



Riverside-San Diego

FSA News

August-September 2010

Farm Service Agency California

Riverside-San Diego

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Hours

Monday-Friday
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

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2008 SURE Program Deadline- September 30

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters incurred in the crop years 2008 through September 30, 2011. To be eligible for SURE payments, a producer is required to obtain crop insurance on all crops in all counties or, if crop insurance is not available, to participate in the Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) except for grazed acreage. However, crop insurance or NAP coverage is no longer required for crops that are not of economic significance or those where the administrative fee required to buy NAP coverage exceeds 10% of the value of the coverage.

Eligible farmers and ranchers who meet the definition of Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, or Beginning Farmer or Rancher are exempt from the risk management purchase requirement.

The following conditions trigger SURE payments:

- At least one crop of economic significance must suffer a 10% production loss due to an eligible disaster condition
- Crop of economic significance is a crop that has contributed or would have contributed at least 5% or more of the total expected revenue from all crops on the farm
- Crop is in a county declared a disaster county by the Secretary of Agriculture, or in contiguous counties, or producer shows proof of an individual loss of at least 50%.

SURE payments can apply to crop production or crop quality losses. Losses are measured with consideration to the whole-farm revenue, which includes crop insurance indemnities and commodity program payments, so that producers are not paid more than once for the same loss.

A SURE calculator is available at:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=diap&topic=sure> .

The calculator is not official, but is intended for educational use. A fact sheet and backgrounder are also available online.

Assistance for Asparagus and Catfish Producers – Sept. 23 Deadline

The Trade Adjustment Assistance Program (TAA) assists eligible producers of asparagus, catfish and shrimp who experienced a decline in their product sales due to imports. The program focuses on technical and business adjustment training in two stages, including a \$4,000 benefit for developing an initial business plan and a \$8,000 benefit for a long-term business adjustment plan.

Applications must be received by September 23, 2010. Sales receipts of total production are required to show either lower production in 2009 or lower price received in 2009. Applicants must show they produced or shared in the risk of producing the crop in 2009 and in three years prior to 2009. For details, contact your nearest FSA office.

ACRE Data Deadline Moved

The deadline for 2009 production certification to comply with ACRE was extended until September 1, 2010. The extension is for completing both the farm benchmark yield (2004 through 2008) and the actual farm yield (2009). Participants in the 2009 ACRE program must certify their yields by September 1, 2010 to remain eligible for ACRE benefits.

- to a beginning or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher by Oct. 1 of the year the CRP contract expires.

Generally, TIP only applies to contracts that expire on September 30, 2010, or later. However, retired or retiring owners or operators with CRP contracts that expired on September 30, 2008, and September 30, 2009, may be eligible to enroll in TIP. To learn more contact your FSA Service Center or County Office or www.fsa.usda.gov .1

Loans for the Socially Disadvantaged

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operating type loans and/or purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided priority funding for members of Socially Disadvantaged Applicants.

A socially disadvantaged applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities.

For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders.

If producers or their spouses believe they would qualify as socially disadvantaged, they should contact their local FSA office for details. FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

Electronic Services

If a producer has Internet access, program participants can access many services from home 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and receive approval and payment by direct deposit within 48 hours.

To participate in these services, you must meet all program eligibility requirements. Online services have stringent security measures to protect your private information.

To utilize electronic services requires a *USDA eAuthentication Level 2 Account*, including your e-mail on an online registration form at www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/index.html followed by a visit to the county office for identity verification.

If you have questions, or would like assistance establishing your account, just contact your local USDA Service Center and talk with our trained FSA personnel.

Wetland Compliance

Producers renting or purchasing land that may have a converted wetland status need to check with the county office to learn if there are restrictions. Farm Bill regulations provide that, unless exempt, persons are ineligible for benefits under certain programs administered by USDA if they:

- plant an agricultural commodity on wetland that was converted after December 23, 1985
- convert a wetland after November 28, 1990

FSA may not approve any loan or loan guarantee to drain, dredge, fill, level or otherwise manipulate a wetland, or to engage in any activity that results in impairing or reducing the flow, circulation or reach of water except in the case of activity related to the maintenance of previously converted wetlands.

The following provides permitted uses and restrictions within Wetland compliance provisions:

- wetlands can be farmed under natural conditions, but not converted

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- wetlands converted before November 28, 1990, cannot be planted to an agricultural commodity and retain eligibility for benefits
- wetlands converted after Nov. 28, 1990, must either be restored to wetland status or mitigated to regain eligibility for program benefits.
- wetlands that can be farmed under natural conditions cannot be manipulated in any way, unless the Natural Resources Conservation Service determines the work would have a minimal effect on the wetland values
- wetlands converted before December 23, 1985, can be farmed and maintained
- Additional information about wetlands is available at the USDA Service Center.

Marketing Assistance Loans

A Marketing Assistance Loan (MAL) is available for producers who share in the risk of producing the crop. To be eligible, a producer must maintain continual beneficial interest in the crop from harvest through the earlier of the date the loan is repaid or Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) takes title to the commodity. Beneficial interest means retaining the ability to make decisions about the commodity; responsibility for loss or damage to the commodity; and title to the commodity. Once beneficial interest in a commodity is lost, the commodity is ineligible for loan — even if the producer regains beneficial interest.

Commodity loan eligibility requires compliance with conservation and wetland protection requirements; beneficial interest requirements, acreage reporting and ensuring that the commodity meets CCC minimum grade and quality standards. For commodities to be eligible they must have been produced by an eligible producer, be in existence and in a storable condition and be merchantable for food, feed or other uses as determined by CCC. The quality of the commodity in farm storage must be maintained throughout the term of the loan.

Producers do not have to participate in the Direct and Counter-Cyclical and/or ACRE Programs to be eligible for commodity loans.

Violating provisions of a marketing assistance loan may trigger procedures, such as assessing liquidated damages, calling the loan and denial of future commodity loans.

The most common violations are removing or disposing of a commodity being used as loan collateral without prior authorization and providing an incorrect quantity certification.

Durum Wheat Program

The Farm Service Agency is currently taking applications for the Durum Wheat Quality Program (DWQP). The program will partially compensate producers for the costs associated with fungicide application on 2010 durum wheat. This compensation is for durum growers that fought Fusarium Head Blight (FHB) which is commonly called wheat scab.

Durum producers have until September 15, 2010, to apply for fungicide application reimbursement under the DWQP program. The fungicide payment rate for the chemical will be established by National Office. The reimbursement rate for the cost of application will be set by the state committees in each durum producing state.

Producers can prepare for DWQP signup by gathering their 2010 fungicide bills that document the Fusarium fighting efforts. For more information about this program producers can contact their local FSA office.

Preventing Fraud

The FSA supports the Risk Management Agency in the prevention of fraud, waste and abuse of the Federal Crop Insurance Program. FSA assists RMA and insurance providers by monitoring crop conditions throughout the growing season. FSA will refer all suspected cases of fraud, waste and abuse directly to RMA. Producers can report suspected cases to the FSA office.

Beginning and Limited Resource Farmers

FSA assists beginning farmers and or members of socially disadvantaged groups to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's average size

Each member of an entity must meet the eligibility requirements. Loan approval is not guaranteed. Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit

www.fsa.usda.gov

Help Available to Stressed Farmers

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Riverside-San Diego County
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Dates to Remember	
August 24, 2010	COC Meeting
September 1, 2010	NAP Coverage Deadline- 2011 Value Loss and Controlled Environment; 2011 Forage Seed Crops
September 6, 2010	Office Closed-Labor Day
September 30, 2010	2008 SURE Deadline

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs 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 programs. (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 USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202)-720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."