

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

November 23rd, 2021

Re: Request for Additional Flexibility under the ELAP Program for Drought Impacted Livestock Producers

Dear Administrator Ducheneaux,

We greatly appreciate the U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency's (USDA/FSA) efforts in exploring all avenues to assist farmers and ranchers affected by this year's widespread and devastating drought. For many regions, this marks the second consecutive year of exceptional drought.

We have heard from many of our producer members in the areas impacted that hauling livestock to feed; rather than feed to livestock opens additional options for feedstuffs and is more economically efficient. At a time when finding forage is a challenge, the ability to look at feed that is not available to haul, like beet tops or corn stalks, is significant. Additionally, this reduces the number of loads needed thus reducing the cost to the producer and the need to find more livestock haulers, which is critical in light of the pandemic related supply chain shortages we are facing.

Our understanding is that under the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP), the Secretary has made available a 60% cost-share to haul additional needed feed at a rate up to \$6.60 per mile, not to exceed 1,000 miles (a higher percentage cost-share for socially disadvantaged livestock producers). We believe that the same parameters would be sufficient for hauling livestock to feed.

Therefore, we respectfully request USDA/FSA make additional flexibility available to cost-share hauling livestock to feed under the same guidelines currently in place for hauling feed to livestock to address this gap in coverage under ELAP.

Thank you for your efforts in quickly assisting drought impacted livestock producers and for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

American Farm Bureau Federation
American Sheep Industry Association
National Cattlemen's Beef Association
Public Lands Council