



July 2008
Special Edition

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Farm Service Agency

NOTICE: 2008 Disaster Programs

Requires Crop Insurance or NAP

Eligibility "Buy-In" Deadline is **September 16, 2008**

The recently-enacted Farm Bill legislates 2008 disaster programs covering losses to crops, trees/vines/bushes, forage, and other losses due to adverse weather. These programs require the crops you planted, grew, produced or were prevented from planting to have been covered by federal crop insurance or FSA's Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). *All* of your crops on *all* of your acreage must be covered, not only those acres that suffered losses.

Due to the late passage of the Farm Bill in May, you will be given an opportunity to "buy-in" to the disaster program by paying a \$100/crop catastrophic crop insurance or NAP service fee for any 2008 crops that are not already covered by crop insurance or NAP.

This eligibility "buy-in" must be completed by **September 16, 2008** at your FSA Office to satisfy the requirement for total CI / NAP coverage. Note that it does not provide you with crop insurance indemnities or NAP benefits. Once this requirement is met, you may be eligible for one or more of the following programs:

Supplemental Revenue Program (SURE): Covers crop revenue losses from quantity or quality deficiencies in disaster declared counties, contiguous counties, or in cases where the overall production loss exceeds 50%

Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP): Compensates livestock owners for forage losses due to drought. Additionally, losses due to wildfire will be covered on public lands.

Tree Assistance Program (TAP): Provides for partial reimbursement for replanting, salvage, pruning, debris removal and land preparation for orchardists and nursery tree growers if losses exceed 15%.

Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish (EALHF): Emergency relief to producers of livestock (including horses), honey bees, and farm-raised fish. Covers losses from disasters such as adverse weather or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires not adequately covered by any other disaster program. This program is authorized at the discretion of the Secretary.

Another disaster program authorized by the Farm Bill is the **Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)** for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality. This is the only disaster program that does not require crop insurance or NAP coverage. Further details of all of these disaster programs, including signup information, will be provided at a later date. Note that additional requirements exist for disaster programs eligibility.

Bottom Line: To be eligible for Disaster Programs in 2008, you must pay the fees for the eligibility buy-in at your FSA Office by **September 16, 2008.** Contact your FSA Office for more information.

Farm Reconstitutions

In Farm Service Agency terms, farms are **constituted** to group all tracts having the same owner and the same operator under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation takes place, a farm **reconstitution** is necessary.

The reconstitution—or recon—is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. To be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by **August 1** for farms enrolled in the Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program. If 2008 DCP direct payments have already been issued on the farm, the reconstitution will be effective for 2009 unless the payments are refunded. Also reconstituted farms must re-enroll in the DCP **within 30 days**, but no later than **September 30, 2008**.

2005-2007 Quality Loss Sign-up for CDP

Signup for quality losses under the Crop Disaster Program (CDP) began on June 23, 2008. Producers can apply for crop quality losses at their local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office.

The CDP provides benefits to farmers who suffered losses to their 2005-2007 crops from natural disasters and related conditions. Producers who incurred qualifying quantity or quality losses in 2005, 2006 or 2007 may receive benefits for only one of these years. However, producers may apply for benefits for losses to multiple crops as long as the losses occurred in the same crop year.

Only producers who obtained crop insurance coverage or coverage under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the year of loss will be eligible for CDP benefits. Producers must have suffered quality losses of at least 25 percent to be eligible for CDP Quality Loss. Producers may receive assistance for both quantity and quality losses. However, the total quantity and quality assistance, together with any crop insurance or NAP payment received for the same crop and the value of the crop production not lost, must not exceed 95 percent of the total value of the crop absent the disaster.

FSA COC Nomination Deadline

County committees play a crucial role in helping county office staff implement the 2008 Farm Bill. Due to the importance of county committee members and their roles, producers are encouraged to participate in the 2008 FSA county committee election process by nominating an eligible candidate by the August 1 deadline.

To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign form FSA-669A. The form and other valuable information about FSA county committee elections are available online at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>; click on News & Events, then County Committee Elections. Nomination forms for the 2008 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on August 1, 2008.

FSA county committee members make decisions on disaster and conservation programs, emergency programs, commodity price support loan programs and other important agricultural issues.

*“To be eligible for
2008 programs
ALL of your crops
on all of your
acreage must be
covered by Crop
Insurance or
NAP, not only
those acres that
suffered losses.”*

Members serve three-year terms. Nationwide, there are more than 7,800 farmers and ranchers serving on FSA county committees. Committees consist of three to five members who are elected by eligible local producers.

FSA will mail ballots to producers beginning Nov. 3. The voted ballots are due back at the local county office either via mail or in person by December 1, 2008.

Newly elected committee members and alternates take office January 1, 2009.

New Crop Certification Deadline

For 2008, the final crop reporting dates for most crops are being extended to August 15, 2008. Late fees will not be applied if acreage reports are filed by the August 15 and all other reporting requirements are met according to 2-CP.

Filing an accurate and timely report for all crops and land uses, including failed crop acreage, can prevent loss of benefits for a variety of Farm Service Agency Programs.

Want Your Newsletter Via E-mail?

If you use a computer at home or in your farm or ranch operation, you may prefer to receive information via e-mail from your Farm Service Agency. Use the e-mail address below to share your e-mail address if you would like to be added to our e-mail list. We are exploring the option to send the county office newsletter and other information directly to your computer. To get on our list, send your e-mail address and full name, address and phone number to joleen.logan@ca.usda.gov. Note that USDA will not share or sell your e-mail address.

Note also that all county FSA newsletters are available on the FSA California website at www.fsa.usda.gov/ca.



Left: FSA Farm Day at Yokayo School in Ukiah

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We're on the Web!

www.fsa.usda.gov

“Final crop reporting dates for most crops are being extended to August 15th”

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