

**April 2013**



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## **Los Angeles-Orange-San Bernardino County FSA Updates**

DEAR PRODUCERS: Welcome to the new GovDelivery bulletins and updates service from the Los Angeles-Orange-San Bernardino County FSA office. Note that you are welcome to request to receive bulletins from more than one state and/or county and can add or remove individual subscriptions at any time.

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### **Los Angeles-Orange-San Bernardino County FSA Office**

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Dan Manassero

**Advisor:**

Basilio Dorado

**Farm Loan Officer:**

Tom Hunton

### **DCP/ACRE Program Sign-Up Continues**

The sign-up period for DCP and ACRE are still open. Producers must sign up for DCP before the Aug. 2, 2013, deadline. Producers signing up for ACRE have until June 3, 2013.

The 2013 DCP and ACRE program provisions are unchanged from 2012, except that all eligible participants in 2013 may choose to enroll in either DCP or ACRE for the 2013 crop year. This means that eligible producers who were enrolled in ACRE in 2012 may elect to enroll in DCP in 2013 or may re-enroll in ACRE in 2013. Likewise producers who were enrolled in DCP may opt for ACRE enrollment.

Contact your local County FSA Office to make an appointment or for more information on the DCP/ACRE program.

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### **CRP Sign-Up Starts Soon**

USDA will conduct a four-week general sign-up for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) beginning May 20 and ending on June 14. CRP protects the nation's natural resources through voluntary participation while providing significant economic and environmental benefits to rural communities across the United States.

Currently, about 27 million acres are enrolled in CRP. Producers that are accepted in the program can receive cost-share assistance to plant long-term, resource-conserving covers and receive an annual rental payment for the length of the contract (10-15 years.)

Contracts on 3.3 million acres of CRP are set to expire on Sept. 30, 2013.

Phone: (661) 336-0967 ext. 116 Producers with expiring contracts or producers with environmentally sensitive land are encouraged to evaluate their options under CRP.

**Farm Loan Technician:**

Elsa Mora

For more information on CRP and other FSA programs, visit a local FSA service center or [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

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## Hispanic and Women Farmers and Ranchers Claims Process Extended

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack has announced the extension of the voluntary claims process for Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who allege discrimination by the USDA in past decades. All claims must now be filed by **May 1, 2013**.

The process offers a voluntary alternative to litigation for each Hispanic or female farmer and rancher who can prove that USDA denied his or her application 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. There are no filing fees to participate in the program.

Claimants may register for a claims package by calling the telephone number below Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Time or by downloading the forms from the website.

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

**Phone:** 1-888-508-4429

**Fax:** (855) 626-8343

**Email:** [claims@hwfr.org](mailto:claims@hwfr.org)

**Claims Period:** September 24, 2012 – May 1, 2013.

Claim packages and other documentation may be mailed to Hispanic and Women Farmers and Ranchers Claims Administrator, PO Box 4540, Portland, OR 97208-4540. Claim packages and other documentation may also be emailed to [claims@hwfr.org](mailto:claims@hwfr.org). Claimants may also fax claims packages and other documentation to (855) 626-8343. **Completed forms and documentation must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. PDT on May 1, 2013.**

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## Microloans Are Cultivating Big Dreams on a Small Scale

Microloans are helping small, niche and beginning farmers and ranchers meet their goals. The less burdensome and more simplified loan process allows producers to apply for a maximum of \$35,000 to pay for initial start-up expenses such as hoop houses, essential tools, irrigation, delivery vehicles and annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents, marketing and distribution expenses.

Producers interested in applying for a microloan should contact their local FSA office to make an appointment with a Farm Loan Officer or Manager.

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## Acreage Certification

After spring planting, producers should certify their 2013 acreage. 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 crops enrolled in programs other than NAP (Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program), acreage reports are to be certified by the acreage reporting deadline for the specific crop.

Acreage reports on crops covered by NAP are due in the county office by the earlier of the acreage reporting deadline of the specific crop, or 15 calendar days before the onset of harvest or grazing of the specific crop acreage being reported.

Contact your local FSA Office for the acreage reporting deadlines for your crop(s).

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## **Rural Youth Loans**

The Farm Service Agency makes loans to rural youths to establish and operate income-producing projects in connection with 4-H Clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5,000.

For more information you can stop by your FSA county office. Our staff can help with preparing and processing the application forms.

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## **Guaranteed Loan Program**

The Farm Service Agency loan limit for the Guaranteed Loan Program has increased to \$1,302,000. The limit is adjusted annually based on data compiled by the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

The lending limit increases every year according to an inflation index. The maximum combined guaranteed and direct farm loan indebtedness has increased to \$1,602,000.

As a reminder, the one-time loan origination fee charged on FSA guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans is 1.5 percent of the guaranteed portion of the loan.

Producers should contact their local FSA County Offices with questions about farm loans.

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## **Farm Safety**

Flowing grain in a storage bin or gravity-flow wagon can be fatal. It takes less than five seconds for a person caught in flowing grain to be trapped.

The mechanical aspects of grain handling equipment, also present very real dangers. Augers, power take offs, and other moving parts can grab people or clothing.

These hazards, along with pinch points and missing shields, are dangerous enough for both 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. Remember to always put safety first.

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USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9450, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay).