



April 2008

Merced-Mariposa County News

Merced-Mariposa County USDA Service Center

Merced-Mariposa County FSA

2135 W. Wardrobe Ave.
Suite B
Merced, CA 95341-6445
209-722-4119 (phone)
209-725-2964 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/**

Hours

Monday - Friday
8:00-4:30

County Committee

Lucy M. Nunes
Pierre H. Perret
Arthur W. Richards
RoseAnn Serrano
Jose Vezquez

County Committee meets
4th. Friday of the Month

Staff

Farm Programs:

Michelle Guinn
Gizela Meirinho-Gover
Michael Oliveira
Lydia Swilley

Laura J. Westerfield, CED

Farm Loan Programs:

Phyllis Boyle
Amy Cody
Chantal Haun
Jeffrey Kincaid

LaVon Treasure, FLM

Farm Bill Extended Until April 18th

Passage of the farm bill, currently being debated by Congress, has been delayed, requiring a 33-day extension that was recently passed and signed by President George W. Bush.

“America’s farmers deserve better than a series of short-term extensions here of our current law,” says Secretary of Agriculture Ed Schafer. “They need to know what farm policy is going to be so that they can make sound business decisions about what to plant this year and how they are going to finance it.”

The current farm bill will now extend to April 18. Congress will have until that date to pass a consolidated bill.

Acreage Reporting

Acreage reporting time will soon be here. Please remember that 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 other than NAP (Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program) crops, acreage reports are to be certified by the April 30 deadline on small grains and a July 15 deadline on all other crops.

Acreage reports on crops for which NAP assistance may be paid are due in the county of-

rice by the earlier of April 30, for small grains and July 15, for all other crops, or 15 calendar days before the onset of harvest or grazing of the specific crop acreage being reported.

Sodbuster, Swampbuster

Most Farm Service Agency programs require compliance with sodbuster and swampbuster provisions. These provisions require producers to follow an approved conservation system on all highly erodible land planted to an annual crop as determined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Be sure to have determinations made on any new land you plan to plant to annual crops. If you plan to plant a different crop on your current cropland, check with NRCS to assure the new crop will qualify under your conservation system.

Swampbuster provisions state that converting a wetland to make possible the planting of a crop will result in the loss of all USDA benefits. It is very important that you contact our office before modifying - tiling, draining, dredging, filling, or leveling - any wetland or drainage ditch. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in loss of all Federal payments and eligibility. To avoid this possibility it is strongly recommended that producers check with NRCS before starting to work in the fields.

Flexible or Cash Lease

Producers should be careful to differentiate between flexible leases and cash leases when reporting to the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

Flexible leases, in which the producer pays a base rent, and offers a bonus on yield and/or price increase to a landowner, are considered by the Farm Service Agency as share leases. Cash leases specifying a fixed amount, not subject to changes from yield or price are common and the

norm across the country. Flexible or hybrid leases are now coming to the attention of FSA.

Each year FSA participants complete form CCC-502 Continuation Sheet for Leased or Owned Land which are subject to spot check. Paying more than what the original lease specifies may violate a producer's CCC-502, if not completed correctly. A violation could make an operator ineligible for Direct Counter-cyclical Payments (DCP).

Example: A lease that is for \$100 acre plus an additional \$40 per acre if the crop exceeds \$4/bushel or 170 bushels corn/acre or \$7/bushel or 40 bushels of soybeans per acre is by FSA procedure a share lease. FSA procedure states that, a lease is a share lease if the lease bases the amount of rent on the quantity of crop produced or the proceeds from the crop, or the interest a producer would have if the crop had been produced.

Sign-up for DDAP III – Ends May 5th

Eligible dairy producers who suffered losses during 2005, 2006, or 2007 may now apply to receive benefits under the Dairy Disaster Assistance Program III (DDAP III). The final rule published in the Federal Register on March 4 specifies that this newly reopened sign up period ends on May 5, 2008.

FSA began enrolling producers in DDAP III in late 2007. Then in early 2008 FSA temporarily halted sign up pending the completion of rulemaking. Based on public comments on the program elicited during this suspension, FSA made minor changes to the DDAP III rules.

To be eligible, a producer's operation must be in a county designated a major disaster or emergency area by the president or declared a natural disaster area by the secretary of agriculture between January 1, 2005 and December 31, 2007. Producers in contiguous counties are also eligible. Further eligibility is possible if an FSA Administrator's Physical Loss No

tice was issued. For further information, contact our office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov/ca.



Crop Disaster Program Signup

The Crop Disaster Program (CDP) provides benefits to farmers who suffered quantity and quality losses to 2005, 2006, or 2007 crops. **Appointments for CDP are currently being scheduled. Call the FSA Office at (209) 722-4119 ext. 2.**

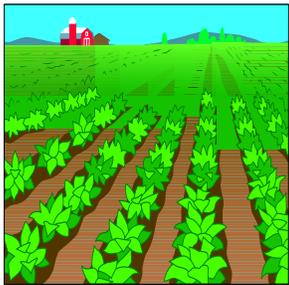
NOTE: Only producers who obtained crop insurance coverage or coverage under the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the year of loss will be eligible for CDP benefits.

Losses from natural disasters may qualify for financial assistance if the crop was planted before Feb. 28, 2007, or, in the case of prevented plantings, for crops that would have been planted before Feb. 28, 2007. Producers who incurred qualifying losses in 2005, 2006 or 2007 can and should apply for benefits in every year and will be paid the highest dollar amount. The calculation is complex, prices for insurable crops are not the same between all three years, eligibility may not be the same for all three years Participants may apply for loss benefits on multiple commodities as long as the losses occurred in the same crop year.

Producers must have suffered quantity losses in excess of 35 percent to be eligible for CDP.

Producers will need to bring:

- Total crop production
- Loss Adjustment information from crop insurance
- Bee receipts for Almond crops
- Growing Contracts
- Proof of ownership on all cropland, rangeland and forestland in which the applicant has an interest.



Livestock Disaster Programs

Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)

The Livestock Indemnity Program is available to help livestock owners who suffered animal losses due to an eligible weather condition. Many local livestock operators suffered significant animal losses due to excessive prolonged heat in July of 2006.



Livestock owners should schedule an appointment by calling the Merced-Mariposa FSA Office at (209) 72-4119 ext 2.

Producers should bring:

- Inventory by type and kind of animals owned as of July 1, 2006.
- Documentation to support the animal deaths for the period July 1-September 29, 2006; tallow works pick up sheets, landfill receipts, etc.
- Third party certification for animal deaths where no other form of proof exists. This is a two part process: The owner certifies there is no other proof and an independent third party who is aware of the animal losses certifies their knowledge of the livestock operation and the animal losses. This third party must sign and date a written certification statement and provide their name, address and phone number.

Payments are limited to \$80,000

Type	Weight Range	Payment per head
Beef Non-adult	Less than 400 lbs	\$ 130.08
	400 lbs or more	\$ 167.20
Beef Adult	Cow	\$244.46
	Bull	\$ 317.80
Dairy Non-adult	Less than 400 lbs	\$ 112.78
	400 lbs or more	\$ 225.55
Dairy Adult	Cow	\$ 451.10
	Bull	\$ 451.10
Boars/Sows	Over 450 lbs	\$ 45.19
Sows/Boars/Barrows/Gilts	151 to 450 lbs	\$24.36
Lightweight Barrows/Gilts	50 to 150 lbs	\$19.21
Feeder Pigs	Under 50 lbs	\$14.07
Sheep	Rams	\$ 8.99
	Ewes	\$ 8.99
	Lambs	\$ 24.36



	Does	\$ 17.97
	Slaughter goats/kids	\$ 24.36
Chickens	Layers/Roasters	\$ 1.95
	Broilers/Pullets	\$ 0.55
	Chicks	\$ 0.06
Turkeys	Toms/Fryers/Roasters	\$ 3.52
	Poults	\$ 0.29
Ducks	Ducks	\$ 0.97
	Ducklings	\$ 0.16
Geese	Goose	\$ 4.42
	Gosling	\$ 0.93

Livestock Compensation Program (LCP)

Livestock Operators in Merced and Mariposa Counties who suffered losses in 2007 to native rangeland feed due to freezing conditions and drought may be eligible for benefits under the LCP.

Call the Merced-Mariposa FSA Office at (209) 722-4119 ext. 2.

Producers will need to bring:

- Leases for all cropland, rangeland and forestland they have an interest in for 2007
- Inventory of eligible livestock by type/kind owned as of January 6, 2007. This must be broken down by the county where the animal was located on January 6, 2007.

Type	Weight Range	Payment per head
Beef, Buffalo & Beefalo	Non-Adult -500 lbs or more	\$8.00
	Adult Cows & Bulls	\$ 10.66
Dairy	Non-Adult 500 lbs or more	\$ 8.00
	Adults 500 lbs or more	\$ 27.72
	All	\$2.67

2008 Committee Election Results

Visit our Web site
 at
www.fsa.usda.gov/ca

The following farmers were elected by you
 to serve as your 2008 Merced-Mariposa
 FSA Committee:

- Lucy M. Nunes – Chairwoman
- RoseAnn Serrano – Vice Chairwoman
- Pierre H. Perret – Member
- Arthur W. Richards – Member
- Jose D. Vazquez – Advisor

Dates to Remember	
April 30	Fall seeded crop Reporting Deadline
May 5	DDAP III Sign up Closed
May 15	Cotton Final Planting Date
May 26	Office Closed – Memorial Day
May 30	Merced/Mariposa Committee Meeting
May 31	Dry Beans, Processing Tomatoes Final Planting Date
June 1	Rice Final Planting Date
July 4	Office Closed – Independence Day
July 15	Fresh Market Tomato Final Planting Date
July 15	Spring Seeded and Permanent Plantings Drop Reporting Deadline

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.