forage and feed for livestock producers. FSA will allow all Ohio farmers to continue emergency grazing on CRP land through **Nov. 30, 2012**, without incurring an additional CRP rental payment reduction. The period normally allowed for emergency grazing lasts through Sept. 30. **This extension of emergency grazing to November 30, 2012 is only applicable to producers who request emergency grazing under Fiscal Year 2012 emergency grazing authority before Sept. 30, 2012.**

The extension of emergency grazing on CRP acres does not apply to these practices: CP8A ó Grass Waterway-Non-easement; CP23 ó Wetland Restoration; CP23A ó Wetland Restoration-Non-Floodplain; CP27 ó Farmable Wetlands Pilot Wetland; and CP28 ó Farmable Wetlands Pilot Buffer.

Under emergency grazing at least twenty-five percent of each field or contiguous CRP fields must be left ungrazed for wildlife, or graze not more than seventy-five percent of the stocking rate as determined by NRCS. CRP participants who do not own or lease livestock may rent or lease the grazing privilege to an eligible livestock producer.

Eligible producers who are interested in grazing CRP under the emergency authorization, and current CRP participants who choose to provide land for grazing to an eligible livestock producer, must first request approval from their local FSA office and obtain a modified conservation plan from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) before Sept. 30, 2012.

Prior to implementation of emergency grazing, a conservation plan must be developed that complies with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and all other applicable federal and state laws and regulations. This plan must be completed by NRCS. If potential negative impacts of grazing on threatened or endangered species or critical habitat are identified, it is not likely the land would be approved for these activities.

Producers must notify their local FSA office and file a request and receive approval before starting the emergency grazing activity.