

Iowa Farm Disaster Relief Coalition Applications Now Available; Donations Still Needed!

Farmers who have suffered losses due to this spring's storms and flooding may now begin applying for assistance from the Iowa Farm Disaster Relief Coalition.

The Coalition is a loose collaboration of more than a dozen Iowa sustainable agriculture and faith-based organization. The Center for Rural Affairs in Lyons, NE, is serving as fiscal agent for the project, which was kicked off in June with a \$10,000 donation from Farm Aid.

Farmers may apply for up to \$500 in relief to help offset household expenses, which in turn will free up finances for replanting, clean up, repair, etc., on the farm.

"We know \$500 is not a lot of money, but Farm Aid's philosophy is to help out as many farmers as possible," says Atlantic farmer Denise O'Brien, coalition spokesperson.

Applications and guidelines are available on the coalition's website. Donations may also be made to the fund on the website.

Applications will be reviewed as quickly as possible by a committee of representatives of the state's membership based sustainable ag groups, including IFU. Deadline for the first round of applications is Sept. 30, 2008; more rounds of grants will be made available as funding allows.

For more information, contact Denise O'Brien at 712-243-3264.

Members of the Iowa Farm Disaster Relief Coalition are: Buy Fresh Buy Local Iowa, Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement, Iowa Farmers Union, Iowa Network for Community Agriculture, Iowa Organic Association, National Catholic Rural Life Conference, Practical Farmers of Iowa, Women Food and Agriculture Network, Edible Iowa River Valley, Iowa Valley Resource Conservation and Development, Iowa Chapter of the NFO, National Farmers Organization, Churches' Center for the Land and People, Atlantic farmer and advocate Denise O'Brien and the Center for Rural Affairs in Lyons, Nebraska which is serving as the project's fiscal sponsor.