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NEWS RELEASE

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Conservation Agencies Urge Farming, Ranching Contingency Plans

ALBUQUERQUE, NM – Unusually dry conditions are prompting federal and local conservation agencies and the New Mexico Department of Agriculture to make a joint call to farmers and ranchers to make those drought contingency plans now. The USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service and New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts are releasing guidelines to farmers and ranchers that help outline factors to be considered as they are making cropping decisions or range management plans.

“Based on a presentation provided to the New Mexico State House of Representative’s Agriculture Committee by the State Engineer, we are still in and drought and I believe that it is prudent for our agriculture community to follow the necessary plans for their property,” said Miley Gonzalez, New Mexico Agriculture Department secretary.

“It is just so incredibly dry out there,” said Debbie Hughes, executive director for the New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts. “I know at my own ranch we are having to

The guidelines NRCS and NMACD are releasing include possible soil moisture management methods such as leaving stubble and reduction of the amount of tillage, and alternates to be considered when planning cropping. Emergency or extra pasture measures, pre-arranged trucking plans, and identification of alternative feed sources are being suggested for ranchers.

“We all hope for some snow or rain and that this planning won’t be necessary, but now is the time to look at contingencies for what we might be facing,” said Rosendo Treviño III, NRCS state conservationist.

Copies of the guidelines are available at any local Soil and Water Conservation District office or NRCS field office. They are also available on the web at www.nm.nrcs.usda.gov

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