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WASHINGTON, April 15, 2010 - USDA announced today that it will accept applications for the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) for losses that took place in calendar years 2008 and 2009. ELAP sign-up ended on Dec.10, 2009, for 2008 losses and on Feb. 1, 2010, for 2009 losses. However, because of changes to program eligibility provisions, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) is accepting late-filed applications for 2008 and 2009 livestock, honeybees, and/or farm-raised fish losses through May 5, 2010.

ELAP, authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill, provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish that have losses due to disease, adverse weather or other conditions, including losses due to blizzards and wildfires. ELAP assistance is for losses not covered under other Supplemental Agricultural Disaster Assistance programs established by the 2008 Farm Bill, specifically the Livestock Forage Disaster Program, the Livestock Indemnity Program and the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program. ELAP is being implemented to fill in the gap and provide assistance under other conditions determined to be appropriate.

ELAP eligibility provisions have been amended for both honeybee and farm-raised fish producers. The modifications include allowing honeybee and farm-raised fish producers who did not replace their honeybees or fish that were lost due to a natural disaster to be eligible for ELAP payments based on the fair market value of the honeybees or fish that were lost. In addition, the requirements to document losses for honeybee producers who suffered losses due to Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) were modified to allow documentation by an independent third party for losses in 2010 through Sept. 31, 2011. Producers can self certify losses due to CCD for 2008 and 2009.

USDA EXTENDS SIGN-UP FOR EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO ELIGIBLE PRODUCERS OF LIVESTOCK, H

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For more information or to apply for ELAP and other USDA Farm Service Agency disaster assistance programs, please visit your FSA county office or www.fsa.usda.gov .