

# News Release

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## USDA-NRCS Florida Expedites Disaster Assistance Sign-up through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program

**GAINESVILLE, Florida, October 18, 2024** – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) [Natural Resources Conservation Service \(NRCS\) in Florida](#) announced it will begin accepting applications today for disaster assistance funding through [Emergency Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](#) to provide technical and financial assistance to agricultural landowners and producers in recovering from damages caused by hurricanes Debby, Helene, and Milton.

Approximately \$26 million will be made available for EQIP disaster assistance applicants to address resource concerns on their land. The sign-up period for this disaster assistance is October 18 – December 20, 2024.

“NRCS is committed to helping Florida agriculture with every means available to repair damages to their land caused by Hurricanes Debby, Helene, and Milton,” said Juan C. Hernandez, NRCS State conservationist in Florida.

NRCS Florida will evaluate disaster assistance applications using the ACT NOW process. ACT NOW allows NRCS to pre-approve ranked application when the ranking score meets or exceeds an established threshold score. The minimum threshold ranking score for EQIP disaster assistance funding is 50 points. Applications will be batched and processed in the order received.

EQIP disaster assistance funding is target to the following conservation practices. To expedite hurricane disaster recovery, Florida NRCS is offering early start waivers to allow commencement of conservation practices prior to program contract approval.

- 325 – High Tunnel System
- 368 – Emergency Animal Mortality Management
- 384 – Woody Residue Treatment
- 400 – Bivalve Aquaculture Gear and Biofouling Control
- 442 – Sprinkler System (center pivots)
- 484 – Mulching
- 590 – Nutrient Management
- 595 – Pest Management Conservation System
- 612 – Tree/Shrub Establishment

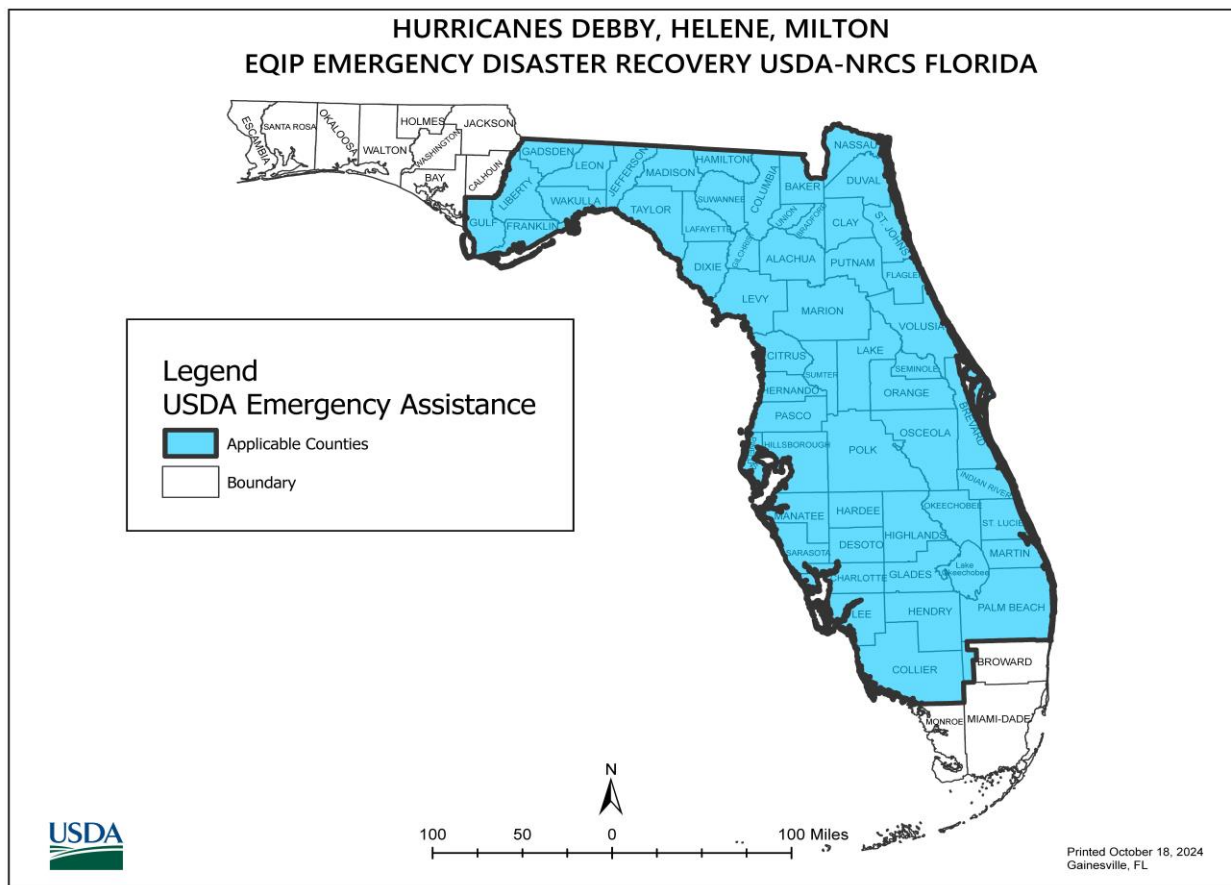
**A webinar is scheduled for Wednesday, October 30, 2024, from 10:00a.m.-12:00 EST.**

**Join ZoomGov Meeting**

<https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1606683390>

**Meeting ID:** 160 668 3390

**Florida counties targeted for EQIP disaster assistance include:** Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Brevard, Brevard, Charlotte, Citrus, Clay, Collier, Columbia, Desoto, Dixie, Duval, Flagler, Franklin, Gadsden, Gilchrist, Gulf, Hamilton, Hardee, Hendry, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Indian River, Jefferson, Lafayette, Lake, Lee, Leon, Levy, Liberty, , Madison, Manatee, Marion, Martin, Nassau, Okeechobee, Orange, Osceola, Palm Beach, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Putnam, Sarasota, Seminole, St. Johns, St. Lucie, Sumter, Suwannee, Taylor, Union, Volusia, and Wakulla.



**Additional USDA Disaster Resources:**

**For the latest on USDA efforts:** visit the [Hurricane Recovery webpage on farmers.gov](https://www.farmers.gov/hurricane-recovery).

**Find your local USDA Service Center:** <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/contact>

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