



San Luis Obispo County News
August 2010

USDA Service Center
San Luis Obispo County
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Web Sites:
FSA: www.fsa.usda.gov
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Hours:
Monday-Friday
8:00 AM-4:30 PM

County Committee:
Tom Ikeda
Michael Strouss
Lonnie Twisselman

Advisor:
Jose Iniguez

County Executive Director:
Jennifer L. Anderson

Staff:
Stacy Alcorn, PT
Kyle Cosgrove, PT
Jody Gouff, PT
Amber Brooks, PT
Kendall Bryson, PT

Conservation Reserve Program General Sign-Up 39 Opens August 2

Competitive sign-up for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) opens on August 2, 2010. From that date through August 27, 2010, producers may offer eligible land for this program. USDA is authorized to maintain CRP enrollment up to 32 million acres. Enrollment is likely to exceed the acreage limit. CRP provides conservation practices that preserve the soil, clean water, and restore wildlife habitat. Producers enrolling in CRP plant long-term, resource-conserving covers in exchange for annual rental payments, cost-share and technical assistance. Participants voluntarily remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production by entering into long-term contracts for 10 to 15 years. *Eligible Land*-cropland this is planted or considered planted to an agricultural commodity four of the previous six crop years from 2002-2007 and is physically and legally capable of being planted (no easement restrictions). The land also must meet one of the following: have a weighted average erosion index of 8 or higher; be enrolled in a CRP contract expiring September 30, 2010, or be located in a national or state CRP conservation priority area. *Eligible Producer*-must have owned or operated the land for at least 12 months prior to the end of the CRP sign-up period. There are some exceptions to this rule-contact the county office. In order to sign-up for this program, you will need to schedule an appointment and submit a CRP offer no later than **August 27, 2010**.

Final Date to file applications for the 2008 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payment Program (SURE)

The deadline to file an application for this program is close of business **September 30, 2010**. Close of business is 4:30 pm. There are no provisions for late-filed applications. Application Form FSA-682 must be signed and filed in the county office by this date. SURE provides crop disaster assistance to eligible producers on farms that have incurred crop production or crop quality losses. The program takes into consideration crop losses on all crops grown by a producer nationwide. Producer must have suffered at least a 10 percent production loss on a crop of economic significance. In addition, producers must meet the risk management purchase requirement by either obtaining a policy or plan of insurance, under the Federal Crop Insurance Act or NAP coverage, for all economically significant crops. For 2008 crops, producers had the opportunity to obtain a waiver of the risk management purchase requirement through a buy-in provision. Producers considered socially disadvantaged, a beginning farmer or rancher, or a limited resource farmer may be eligible for SURE without a policy or plan of insurance or NAP coverage. Please contact the office immediately for information.

2011 Crop Acreage Reporting Dates

September 30, 2010.....Value Loss Crops (Nursery, Flowers, Aquaculture)
January 2, 2011.....Honey/Bee Hives
April 30, 2011.....Small seeded grains & forage crops (Wheat, Barley, Oats)
July 15, 2011.....All other tree & fruit crops, vegetables, herbs, native grass, CRP.



2010 County Committee Election Nominees

The Farm Service Agency County Committee is elected by other farmers and ranchers and help in the delivery of programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to the agricultural community. Each year, a specific area is up for election of members for a three year term of office. South County San Luis Obispo (Local Administrative Area (LAA #1) is holding elections this year for County Committee representation. This includes the area between Atascadero and the South San Luis Obispo County border.

Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters on **November 5, 2010**. Election day and the last day to return voted ballots to the FSA Office is **December 6, 2010**. Newly elected members take office on **January 1, 2011**.

The following nominees have filed nomination forms by the filing deadline:

Don Warden, Vegetable Grower
Jose Iniguez, Strawberry Grower

Dick Nock, Cattle Rancher
Chuck Darway, Wheat and Vegetable Grower

Trade Adjustment 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 the FSA office.

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.

2011 Non-insured Crop Assistance Program (NAP) Closing Dates

NAP Crops	2011 Application Closing Dates
Garbanzo Beans	Sept. 1, 2010
Value Loss Crops (ie. Cut Flowers)	Sept. 1, 2010
Grazing Acreage & Forage/Hay Crops	Dec. 1, 2010
Honey, Onions	Dec. 1, 2010
Almonds, Apricots, Asparagus, Cane berries, Kiwis, Persimmons, Cherries, Mint, Olives, Nectarines, Peaches, Pears, Grapes, Pistachios, Plums, Strawberries, and Walnuts	Dec. 15, 2010
2012 Citrus Crops (2-6 years old)	Jan. 1, 2011

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
- 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.

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.

Actively Engaged

FSA wants to remind producers about the rules that govern the requirements to be 'actively engaged' in farming. These rules apply to eligibility for payments under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) or Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) program administered by FSA. Normally the stockholder or a member of a legal entity **must make contributions of active personal labor and/or active personal management for the farming operation**. The contributions are to be performed on regular basis, must be identifiable, and separate from the contributions of others. The exception to this rule for a stockholder or member of a legal entity only occurs if both of the following apply:

- At least half of the interest in the legal entity is held by stockholders or members who are providing active personal labor or active personal management; and
- The total direct payments received, both directly and indirectly, by the legal entity and each of the members doesn't exceed \$40,000.

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.

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. If you have durum wheat, please contact this office.

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