



Steven W. Troxler
Commissioner

North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Ag and Equine Partners Hay Relief Programs

A Special Project of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services

Description of Programs

With North Carolina continuing to experience drought conditions, the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has explored several options to assist livestock producers in locating and transporting forage products to their farms. It is clear that the biggest impediment North Carolina livestock producers have to moving hay and other forage products to their farms is the cost of transportation.

The goal of the Ag and Equine Partners Hay Relief Programs is to collect and fairly distribute funds that may be used to defray some of the cost associated with transportation of hay from outside North Carolina at a rate of 50 cents/mile round trip or \$1.00/loaded mile, up to \$500.00. These reimbursements will be made on a first-come, first-served basis until funds are exhausted. The extent of funds is entirely dependent on the level of donations received from outside sources.

Producers are eligible for cost-share reimbursement on a maximum of up to four loads, provided that one of those loads was delivered between September 5, 2007, and December 3, 2007. Producers are eligible for cost-share reimbursement on a maximum of three loads delivered on or after December 4.

How the Programs Work

Eligibility

- Ag and Equine Partners Hay Relief Program funds are only available to reimburse farmers for hay brought in from outside North Carolina on or after September 5, 2007.
- To be eligible to receive reimbursement for transportation costs, a buyer of hay or forage must submit a Transportation Reimbursement Request form, along with the original bill of lading from the trucker used to transport the hay or forage. Farmers should retain a copy of the bill of lading or transportation receipt for their records.
- To be eligible for cost-share funds, the hay that is moved must be for the farmer's (or rescue operation's) own use, and not be intended for resale.

- Because funds are limited, producers will be limited to cost-share reimbursement for only one load per farm for loads delivered between September 5, 2007, and December 3, 2007, with a \$500.00 cap on the reimbursement. These applications must be postmarked by January 31, 2008.
- Producers are eligible for reimbursement on a maximum of three loads delivered on or after December 4.
- Applicants who have already received reimbursement for a load delivered prior to December 4 can simply reapply for reimbursement on loads delivered on or after December 4. Applications will be accepted until funds are exhausted.
- Any cases of fraud or abuse of the program will be prosecuted or pursued to the fullest extent of criminal and civil law.
- Only full loads of 25 or more standard large round bales weighing at least 750 pounds each, or the equivalent amount in small bales, large square bales or very large round bales will qualify for the reimbursement.
- Animal owners can utilize their own transportation (use their own truck, tractor trailer, etc.), but may be asked to submit additional documentation prior to reimbursement.
- Forage or hay transported must be for feed to be given to livestock, including cows, horses, goats and sheep.
- Hauls must be a minimum of 100 miles one way to be considered. Reimbursement will be based on \$0.50 per mile round trip or \$1.00 per loaded mile.
- The buyer of the hay or forage is responsible for making the arrangements of the purchase, transportation, and assuring payment to both the grower and the trucker.
- The Reimbursement Request form must include the following information:
 - ⇒ Name of farmer seeking reimbursement
 - ⇒ Mailing address and telephone number
 - ⇒ Social Security or federal tax ID number
 - ⇒ NC Farm ID Premises Identification Number
 - ⇒ Size of livestock operation, including specifically the number of livestock and hay on hand prior to the purchase for which cost-share funds are sought
 - ⇒ Seller information, including the identity, address, and telephone number of the individual who sold the applicant the forage
 - ⇒ Transportation information, including the name and number of any individual or entity who provided transportation services
 - ⇒ The original bill of lading or transportation receipt
 - ⇒ Date of delivery
 - ⇒ Number of miles the forage was transported
 - ⇒ Number of bales transported
 - ⇒ Delivery location and location of origination of load (which must be outside NC)
 - ⇒ Signature and date of application

Applying for Ag and Equine Partners Hay Relief Funds

For loads delivered between September 5 and December 3, producers must request to be placed on the waiting list for funds. There are two ways to get on the waiting list:

1. Fill out the Ag/Equine Partners form at www.ncagr.com/HayAlert/partners_sub.asp
or
2. Call the Hay Alert Hotline at 1-866-506-6222.

Either of these steps will put you on the waiting list for funds, regardless of whether you placed an ad on the Hay Alert website or made your own arrangements to bring in hay from outside North Carolina.

The time of your request will be documented, and you will have reserved your place in line. Once you have done that, someone from the NCDA&CS will contact you to verify your eligibility. If funds are available, a Reimbursement Request form will be sent to you.

There is no guarantee that all farmers will be reached.

To sign up for cost-share assistance on loads delivered on or after December 4, 2007, download a Reimbursement Request Form from the Hay Alert website and send it in with the proper documentation. Forms also are available by calling 1-866-506-6222.

Determining the Amount of Cost-Share Funds to be Allocated

When funds have been depleted, the program will end. However, applications for reimbursement on loads delivered between September 5 and December 3 must be postmarked by January 31, 2008.

The Department reserves the right to deny or limit the reimbursement if an applicant's transportation expenses appear to be unreasonably excessive, and to request additional information or documentation before making eligibility determinations. This is not an entitlement program. The ultimate discretion for eligibility determinations belongs to the Department, and determinations are final once they are rendered.

The Department reserves the right to amend or further clarify the procedures and guidelines of the Ag and Equine Partners Hay Relief Programs in order to ensure fair and timely management of the programs.

Making a Contribution

If you are aware of any individual or entity that would consider donating funds to be used in the Ag Partners or Equine Partners Hay Relief Program, please contact Chrissy Lucas at the Department by dialing 919-733-7125 or via e-mail at christina.lucas@ncmail.net. Contributions to the Ag Partners Hay Relief Program are tax-deductible.

Additional Information

Individuals who want to know more about the Ag and Equine Partners Hay Relief Programs are encouraged to visit the Department's Hay Alert website at www.ncagr.com/hayalert or call the Department's toll-free Hay Alert Hotline at 1-866-506-6222.