



Disaster Recovery



Hurricanes Inflict \$950+ Million in Damage on Louisiana Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

Totals from Gustav, Ike Continue to Mount

Preliminary estimates peg this year's hurricane damage and lost revenue to Louisiana agriculture, forestry and fisheries at more than \$950 million and climbing.

Based on information gathered and compiled by LSU AgCenter economists, crop specialists, field agents and others, the mid-September estimates on the impact of hurricanes Gustav and Ike showed a total of \$951 million in potential lost revenue and damage to infrastructure – farm equipment, docks, barns, processing facilities and so forth. The total includes up to \$763 million in lost revenue to Louisiana farmers, ranchers, foresters and fishers in 2008 and as much as \$175 million to \$200 million in infrastructure damage.

Among the hardest hit, in terms of total lost revenue, are cotton, soybeans, timber, sugarcane, corn, rice, sweet potatoes and shrimp. But the millions in losses to those crops don't tell the whole story. For example, in addition to losing approximately half the state's cotton and sweet potato crops, estimates show at least half the Louisiana pecan crop also was lost.

Another piece of the story involves the cascading effects these losses could have on communities across Louisiana whose economies rely heavily on agriculture and natural resource industries. The final picture won't come into focus until we know the full extent of the hurricanes' damage – and the effects of lingering rains between those storms – on agriculture, forestry and fisheries in the state. Adverse weather conditions could delay harvest of and result in additional quantity and quality losses for many commodities, whereas good weather might speed the process and help to reduce any further losses. As a result, weather conditions over the next several weeks will, in part, help determine the ultimate impact on agriculture and the corresponding impact on economies of the rural communities that depend on agriculture and natural resources.

The table at right provides additional information on the potential revenue losses suffered by various segments of Louisiana's agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors.

Estimates of Lost Revenue to Selected Commodities from Hurricanes Gustav and Ike			
Commodity	Estimated 2008 Farm Gate Value Prior to Hurricane Gustav	Estimated Lost Revenue Due to Hurricanes	Estimated Percentage of Annual Revenue Lost
Aquaculture & Fisheries*	\$413,958,016	\$126,690,340	30.60%
Beef Cattle	\$356,254,535	\$1,666,664	0.47%
Citrus	\$6,431,100	\$1,574,764	24.49%
Corn	\$426,870,000	\$66,402,000	15.56%
Cotton	\$237,249,000	\$136,640,596	57.59%
Dairy	\$85,033,608	\$2,318,760	2.73%
Forage/Hay	\$140,217,945	\$6,220,883	4.44%
Nursery Crops	\$160,000,000	\$6,500,000	4.06%
Pecans	\$12,036,016	\$6,018,008	50.00%
Poultry	\$794,988,118	\$25,275	0.00%
Rice	\$387,655,000	\$33,571,911	8.66%
Sorghum	\$46,550,000	\$3,562,500	7.65%
Soybeans	\$416,500,000	\$153,455,940	36.84%
Sugar	\$582,609,720	\$87,391,458	15.00%
Sweet Potatoes	\$65,548,000	\$33,540,019	51.17%
Timber	\$1,092,538,858	\$91,737,294	8.40%
Vegetables	\$45,332,680	\$5,544,561	12.23%
Total	\$5,269,772,596	\$762,860,973	14.48%

* Losses in aquaculture and fisheries cover crawfish, catfish, alligators, turtles, shrimp, crabs, oysters and other fisheries enterprises. Estimated revenue based on 2007 estimates from LSU AgCenter and National Marine Fisheries Service.
Losses shown here include only the potential lost income for the year and do not show up to \$178 million in infrastructure damage (docks, marinas, vessels, etc.) for aquaculture and fisheries, as well as another \$10 million in infrastructure damage for other agricultural enterprises.

9/24/08