

September 2013



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Kings County FSA Updates

Kings County FSA Office

680 Campus Drive, Suite C
Hanford, CA 93230

Phone: 559-585-8732
Fax: 559-584-8715

Website:
www.fsa.usda.gov

Office Hours:
8:00 am - 4:30 pm
Monday through Friday

County Executive Director:
Kathy L Sargent

Program Technicians:
Joan Avila
Winifred Brogan
Lillian Hernandez
Nathan Olson

Farm Loan Manager:
(Located in Visalia Office)
Tom Roberts

Farm Loan Staff:
Patricia Miller
Slade Childers

Visalia Phone: 559-734-8732

Next County Committee Meeting: October 30, 2013 at 9:00 AM (Tentative)

2013 County Committee Elections

The election of agricultural producers to the Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to all farmers and ranchers. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The 2013 election in Kings County will be conducted for the representative for the Lemoore/Stratford/Avenal area of the county. This area includes that portion of the county that lies south of Excelsior Avenue, west of 16th Avenue when north of Nevada Avenue and west of 22nd Avenue when south of Nevada Avenue.

County Committee (COC) members are a critical component of FSA operations. The intent is to have the COC reflect the diversity of producers and represent all constituents. This means that minorities, women or lower income producers need to be on the committee to speak for underrepresented groups.

County Committee election ballots will be mailed to eligible voters on Nov. 4, 2013. The last day to return completed ballots to the USDA Service Center is Dec. 2, 2013.

Banking Changes?

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, please contact the FSA County Office as soon as possible. Incorrect information on file with the County Office may result in the delay of your payments. Direct and Counter Cyclical Program payments for the 2013 crop year are scheduled to be issued in October 2013. **Please notify us of any banking account changes immediately!**

2014 Crop Acreage Reporting Dates - Review Carefully - Deadlines have changed from past years

Producers should file a crop acreage report each year. Filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs. Failed acreage must be reported within 15 days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date. Acreage reports are required for many Farm Service Agency programs. For all crops, including Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) crops, acreage reports are to be certified by the deadline for each crop. For exact deadlines on certifications for each type of crop and late filed acreage reporting provisions, call the County Office for information.

2014 Crop Acreage Reporting Dates

September 15, 2013.....Strawberries planted 6/15/2012 through 8/15/2012
September 30, 2013.....Value Loss Crops (aquaculture, flowers, Christmas trees)
December 15, 2013.....Perennial Forage, including ***Native Grass for grazing***and **alfalfa hay**
January 2, 2014.....Honey
January 15, 2014.....Strawberries planted 8/16/2012 through 11/15/2012
January 15, 2014.....Avocados, Blueberries, Lemons, Oranges, other Citrus, and Sugar Beets
March 15, 2014.....Barley, Wheat, Oats for Grain, Silage or Hay
March 15, 2014.....Alfalfa seed, Almonds, Apples, Barley, Cherries, Figs, Apricots, Peaches, Nectarines,
Pears, Plums, Walnuts
May 15, 2014.....Grapes
June 15, 2014.....Forage seeding (annually planted spring seeded forage crops such as rye grass
or sudan)
July 15, 2014.....Caneberries, Corn, Dry Beans, Tomatoes, Grain Sorghum, Mint, Onions, Rice, Safflower,
CRP, Strawberries planted after 11/15/2013 and all other crops.
July 31, 2014.....Raisins

2014 NAP Application Closing Dates

The NAP program is a risk management tool that provides catastrophic coverage for most crops that are not insurable by Federal Crop insurance. For a nominal fee, or a waived fee if you meet the limited resource farmer definition, you may purchase coverage on your crop for losses due to adverse weather. Participants must file an acreage report and production records each year, meet applicable Adjusted Gross Income eligibility requirements, file a timely notice of loss on the crop that is damaged, and incur greater than a 50% loss of production on the crop by unit to qualify for benefits. For more detailed information on this program, request a copy of the new NAP Basic Provisions from this office or at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

2014 NAP Application Closing Dates:

05/01/2013.....Ornamental Nursery
09/01/2013.....Value Loss Crops (aquaculture, flowers, Christmas trees)
09/01/2013.....All seed crops, including forage with intended use of GR or SD, alfalfa, clover, grass, vegetables
10/01/2013.....***NEW DATE TO PURCHASE STRAWBERRY COVERAGE***
10/01/2013.....Garlic, fall planted
10/31/2013.....Camelina
12/01/2013.....Forage Crops, intended use of FG (silage/hay) and GZ (graze)
12/01/2013.....Honey
12/01/2013.....Onions
12/15/2013.....Most Fruit and Nut Tree crops, Asparagus, Artichokes,
Caneberries, Grapes, Mint, Olives, etc.
01/31/2014.....Apples (if not insurable)
03/01/2014.....Annual crops (Green Beans, Herbs, Squash, Carrots,
Peppers, Broccoli, Brussel Sprouts, etc)

2015 First NAP Application Closing Dates

01/01/2014.....Avocados and citrus

If you are not sure if your crop is covered through federal crop insurance or NAP, please contact this office. Fruit and nut trees must meet specific age requirements to obtain coverage. If you do not see the crop you grow on this list, contact this office for clarification. The CCC-471 NAP Application for Coverage form and the applicable fee must be submitted by these dates in order for your crop to have coverage in 2014.

Micro Loan Program

FSA offers applicants a Microloan designed to help farmers with credit needs of \$35,000 or less. The loan features a streamlined application process built to fit the needs of new and smaller producers. This loan program will also be useful to specialty crop producers and operators of community supported agriculture (CSA). Eligible applicants can apply for a maximum amount of \$35,000 to pay for initial start-up expenses such as hoop houses to extend the growing season, essential tools, irrigation and annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents, marketing, and distribution expenses. Individuals interested in applying for a microloan or would like to discuss other farm loan programs available, should contact the Farm Loan Staff in the Visalia office at (559) 734-8732.

Farmers, Ranchers Can Apply For 2014 Conservation Funding

The Natural Resources Conservation Service is accepting applications from farmers and ranchers wishing to participate in the 2014 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). **The cut-off deadline for accepting applications is November 15, 2013.**

The EQIP program offers funds on a cost-share basis to producers for practices ranging from animal waste systems to wind breaks to grazing systems. Applications are scored and ranked based on a locally modified scoring system striving to get the best environmental benefits. It gives each county an opportunity to focus EQIP dollars and prioritize conservation work to address its most pressing resource needs.

The program's objective is to promote agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible national goals. EQIP rules are expected to be revised by Congress as part of the next farm bill. It offers financial and technical assistance to implement measures that will address water quality and erosion concerns as well as restoration of wildlife habitat. The list of potential practices is lengthy and should meet the needs of a number of producers in the county.

Landowners wanting more information about EQIP and how it can be used to install conservation measures on their property should contact their local NRCS office. In Kings County, the NRCS office is located at 680 Campus Drive, Ste E, Hanford, CA 93230, (559) 584-9209 x 3.

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).