



STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA  
M. MICHAEL ROUNDS, GOVERNOR

June 30, 2006

The Honorable Mike Johanns  
Secretary of Agriculture  
14<sup>th</sup> Street and Independence Avenue S.W., Room 200A  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Johanns:

The state of South Dakota is now in its seventh consecutive year of drought. So far in 2006, late spring killing frost, extreme heat, high winds, hail, insect damage, insufficient subsoil moisture and significantly below normal precipitation have caused the same conditions that impacted the agricultural industry in portions of South Dakota in 2005 and in previous years. This drought has left dams and dugouts dry and aquifers low, which has the potential to produce high selenium concentration threatening the health of livestock. Counties have reported losses of cash crops such as alfalfa, barley, corn, hay, oats, soybeans, sunflowers and wheat, as well as shortages of grass and forage for livestock. All of these conditions have forced farmers and ranchers to begin to reduce their cattle and sheep herds. The conditions continue to bring economic hardships not only to the affected farmers and ranchers, but also to those businesses that depend on farmers and ranchers for their livelihood.

I have received County Disaster Resolutions and United States Department of Agriculture Flash Situation Reports noting the conditions listed above from the counties of Brule, Buffalo, Campbell, Corson, Custer, Dewey, Edmunds, Fall River, Faulk, Hughes, Hyde, Jackson, Jerauld, Jones, Lyman, Meade, Pennington, Perkins, Potter, Stanley, Sully, Walworth and Ziebach. The Flash Situation Reports reflect alfalfa, barley, corn, hay, oats, soybeans, sunflowers and wheat production, rangeland and pastureland losses varying from 30 to 100 percent.

I have also received a County Disaster Resolution and United States Department of Agriculture Flash Situation Report from Turner County as a result of high winds, heavy rain and hail that occurred on June 16, 2006. Turner County reports losses ranging from 50 to 90 percent to cash crops such as corn, soybeans, winter wheat and oats.

I am concerned that the agricultural producers in these counties may not be able to continue their family farming and ranching operations next year if assistance is not provided by the United States Department of Agriculture. Therefore, I am requesting that you declare the counties listed above as Secretarial natural disaster areas and make available to these producers all necessary and available assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Michael Rounds". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

M. Michael Rounds

MMR:nkn

cc: Senator Tim Johnson  
Senator John Thune  
Representative Stephanie Herseth

Enclosures