

Gov. Walker: Announces 23 Wisconsin counties Affected by Alfalfa Winterkill are eligible for USDA Aid

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MADISON - Governor Scott Walker announced today that ten Wisconsin counties have been designated disaster areas due to losses to winterkill and late freezes that hit alfalfa fields especially hard in the first five months of the year.

Farmers in those counties and 13 adjacent counties may be eligible for assistance from the USDA Farm Service Agency in the form of emergency loans.

“We applaud the USDA’s decision to designate the counties affected by alfalfa winterkill as disaster areas,” Governor Walker said. “This aid helps Wisconsin farmers get back on their feet and protects them from crippling losses due to damaged crops. We look forward to working with USDA moving forward on this issue.”

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Sonny Perdue informed Governor Walker that ten counties, where losses reached as high as 70 percent, were named as primary disaster areas, including: Brown, Calumet, Kewaunee, La Crosse, Manitowoc, Monroe, Outagamie, Ozaukee, Sheboygan, and Washington. The 13 adjacent counties are also eligible for aid, including: Dodge, Door, Fond du Lac, Jackson, Juneau, Milwaukee, Oconto, Shawano, Trempealeau, Vernon, Waukesha, Waupaca, and Winnebago.

The losses stemmed mainly from the lack of snow cover, which insulates plants from freeze damage, this past winter. Alfalfa is a perennial plant that regrows from the roots every year, and snow insulates and protects the plants from cold damage.