

# Help offered to storm victims

**HARRISBURG** — Farmers who suffered losses from Tropical Storm Eloise are eligible under certain conditions for a broad spectrum of assistance that includes low-interest loans, grants and technical assistance. Covered are damage to farm lands, structures, supplies, crops and potentially, stream channels. Detailed information,

including procedures on applying for such assistance, is available from county offices of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The assistance programs are covered under regulations of three USDA agencies: the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS), the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA), and the Soil Conservation Service (SCS).

The ASCS program provides up to 80 percent of the cost of restoring farmland and conservation structures to their pre-disaster condition. Included in the program are the removing of debris from farmland; grading, shaping, releveling of land or similar measures; restoring permanent fences; and restoring structures and other installations.

Costs incurred by the farmer which are eligible under the program are materials and services purchased, use of farm equipment and farm labor at reasonable rates, and hired labor.

Where needed, technical engineering assistance will be provided by (SCS) in cooperation with the ASCS.

Also available under the program are provisions for crop losses, prevented planting and abnormally low yield. Farmers are reminded that applications for prevented planting of wheat and barley should be made by Nov. 15.

The FmHA program

provides emergency loans at 5 percent interest for actual losses and expenses in order to repair, restore or replace damaged or destroyed farm property and supplies, for expenses incurred for crop production, and to pay farm debts owed to other creditors.

A borrower eligible for a 5 percent emergency loan also may be eligible for an additional loan at the prevailing market interest rates to construct or improve buildings and facilities, to purchase livestock, and to reorganize the farming system in order to make it a sound operation.

To be eligible for an emergency loan a farmer must have suffered loss in a county declared eligible for assistance, be unable to obtain the necessary credit from other sources, be an established farmer who manages his operation, be a citizen, be of good character and have farming experience.

Applications for emergency loans under the FmHA program must be filed within 60 days of the date of the emergency declaration for physical loss, and within nine months for production loss.

The SCS program, currently pending, provides emergency measures for protection from flooding, erosion, or sedimentation damage until long range practices become effective.

Work under the program

may include placing quick cover on denuded areas, sloping banks if they were created or steepened as a result of a natural calamity or if sloping is essential for treatment, opening stream channels where streamflow is dangerously restricted as a result of natural calamity, and constructing protective diversions.

Monies for the stream restoration program area contained in Section 216 of

the Agriculture Department's budget for fiscal year 1976, which currently is awaiting the President's signature. Monies for Pennsylvania farmers would be available after a request has been submitted by the state's SCS administrator to the national SCS administrator in Washington, and pending sufficient available funds. Such a request will follow completion of a study on need.

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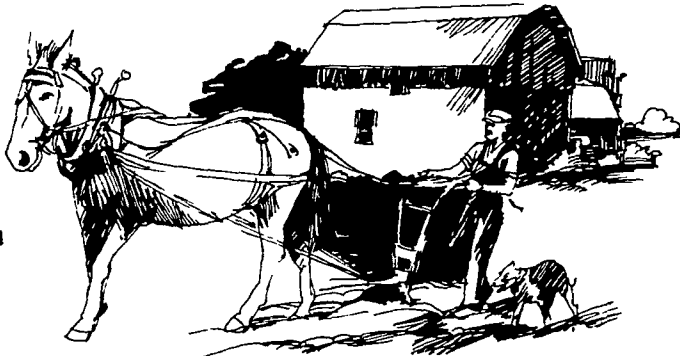
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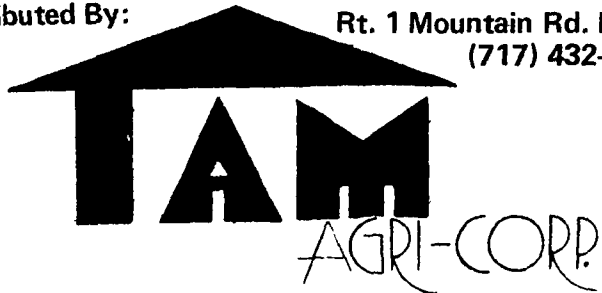
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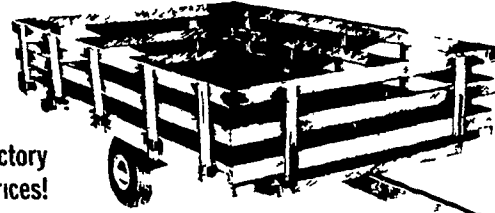
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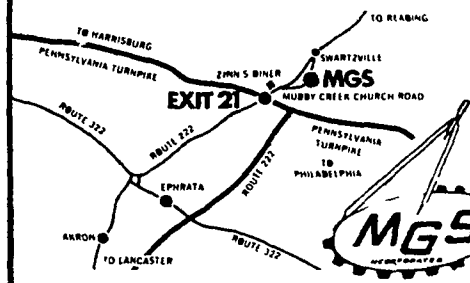
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