

February 2014



Kern County FSA Updates

- [COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTION RESULTS](#)
- [2014 Acreage Reporting Dates](#)
- [Farm Safety](#)
- [GovDelivery – Instant Bulletins, Alerts, News at No Cost to You](#)
- [FSA Signature Policy](#)
- [Changing Banks](#)

Kern County FSA Office

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Donny McKinney

Next County Committee Meeting: May 15 at 9:00 am

COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTION RESULTS

County committee elections are over, the ballots are counted and the results are in. Ben Ansolabehere of Bakersfield was elected to represent LAA #3 and Gerald Knopf of Bakersfield will serve as the first alternate.

Elected county committee members serve a three-year term and are responsible for making decisions on FSA disaster, conservation, commodity, and price support programs, as well as other important federal farm program issues.

County committee members are a valuable asset because they are comprised of local producers who participate in FSA programs themselves and have a direct connection to farmers and ranchers in the community. All recently elected county committee members and alternates will take office on February 17, 2014, and join the existing committee.

For more information about county committees and the election process, please contact your local FSA Office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

2014 Acreage Reporting Dates

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit the Kern County FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline.

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for Kern County:

December 15, 2013: Perennial Forage all uses, Fall Potatoes

January 2, 2014: Honey

January 15, 2014: Avocados, Blueberries, Grapefruit, Lemons, Mandarins, Minneola Tangelos, Navel Oranges, Orlando Oranges, Sweet Oranges, Valencia Oranges, Sugar Beets (planted 9/1/13-12/13/13), Strawberries

March 15, 2014: Wheat, Barley, Oats, Alfalfa Seed, Almonds, Apples, Cherries, Figs, Fresh Apricots, Fresh Firestone Peaches, Fresh Nectarines, Pears, Plums, Processing Apricots, Processing Cling Peaches, Processing Freestone Peaches, Walnuts

May 15, 2014: Spring Potatoes, Grapes & Table Grapes

May 31, 2014: Nursery

June 15, 2014: Forage Seeding

July 15, 2014 : Spring Alfalfa Seed, Corn, Cotton, Dry Beans, Fresh Market Tomatoes, Grain Sorghum, Mint, Onions, Safflower, Tomatoes, and all other crops and land uses

July 31, 2014: Raisins

September 15, 2014: Value Loss Crops, Aquaculture, Christmas Trees, Floraculture, etc.

November 15, 2014: Apiculture, PRF (Crop Insurance Only)

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.
- If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of "cover only," "green manure," "left standing," or "seed," then the acreage must be reported by July 15th.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact the Kern County FSA office at (661) 336-0967.

Farm Safety

Flowing grain in a storage bin or gravity-flow wagon is like quicksand — it can kill quickly. It takes less than five seconds for a person caught in flowing grain to be trapped.

The mechanical operation of grain handling equipment also presents a real danger. Augers, power take offs, and other moving parts can grab people or clothing.

These hazards, along with pinch points and missing shields, are dangerous for adults and children. It is always advisable to keep children a safe distance from operating farm equipment. Always use extra caution when backing up or maneuvering farm machinery. Ensure everyone is visibly clear and accounted for before machinery is engaged.

Have a productive crop year by keeping safety first and foremost in your operation.

GovDelivery – Instant Bulletins, Alerts, News at No Cost to You

The modern USDA Farm Service Agency is taking another step toward a paperless operation. Producers now have the option to enroll in the new GovDelivery system using email to provide instant notices, newsletters and electronic reminders instead at absolutely no charge to producers.

FSA, like many other organizations, is working smarter and more efficiently. Moving to electronic notifications via email helps conserve resources, speeds up the delivery of important information and saves taxpayer dollars.

Producers and others can subscribe to receive free e-mail updates from any County FSA office by going to <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe>.

FSA Signature Policy

Using the correct signature when doing business with FSA can save time and prevent a delay in program benefits. The following are FSA signature guidelines:

- Spouses may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and CCC programs in which either has an interest, unless written notification denying a spouse this authority has been provided to the county office
- Spouses shall not sign on behalf of each other as an authorized signatory for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations, or other similar entities

For additional clarification on proper signatures contact your local FSA office.

Changing Banks

Almost all Farm Service Agency payments are made electronically using direct deposit.

To keep the system running smoothly, it's critical to keep the county office staff up to date on changes you might make in your financial institutions.

If you have changed accounts or institutions that might affect the direct deposit of your FSA payments, contact the FSA county office so we can update our files to insure continued uninterrupted service.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).