July 6, 2021

The Honorable Greg Gianforte
Governor
State of Montana
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, Montana 59620

Dear Governor Gianforte:

In accordance with 7 CFR 759.5(a), I am designating two Montana counties as primary natural disaster areas due to a recent drought.

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor (see http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/), these counties suffered from a drought intensity value during the growing season of 1) D2 Drought-Severe for 8 or more consecutive weeks or 2) D3 Drought-Extreme or D4 Drought-Exceptional.

In accordance with section 321(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, additional areas of your state are named as contiguous disaster counties. Enclosed you will find documentation that provides a detailed list of all primary and contiguous counties impacted by this disaster.

Other counties in Montana may have already been designated as natural disaster counties if they had previously met the requirements found under 7 CFR 759.5(a) for the current crop year.

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 loans. FSA considers each emergency loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of production losses on the farm and the security and repayment ability of the operator.

Local FSA offices can provide affected farmers with further information.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary

Enclosure

Disaster Designation Areas for Montana

Primary Counties:

Montana **(2)**
Hill   Wheatland

Contiguous Counties:

Montana **(8)**

Blaine	Fergus	Judith Basin	Meagher
Chouteau	Golden Valley	Liberty	Sweet Grass