



# NEWSLETTER



## Imperial County Farm Service Agency

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Website: [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) Office Hours: 8:00AM – 4:30PM Monday - Friday

### Hispanic and Women Farmer and Rancher Claims Period

USDA has announced that Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who allege discrimination by the USDA in past decades can file claims between Sept. 24, 2012 and March 25, 2013.

The process offers a voluntary alternative to litigation for each Hispanic or female farmer and rancher who can prove that USDA denied their applications for loan or loan servicing assistance for discriminatory reasons for certain time periods between 1981 and 2000.

As announced in February 2011, the voluntary claims process will make available at least \$1.33 billion for cash awards and tax relief payments, plus up to \$160 million in farm debt relief, to eligible Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers. There are no filing fees to participate in the program.

USDA will continue reaching out to potential Hispanic and female claimants, around the country to get the word out to individuals who may be eligible for this program so they have the opportunity to participate.

Claimants can obtain a claims package in the mail by calling 1-888-509-4429 or visiting the website [www.farmerclaims.gov](http://www.farmerclaims.gov) . and the claims package will be mailed to claimants. Public meetings are also being held in many areas to

share further information. Contact your nearest FSA office to get a schedule in your area.

Website: [www.farmerclaims.gov](http://www.farmerclaims.gov)

Phone: 1-888-508-4429

**Claims Period: Sept. 24, 2012 - March 25, 2013.**

An independent third-party administrator will administer the claims process and adjudicate the claims. There are no filing fees to participate and a lawyer is not required to participate in the claims process, but claimants may retain an attorney or other legal services provider. The USDA news release provides more background:

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=2012/09/0309.xml&contentidonly=true>

### IRS 1099 Changes

Calendar year 2012 has brought changes to the way FSA reports farm program payments to the producer and to the IRS.

In past years, IRS Form 1099-G would be issued to show all program payments received from the Farm Service Agency, regardless of the amount.

Starting with calendar year 2012, producers whose total reportable payments from FSA are less than \$600 will not receive IRS Form 1099-G. Also, producers who receive payments from more than one county will only receive one Form 1099-G if the total of all payments from all counties is \$600 or more.

The same changes will apply to those who normally receive IRS Form 1099-MISC from FSA.

## **2011 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program Applications**

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) will continue to accept SURE applications for 2011 crop losses through June 7, 2013. The SURE Program provides payments to producers when crop revenues are less than the crop guarantee. The SURE Program payment is equal to 60 percent of the difference between the SURE guarantee and total farm revenue.

To determine the guarantee and revenue for the SURE Program, all crops on all farms for a producer are included in the calculation. Payments under the SURE Program are limited to \$100,000.

To be eligible for the 2011 SURE Program, producers must have crop insurance on all insurable crops. For crops that are not covered by crop insurance such as pumpkins, cucumbers and others, producers must have purchased Non Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage through FSA. The Crop Insurance and NAP purchase requirement is waived for crops that are not economically significant to the farming operation. In addition, producers must have at least one crop with a 10 percent production loss in the Secretarial Disaster Designation for the county or a 50% loss in actual crop production.

For more information concerning the 2011 SURE program or other Farm Service Agency programs, contact your local FSA office or visit the Farm Service Agency website at [www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/).

## **NAP Coverage Deadlines**

Noninsured Crop Disaster applications are due at different times according to the crop being insured. Producers should apply for Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage using form CCC-471 (Application for Coverage). Related service fees are due when the application is filed. The application and service fee MUST be filed by the crop sales closing date. Contact the local FSA office for the filing dates for your crops.

## **Imperial County Disaster Designation #S3439**

On November 14, Secretary of Agriculture Thomas Vilsack determined Imperial County suffered sufficient production losses caused by flooding and flash flooding from the July and August thunderstorms to warrant a Secretarial natural disaster designation. Disaster Designation #S3439 makes farm operators in Imperial County and contiguous counties eligible to be considered for assistance from FSA provided eligibility requirements are met. This assistance includes FSA emergency farm loans. Farmers have until July 15, 2013 to apply for emergency farm loan assistance. FSA will consider each emergency farm loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of production losses, security available and repayment ability.

## **Emergency Farm Loans**

FSA provides emergency loans to help producers recover from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding, other natural disasters, or quarantine.

Emergency loan funds may be used to:

- Restore or replace essential property;
- Pay all or part of production costs associated with the disaster year;
- Pay essential family living expenses;
- Reorganize the farming operation; and
- Refinance certain debts.

For further information and applications for emergency farm loans please contact FSA farm loan staff in Bakersfield at 661.336.0967.

## **Emergency Conservation Program Authorized**

The Imperial FSA County Committee recently requested and was granted authorization to administer FSA's Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) as a result of the significant damage to farmland caused by this summer's thunderstorms, floods and flash floods. ECP provides emergency funding and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters.

ECP participants may receive cost-share assistance of up to 75% of the cost to implement approved emergency conservation practices. Qualified limited-resource producers receive cost-share assistance of up to 90% of the cost to implement approved emergency conservation

practices. Emergency Conservation practices included in this authorization are:

- EC1- Removing Debris from Farmland
- EC2-Grading, Shaping, Re-leveling or Similar Measures
- EC4- Restoring Conservation Structures and Other Installations (concrete field ditches, etc)

Individual requests for cost-share assistance of \$50,000 or less per person or legal entity, per disaster are approved at the county committee level. Cost-share assistance requests exceeding \$50,000 require approval from the state committee or national office level. Cost-share assistance is limited to \$200,000 per person or legal entity, per disaster.

Please contact this office if the summer storms, floods and flash floods that occurred between July 13 and August 13, 2012 caused significant damage to your farmland or if you have any questions regarding ECP.

**Applications for ECP are being accepted December 1, 2012 through January 29, 2013.** Funding for ECP is appropriated by Congress.

## 2013 Ag Census Coming

USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service will mail the 2013 Census of Agriculture in mid-December. If you receive an Ag Census form, please complete and return it by the February 4, 2013 deadline.

Producers can easily and securely respond online after receiving their census form at [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov). For questions or help completing the form producers can contact NASS at (888) 424-7828.

The Census of Agriculture is conducted only once every five years to accurately collect demographic information about farmers, ranchers and their operations. USDA agencies and many other institutions and organizations use the results of the Census for education, research, planning and policy-making decisions within government, as well as business, industry and academia. The use of this valuable information impacts **everyone** across our nation.

## LDPs for Unshorn Lamb Pelts

Eligible producers have until Jan. 31, 2013, to apply for Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP) for unshorn lamb pelts produced during the 2012 crop year.

Eligible producers must have beneficial interest in the pelts, owned the lamb for at least 30 calendar days before the date of slaughter and sell the unshorn lamb for immediate slaughter. Producers must also comply with wetland conservation and highly erodible land conservation provisions on all lands they operate or have interest in.

For an eligible producer to qualify for payment, pelts must have been produced from live unshorn lambs of domestic origin in the United States.

## Important Changes to FSA Crop Reporting Dates

Effective July 1, 2012, this FSA county office went from two acreage reporting dates to no less than eight acreage reporting dates. The table below identifies various crops and corresponding reporting deadlines.

The next reporting deadline that is rapidly approaching is DECEMBER 15<sup>th</sup>, applicable to perennial forage (alfalfa, bermuda, klein, etc) and potatoes. If you have these crops and have not contacted this office to file your report, please do so immediately. New reporting dates are as follows:

Crop	Report Date
Aquaculture	09/30/12
Perennial Forage, potatoes	12/15/12
Honey	01/02/13
Sugar Beets, all citrus	01/15/13
Wheat, fall-seeded barley & oats	03/15/13
Table Grapes	05/15/13
Nursery	05/31/13
Spring-seeded barley, oats, corn, cotton, grain sorghum, onions, sudan, tomatoes & all other crops	07/15/13

**NOTICE  
TO HISPANIC  
AND/OR  
WOMEN  
FARMERS OR  
RANCHERS**

**COMPENSATION  
FOR CLAIMS OF  
DISCRIMINATION**

If you believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) improperly denied farm loan benefits to you between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic, or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation.

To register your name to receive a claims packet, call the Farmer and Rancher Call Center at 1-888-508-4429 or visit: [www.farmerclaims.gov](http://www.farmerclaims.gov)

The claims package will have detailed information about the eligibility and claims process.



USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**Farm Loan Programs** – FSA is committed to providing family farmers with loans to meet their farm credit needs. Those producers who are having trouble getting credit for their farm or who regularly borrow from FSA, direct and guaranteed loans are currently available. Ask a lender about an FSA loan guarantee to help with a setback or if a lender has been reluctant to extend or renew a loan. Farm ownership loans or farm operating loans may be obtained as direct loans for a maximum of up to \$300,000. Guaranteed loans have a maximum limit of \$1,214,000. The one-time loan origination fee charged on FSA guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans has increased from 1% to 1.5% of the guaranteed loan. To find out more, contact FSA Farm Loan staff.

**Selected Interest Rates for  
December, 2012**

Farm Operating Direct	1.125%
Farm Ownership Direct	3.125%
Farm Ownership Direct, Joint Financing	5.00%
Farm Ownership Direct Down Payment,	1.500%
Emergency	2.125%
Conservation Loan	3.125%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.125%

**Dates to Remember**

Dec. 3	COC Ballots due to FSA Office
Dec. 15	Acreage Report Deadline for perennial forage, potatoes
Dec. 15	NAP 2013 application closing date for Fruit/nut/tree crops, asparagus, artichokes, herbs
Dec. 25 & Jan 1, 2013	Holiday, Office closed
Jan 2, 2013	NAP 2014 Citrus application closing
Jan 2, 2013	Honey Report Deadline
Jan. 15, 2013	Acreage Report Deadline for sugar beets and all citrus
Jan 29, 2013	ECP Application Deadline
Mar 1, 2013	NAP 2013 closing date for all annual crops
Mar 15, 2013	Acreage Report Deadline for all fall-seeded small grains (wheat, etc...)
Mar 25, 2013	Hispanic and Women Farmer and Rancher Claims Period ends
July 15, 2013	S3439 Declaration deadline to apply for Emergency Loan assistance
July 15, 2013	Acreage Report Deadline for corn, cotton, onions, sudan, tomatoes & all other crops

**County Office Staff**

**County Executive Director**  
Rosalinda Singh

**Program Technicians**  
Carmen Perez  
Julia Contreras  
Elizabeth Fletes –  
Student Volunteer

**County Committee**  
Curt Corda – LAA1  
Stephen Benson – LAA2  
Craig Alameda – LAA3

**Committee Advisor**  
Gilberto Gonzalez

**Farm Loan Staff**

**Farm Loan Manager**  
Thomas Hunton

**Program Technician**  
Elsa Mora

Phone: 661.336.0967

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