



STATE OF MINNESOTA

Office of Governor Tim Pawlenty

130 State Capitol ♦ 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard ♦ Saint Paul, MN 55155

August 3, 2007

The Honorable Mike Johanns
Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue Southwest
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Johanns:

I respectfully request that you declare the counties of Aitkin, Anoka, Benton, Brown, Carlton, Cass, Cook, Crow Wing, Douglas, Hennepin, Hubbard, Itasca, Kanabec, Lake, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Pipestone, Pope, St. Louis, Sherburne, Swift, Todd, Wadena, and Wright as agricultural disaster areas due to persistent drought conditions which began May 1, 2007, and continuing. Furthermore, I request that you declare Roseau County an agricultural disaster area due to winter grass kill and early excessive rains from September 1, 2006, and continuing.

A declaration would allow affected farmers to receive the assistance of the United States Department of Agriculture, specifically the low-interest Emergency Loan (EM) Program administered by the Farm Service Agency.

Many areas in Minnesota received much needed rainfall during the spring of 2007 after an extremely dry fall and lack of significant snow cover during the winter months. Since the first of May, rainfall, particularly in the northeast, north central, and now the southwest, has been much less than average. Farmers in northern Minnesota are experiencing the most significant losses to their hay and pasture crops. In many of these counties, the first cutting of hay was good, the second was of lower value, and there is no third crop. Producers are looking for extra hay and are worried about not having feed for livestock over the winter months. The corn and soybean crops are also losing value daily as the warm, dry weather continues across the state.

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Roseau County is being included in this request due to the losses of their grass seed crop. This crop suffered from the lack of autumn rain and no snow cover with bitter cold during the winter of 2006, resulting in extensive winterkill in the county's perennial ryegrass fields.

Each of the counties' emergency boards has met and assessed damages. The Minnesota Farm Service Agency Office convened the State Emergency Board on August 2, 2007, and is in agreement with the Damage Assessment Reports (DARs) submitted by each county. I am attaching the DAR from each of the 25 counties, along with minutes of the County Emergency Board meetings, minutes of the State Emergency Board meeting, and a summary spreadsheet of the DARs submitted to the Minnesota Farm Service Agency Office.

Furthermore, I have been notified that several other counties in the state are nearing the 30 percent crop loss threshold, and will continue to experience losses if these areas don't receive significant rainfall in the near future. Taking this into account, I may need to submit additional requests to your office.

Thank you for your review and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Pawlenty', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tim Pawlenty
Governor

Enclosures: DARs from each of the 25 counties
Minutes of the County Emergency Board meetings
Minutes of the State Emergency Board Meeting