

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 9, 2021

Zach Ducheneaux
Administrator, Farm Service Agency
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Administrator Ducheneaux:

We write in response to the significant concerns that we have heard from farmers and ranchers in our states about persistent drought conditions and the lack of flexibility on emergency haying when the U.S. Drought Monitor designates D3 extreme drought conditions. We urge you to prioritize quick action to ensure that livestock producers have more emergency options as drought conditions worsen.

Livestock producers in Minnesota and South Dakota are particularly concerned about certain Conservation Reserve Program acres that are eligible for emergency haying and grazing under D2 conditions but are ineligible when a county moves to D3 conditions. When conditions on the ground worsen, producers already facing a shortage of hay and available grazing lands should be provided with more options—not fewer.

Our understanding is that administrative policy changes were made earlier this year with respect to emergency haying of wetland restoration acres under D3 conditions. We respectfully request clarification about those changes, and we urge you to prioritize quick action to ensure that livestock producers have additional emergency options as drought conditions worsen. We look forward to working with you to ensure a quick recovery from the drought.

Sincerely,



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



John Thune
United States Senator