

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 29, 2011

The Honorable Tom Vilsack,
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Administration Building, Room 100-A
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. President,

We write you to urge you to swiftly approve Governor Chris Gregoire's request for a Secretarial disaster declaration for all 39 Counties in Washington State made on August 2, 2011.

Every county in Washington received excessive rain and experienced cool spring temperatures between March and April of 2011 which delayed the planting of crops thereby reducing the quality and quantity of spring crops such as berries and forage. The cool weather has delayed crop maturation which has in turn delayed harvests and reduced yields. As harvest dates are pushed into the fall the likelihood of frosts will increase, further damaging crops and limiting yields even more.

The Seattle area did not experience its first day with a high temperature over 70 degrees until May 20th, Spokane did not reach 60 degrees until April 24th and 70 degrees until May 11th. Vancouver had only four days above 70 degrees by May 19th and Spokane only three.

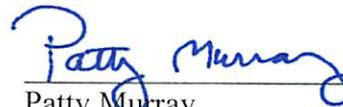
We urge you to approve Governor Gregoire's request so that this crucial assistance can be made available as soon as possible.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this manner.

Sincerely,



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator