

Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection: Reminds farmers to report storm losses, offers resources

Posted on Friday, Mar 8, 2019

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Media Contact: Grace Colás, Communications Director
608-224-5020, grace.colas1@wisconsin.gov

MADISON - With more snow in the forecast this weekend, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) reminds farmers to report winter storm losses to their county Farm Service Agency (FSA) office as soon as possible. These reports are essential to making the determination whether to seek a disaster designation from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary.

“This week, I had the opportunity to talk directly with farmers and tour their farms that have suffered extensive barn and shed damage due to the ice, snow, and wind,” said DATCP Secretary Brad Pfaff. “It is devastating to hear about the livestock losses and extreme stress the farmers are working under to take care of their animals in this very difficult situation.”

A disaster designation in their county would make farmers eligible for low-interest loans if they cannot access private financing. FSA has safety net programs, including the Livestock Indemnity Program and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program, which may be helpful for farmers who lost livestock due to an adverse weather-related event.

Contacts for county FSA offices are available online. Farmers should also report all

property damage and losses, including photographs when possible, to their insurers. In some communities, local officials may direct farmers to report damage to additional area contacts.

“Our team at DATCP continues to work with Governor Evers and his staff to share information, support farmers, and provide assistance,” added Pfaff. “We are working to connect the numerous agencies, collaborating with Wisconsin Emergency Management, the Department of Transportation, and others, to ensure farmers can access all available services.”

DATCP is available for farmers needing resources. Farmers can contact the Wisconsin Farm Center staff at 800-942-2474 for assistance with mediation, financial analysis, and emotional stress. Farmers can also contact the Bureau of Consumer Protection staff at 800-422-7128 for advice on hiring contractors and checking their complaint history before signing a contract.

“Thank you to all the farmers, families, friends, and neighbors who are working to help each other as they work through the immediate challenges and make decisions for the future,” concluded Pfaff. “Please be safe out there as the snow continues to fall.”