

**What to do Next:**  
**A Farmer's Guide to Moving Forward After Tropical Storm Irene**

## **1. Document Losses**

All Vermont farmers are encouraged to document all losses and expenses incurred from Hurricane Irene. Records to track and keep include:

- A notebook and calendar are helpful tools for recording all field work, hours of labor spent on clean up efforts, and conversations with insurance agents as well as with state and federal agencies. Record the date of each entry and the crucial details of the conversation, appointments or meeting. Include actions to be taken or next steps and who will do them. Record the complete name and contact information of the person and agency you are dealing with.
- If you have homeowners, renter's or crop insurance, you will need to provide proof of property ownership, estimated value and damage incurred. If you do not have insurance, you may be able to use the property loss as a deduction on your income taxes.
- When it is safe to enter the property, document proof of all property loss with photos and written details. Include manufacturer, model, serial number, age, value new, approximate current value and damage incurred for any equipment. For crops, include crop type, acreage, and estimated value of loss. For livestock, include the type of livestock impacted, number of deaths, and estimated value of loss. A copy of the Agricultural Damage Assessment sheet developed by the USDA Farm Service Agency is enclosed.
- Keep receipts and record all expenses related to recovery or rebuild efforts. They may be covered by insurance, assistance programs or be deductible on taxes. For example, keep receipts for lodging, clean-up supplies, doctor bills related to disaster injury, record hours of labor related to flooding damage, and other related expenses.

## **2. Report Losses**

Reporting your losses will help ensure your eligibility for insurance claims, grants, loans and any future federal funding that may become available to help you recover from the flooding. You can report your losses by:

- Forwarding your completed Agricultural Damage Assessment sheet (enclosed) to your county USDA Farm Service Agency office (see

enclosed USDA Farm Service Agency Vermont County Offices sheet for FSA county office addresses and phone numbers), or e-mailing Vern Grubinger ([vernon.grubinger@uvm.edu](mailto:vernon.grubinger@uvm.edu)) with an estimate of the dollar value of your losses, including main crops and number of acres effected, and describe damage to structures. Vern will provide Vermont's Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Agency of Agriculture with an overall estimate of losses to the industry so they have the information they need to work on securing additional financial assistance for farmers. Please copy the information and send to NOFA-VT at [enid@nofavt.org](mailto:enid@nofavt.org) so that we can document the losses to organic farmers. Having this information will help us target our technical assistance, and be able to tell your story to help raise money for our emergency fund.

- Contacting your crop insurance agent, if applicable.

### **3. Seek Support**

Many resources are available to assist farmers coping with the aftermath of Hurricane Irene, and more will be available in the future. The following is a just a short list of federal and state agencies, non-profit organizations, and web sites that may help you find information on a wide range of issues including funding, how to handle flooded crops, or how to find extra hands to help with the clean up.

- NOFA-VT  
Our website ([www.nofavt.org/flood](http://www.nofavt.org/flood)) provides links to resources available and will continue to be updated with more resources. Enclosed you will find a Financial Resources for Farmers Impacted by Hurricane Irene guide, guides to managing flood damaged crops, and more. Please don't hesitate to call:  
(802) 434-4122 for general questions or (802) 434-3821 for organic certification questions
- UVM Extension  
An extensive list of hurricane Irene recovery resources can be found at: <http://www.uvm.edu/extension/>  
Or call (802) 656-2990 or 1-(866)-622-2990 (toll-free in VT)
- USDA Farm Service Agency  
FSA serves agriculture by providing federal program benefits such as annual operating loans and land purchases, commodity price supports, disaster relief, and conservation.  
See the enclosed list of Vermont county offices or visit their website:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/stateoffapp?mystate=vt&area=home&subject=landing&topic=landing>

- Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets  
Fact sheets for farmers and updates can be found at:  
<http://www.vermontagriculture.com/>  
or call (802) 828-2430
- Vermont Emergency Management  
Information on road closures, power outages, and other recovery updates:  
<http://vem.vermont.gov/>  
or call: 800-347-0488 or 802-244-8721 (Voice), 888-545-8721 (TTY)
- VTResponse  
If you are looking to find help for work on your farm, try posting on the VTResponse website (<http://vtresponse.wordpress.com/>). This site allows people looking to offer help with those who need it.