

Small-Scale Agriculture and Climate Information and Risk Management: Implications for Small Family Farmers and Ranchers

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In the US, limited resource farmers, socially disadvantaged farmers and transitioning Caucasian farmers are mainly engaged in enterprises that are not normally covered by the Federal Crop Insurance Scheme. To mitigate the elements of hurricanes, droughts, floods and freezes, which contribute to production risks, farmers have resorted to participation in NAP, and technical assistance and training projects on non-insurance based risk management strategies. While these have demonstrated some benefits to these farmers they are faced with major constraints when it comes to climate information. These are due to the following reasons:

- Disinterest in climate information and other related areas that are not promoted among the universities and NGOs that serve these groups
- Lack of awareness of the advantages and use of climate information that when forecasted accurately, and with a sound farm plan can reduce losses on these farms
- Lack of a disaster preparedness plan on these farms
- Poor record keeping especially those that could be used in planning when combined with climate information
- In some regions, their over indulgence and belief that they should rely on disaster payments
- Cultural apathy among small farmers in the belief that adverse weather conditions while natural, it is indomitable useless to plan for and to prepare alternatives

For those who have shown interest, it is the belief that effects of adverse weather condition, could prove to be less onerous when climate information is addressed. Also, this should become a part of the farm risk management plan for these small family farmers and ranchers. Partnerships must therefore be developed with farmers' organizations and organizations that serve them to demonstrate how a program like the CIMR could be of benefit to them.

This presentation will address the following:

1. Small Farmers and Ranchers and their attitudes toward Climate information and Risk Management
2. Types of Climate Information that are most relevant to these farming clusters
3. How partnerships can be developed to allow for universities, CBOs, and NGOs that serve these farming groups, to implement programs that will ensure that the effects of adverse weather conditions that result in agricultural losses can be minimized.

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