The Honorable Terry E. Branstad
Governor
State of Iowa
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Dear Governor Branstad:

With the publication of the final rule of the disaster designation on July 12, 2012, found at 7 CFR 759, I am designating 42 Iowa counties as primary natural disaster areas in accordance with 7 CFR 759.5(a), due to a recent drought. The primary counties included under this designation are:

Appanoose  Cedar  Fayette  Jasper  Lucas  Poweshiek
Benton    Clayton  Grundy  Jefferson  Mahaska  Scott
Black Hawk  Clinton  Hamilton  Johnson  Marion  Story
Boone     Davis  Hardin  Jones  Marshall  Tama
Bremer    Delaware  Henry  Keokuk  Monroe  Van Buren
Buchanan  Des Moines  Iowa  Lee  Muscatine  Wapello
Butler    Dubuque  Jackson  Linn  Polk  Wayne

These counties have suffered from a drought intensity value of at least D2 (Drought-Severe) for 8 or more consecutive weeks or D3 (Drought-Extreme) or higher at any time during the growing season according to the U. S. Drought Monitor (see http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/).

In accordance with section 321(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, 16 counties are named as contiguous disaster counties. The contiguous counties included under this designation are:

Allamakee  Dallas  Greene  Washington
Cerro Gordo  Decatur  Louisa  Webster
Chickasaw  Floyd  Madison  Winneshiek
Clarke    Franklin  Warren  Wright

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A Secretarial disaster designation makes farm operators in primary counties and those counties contiguous to such primary counties 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 counties have 8 months from the date of a Secretarial disaster declaration to apply for emergency loan assistance. FSA will consider each emergency loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of production losses, security available, and repayment ability.

Local FSA offices can provide affected farmers with further information.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary