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MR. PRESIDENT, I have joined Senator Russell as a co-sponsor of ~~the~~ bill to provide relief to farmers and farm workers suffering crop losses or loss of employment because of damage to crops caused by natural disasters.

Two weeks ago, South Carolina's peach growers in several sections of the state suffered the loss, not only of this year's crop of peaches, but also of the loss of trees up to several years of age as a result of devastating hail and wind storms. I immediately consulted officials of the Department of Agriculture and requested that surveys be made in order that the affected areas might be declared eligible for emergency loans. That was done.

But this past weekend, another natural disaster struck the entire state of South Carolina. A killing freeze destroyed the entire peach crop of the state and damaged vegetable crops to an extent yet to be determined. At my request, Department of Agriculture officials have declared producers over the entire state eligible for emergency assistance.

But this is not enough, Mr. President. In 1953, South Carolina produced and marketed fruits and vegetables totalling \$29,715,000. In 1954, South Carolina's total production of fruits and vegetables amounted to \$24,771,000.

I should like to point out that the state of South Carolina produces and ships to market more fresh peaches than any other state in the Union according to official Department of Agriculture records. South Carolina's peach crop alone, which was destroyed by the freeze, was estimated to be worth approximately \$10,000,000-- more than one-third of the total value of fruit and vegetable

crops grown commercially in the state. This means, Mr. President, that more than one-third--nearly one-half--of the income of growers from fresh fruits and vegetables was destroyed last weekend. Damage to other crops probably will increase this loss.

It should also be pointed out that while a normal crop of peaches in my state is valued at approximately \$10,000,000, during recent years past growers have lost their entire crops several times. Consequently, this has greatly reduced the average income from this crop. This reduced average means that many growers have had to secure substantial loans during the bad years and, therefore, some are now faced with disaster unless additional assistance is given above that now provided by law.

This means, too, Mr. President, that thousands of farm and orchard workers will be thrown out of employment unless it is possible to provide compensating acreage to those who have suffered these disasters.

I want to urge that quick <sup>by the committee</sup> action be taken and this bill be given prompt passage. Only by such action can we provide the relief essential for those who have lost their crops and their jobs.