

Farmer Recovery Centers

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Agriculture and aquaculture interests were significantly impacted by Hurricane Idalia in Florida. FEMA Interagency Recovery Coordination was asked to coordinate support.

Hurricane Idalia made landfall August 30, 2023, near Keaton Beach in Taylor County as a Category 3 hurricane. Storm impacts affected primarily rural, sparsely populated areas, including those with significant agriculture and aquaculture industries. Interagency Recovery Coordination (IRC) provided a platform for farmers to receive targeted support from federal, state and private sector agencies.

Farmer Recovery Center Events

IRC and partners conducted two Farmer Recovery Center events to help farmers access programs that can assist with their recoveries.

- FRC #1 Suwannee County, October 5, 2023 focused on agriculture, attended by 54 farmers.
- FRC #2 Gilchrist and Levy counties, October 11, 2023, attended by 37 farmers. Focus was aquaculture community of clam farmers from Levy and Dixie counties. These interests often do not qualify for many of the traditional USDA programs.

Participating Agencies

- Florida Department of Commerce-Disaster Unemployment Assistance program, Dislocated Worker Grant program, Emergency Bridge Loan Program, Florida Division of Emergency Management Response and Recovery Programs, Florida Farm Bureau, Small Business Administration (SBA), USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA), USDA Rural Development (RD), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), FEMA Individual Assistance and Disaster Survivor Assistance (FEMA), FEMA Geographic Operations



FEMA

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Attendees expressed appreciation for having access to multiple agencies in one venue. FEMA Individual Assistance and Disaster Survivor Assistance staff worked with applicants who had non-business-related losses. FDEM staff assisted those with debris removal questions.

IRC is working through the DR-4734 USDA Advisor and the USDA FSA Florida State Office to plan for Farmer Recovery Center #3. The Farmer Recovery Center events are being modeled as a “best practice” for future engagements with farmers affected by disasters.

