

**Subject:** Disaster Aid Proves Timely for Drought Stricken Farmers

**Story Summary:** The later winter snowstorm that hit Rocky Mountain states brought much needed moisture for drought stricken farms and ranches. Weather disaster assistance payments are also bringing needed relief after one of the most widespread droughts on record.

**TRT:** 1:47

**Suggested Lead:** Drought may not hit as fast and furiously as a flood, tornado or forest fire, but for farmers it can be just as devastating. That's why disaster assistance from Congress was so important to farmers throughout much of the nation. Johnna Miller reports.

**Suggested Supers:**

- Eastern Colorado  
@ :01
- Fred Walker  
Colorado Farmer  
@ :35
- Skylar Loeffler  
Colorado Farmer  
@ :56
- Johnna Miller  
Reporting  
@ 1:38

**Anchor Tag:** Farmers in designated disaster areas will be partially compensated for one year of production losses from the past two years of drought.

## Disaster Aid Proves Timely for Drought Stricken Farmers

Johnna Miller Reporting

March 27, 2003

<p>Snowy scenery</p> <p><b>Locator – Eastern Colorado</b></p> <p>Shot of empty reservoir</p>	<p>VO/ THE TWO TO SEVEN FEET OF SNOW THAT BLANKETED PARTS OF COLORADO WERE A BEAUTIFUL SITE. FOR THE STATE'S FARMERS THE BEAUTY WAS IN THE MOISTURE EACH FLAKE OFFERED TO LAND PARCHED BY THE WORST DROUGHT EVER RECORDED THERE. (NAT IF WE HAVE ANY) A DROUGHT SO BAD THAT ALL THIS SNOW STILL LEAVES COLORADO WITH LESS THAN NORMAL SNOWPACK...A DROUGHT SO SEVERE THAT RESERVOIRS HAD DRIED TO PUDDLES.</p>
<p>Soundbite</p> <p>Fred Walker standing at bottom of reservoir</p>	<p>NATSOT/ IN A TYPICAL YEAR I'D BE 30 FEET UNDER WATER AT THIS POINT. IT'S AN INDICATION OF HOW DRY IT'S BEEN.</p>
<p>Tractor discing field</p>	<p>VO/ LAST YEAR – LIKE MANY OTHER FARMERS – FRED WALKER WATCHED HIS CROPS DRY UP.</p>
<p>Soundbite</p> <p><b>Fred Walker Colorado Farmer</b></p>	<p>SOT/ I ONLY PLANTED ABOUT HALF MY ACREAGE AND THEN WE ONLY HARVESTED MAYBE 30 TO 40 PERCENT OF THAT 50 PERCENT. SOME OF THAT WE PLANTED EARLY WASN'T EVEN WORTH HARVESTING BECAUSE THERE WAS NO RAIN.</p>

<p>Loeffler walking by corrals with son</p>	<p>VO/ CATTLE PRODUCERS LIKE SKYLAR LOEFFLER HAVE BEEN FORCED TO SELL OFF MUCH OF THEIR HERDS.</p>
<p>Soundbite  <b>Skylar Loeffler</b> <b>Colorado Farmer</b></p>	<p>SOT/ WHEN FEED IS AS COSTLY AS IT IS NOW WE CAN'T REALLY AFFORD TO FEED THEM YEAR ROUND AND THERE'S SIMPLY NOT THE PASTURE TO BE FOUND. AND THE PASTURE WE DO HAVE IS GOING TO BE...IT'S IN ROUGH SHAPE.</p>
<p>Parched ground</p>	<p>VO/ LOEFFLER SAYS MANY PEOPLE DON'T RECOGNIZE THAT DROUGHT IS A SLOW-ACTING NATURAL DISASTER.</p>
<p>Soundbite  Loeffler</p>	<p>SOT/ THIS IS BEYOND OUR CONTROL. SO YOU CAN BE AN EXCELLENT FARMER BUT THERE'S ONLY SO MUCH YOU CAN DO ABOUT DROUGHT.</p>
<p>Shots of cows in field</p>	<p>VO/ WHICH IS WHY THE \$3.1 BILLION CONGRESS PROVIDED FOR DISASTER RELIEF WAS ESSENTIAL.</p>
<p>Soundbite  Walker</p>	<p>SOT/ WE ARE IN OUR FOURTH YEAR OF THIS DECLINING PRODUCTION AND WE NEED THE ASSISTANCE JUST TO KEEP OUR OPERATIONS WHOLE.</p>
<p>Shot of mountains then pan to Walker talking to tractor driver  mountains</p>	<p>VO/ AS MUCH AS FARMERS APPRECIATE THE DISASTER AID, YOU CAN BET THEY'D PREFER A LITTLE MORE COOPERATION FROM MOTHER NATURE. IN WELD COUNTY, COLORADO, I'M JOHNNA MILLER.</p>

	IN WELD COUNTY. COLORADO, I'M JOHNNA MILLER FOR U.S. FARM REPORT.
	IN WELD COUNTY, COLORADO, I'M JOHNNA MILLER REPORTING FOR AG DAY.