

For Immediate Release

December 15, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

Statement by the President

This past summer and fall, several States--primarily in the Midwest--suffered a severe drought which caused major reductions in the amount of feed grains produced and available for livestock feeding. Because our livestock producers had been adversely affected, the Department of Agriculture took steps to provide drought-stricken farmers with oats from the Commodity Credit Corporation reserve stocks under its Emergency Livestock Feed Program. However, the stocks reserved by the Corporation for emergency livestock feed have now been exhausted and no further orders for emergency livestock feed are being processed by the Department of Agriculture.

Because this situation poses an immediate and serious threat to a major segment of our national livestock industry, I have today directed the Secretary of Agriculture and the Administrator of the Federal Disaster Assistance Administration (FDAA) to cooperate in providing emergency livestock feed assistance payments to protect our threatened livestock. This assistance program will be administered by USDA and funded by FDAA. This action, which I am taking today pursuant to my authority under the PL 93-288 grant assistance program, will assist livestock producers to make emergency purchases of feed grains and hay. Initially, this assistance will be provided to producers in South Dakota, Minnesota and Wisconsin, whose Governors have already requested the assistance, but it is expected that additional States where I have declared emergencies during 1976 due to the drought may become eligible for assistance. As a result of today's action, I am confident that our threatened livestock will be protected until next summer, when new grain crops become available.

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