

Farm Service Agency

Address:

USDA Service Center
65 S. Main Street Suite 106
Templeton, CA 93465

Telephone:

(805) 434-0398 Ext. 2
(805) 434-0284 FAX

Web Sites:

FSA: www.fsa.usda.gov
USDA: www.usda.gov

Hours:

Monday-Friday
8:00 AM-4:30 PM

County Committee:

Don Warden
Michael Strouss
Lonnie Twisselman

Advisor:

Jose Iniguez

County Executive**Director:**

Jennifer L. Anderson

Staff:

Stacy Alcorn, PT
Amber Brooks, PT
Kendall Bryson, PT
Kyle Cosgrove, PT
Jody Gouff, PT
Denise Lopez, PT

IN THIS ISSUE:

- COC Elections
- 2011 DCP Deadline
- NAP Deadlines
- 2011 Crop Acreage Reporting & Deadlines
- ECP Sign-up
- SURE Sign-up
- Hispanic & Women Farmers
- Dates to Remember

San Luis Obispo County

FSA NEWS

May 2011

2011 FSA County Committee Elections

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Committees is important to ALL farmers and ranchers, whether beginning or long-established, large or small. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

County Committee (COC) members are a critical component of FSA operations. The intent is to have the COC reflect the makeup of the producers and to represent all constituents. This means wherever possible, minorities, women or lower income producers need to be on the committee to speak for these underrepresented groups.

County Committees provide local input on commodity price support loans and payments, conservation programs, incentive, indemnity and disaster payments for some commodities, emergency programs and payment eligibility.

FSA County Committee members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decision and operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal rules, regulations and laws.

Election Period

- **June 15, 2011** COC nomination period begins.
- **August 1, 2011** COC nomination forms (FSA-669A) due at the local USDA Service Center
- **November 4, 2011** COC ballots mailed to eligible voters
- **December 5, 2011** Last day to return completed COC ballots to the USDA Service Center
- **Jan. 2, 2012** Newly elected COC members take office

Who Can Hold Office

To hold office as a county committee member, a person must meet the basic eligibility criteria as follows:

- Participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA
 - Be eligible to vote in a county committee election
 - Reside in the LAA in which the person is a candidate
- Candidates must not have been:
- Removed or disqualified from the office of county committee member, alternate or employee
 - Removed for cause from any public office or have been convicted of fraud, larceny, embezzlement or any other felony
 - Dishonorably discharged from any branch of the armed services.
- For more information about county committee elections, contact the county office staff.

Local Administrative Area Open for 2011 Election

The Local Administrative Area open for the 2011 election is area #3. The Area consists of the eastern side of the county including Santa Margarita, Carrizo Plains, and parts east of Shandon. It is currently represented by member Lonnie Twisselman.

2011 FSA County Committee Elections (Continued)

Nominations

Nominees must complete and sign form FSA-669A (Nomination Form for County FSA Committee Election). Current Nomination forms are available at the USDA Service Center and online at http://fforms.sc.ecov.usda.gov/efcommon/eFileServices/eFormsAdmin/FSA0669A_110331V01.pdf

Nomination forms for the 2011 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on **August 1, 2011**. Agricultural producers who participate, or cooperate, in an FSA program may be nominated for candidacy.

Who Can Vote?

Agricultural producers of legal voting age (18 years) may be eligible to vote if they participate, or cooperate, in any FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises, and conducts, the farming operations of an entire farm may also be eligible to vote.

2011 DCP Signups

Signup for the 2011 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment (DCP) Program continues until **June 1, 2011**. FSA will not accept late-filed applications. Please contact our office for an appointment.

FSA computes DCP Program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2011, you may request to receive advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment for each commodity associated with the farm. Counter-cyclical payment for a commodity is only issued if the effective price for a commodity is below the commodity's target price.

The electronic DCP (or eDCP) service will save you time, reduce paperwork and speed up contract processing at FSA offices. It is available to anyone eligible to participate in the DCP Program. To access this on-line service, you must have an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires filling out an online registration form at <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov> followed by a visit to the local USDA Service Center for identity verification.

Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP)

The NAP program provides financial assistance to producers on non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occur due to a natural disaster for crops which catastrophic risk protection level of crop insurance is not available. At the time of application, producers must pay a nonrefundable service fee for the eligible NAP crop by the application closing date. **The cost for coverage is now \$250 per crop per producer with a \$750 cap per county, not to exceed \$1,875 per producer for all counties.**

NAP Crops	2012 Application Closing Dates
All Vegetable Crops	Aug. 1, 2011
Fall Planted Seed Crops	Aug. 1, 2011
Garbanzo Beans	Sept. 1, 2011
Value Loss Crops (ie. Cut Flowers)	Sept. 1, 2011
Grazing Acreage & Forage/Hay Crops	Dec. 1, 2011
Honey, Onions	Dec. 1, 2011
Almonds, Apricots, Asparagus, Cane berries, Kiwis, Persimmons, Cherries, Mint, Olives, Nectarines, Peaches, Pears, Grapes, Pistachios, Plums, Strawberries, and Walnuts	Dec. 15, 2011
2013 Citrus: Valencias, Navels and Limes (No young trees are eligible)	Jan. 1, 2012

Notice of Loss: To be eligible for a NAP payment, producers must notify the FSA Office within 15 calendar days after a disaster has affected the NAP crop and complete a CCC-576 Notice of Loss Form.

Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) (Continued)

Production must be submitted no later than July 15, 2011 for the 2010 crop year. If you have not previously submitted your 2010 crop production you must make an appointment with our office or you will not be eligible for benefits.

Crop Reporting

The annual, timely and accurate reporting of acres for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent loss of benefits for a variety of Farm Service Agency programs. All cropland on the farm must be reported to receive benefits from the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, marketing assistance loans and Loan Deficiency Payments. Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage must be reported to receive annual rental payments. And, crop acreage for Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) must also be reported. **Crop reports, form FSA-578, Report of Acreage, must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted.**

Crop Reporting Deadlines	
July 15, 2011	All crops other than small grains including; CRP land, hay crops and grass for grazing.
15 Calendar days before the onset of harvest or July 15, 2011	Crops covered by NAP only

Prevented Planting: Prevented planting needs be reported no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date.

Failed Acreage: Reports of failed acreage must be filed before disposition of the crop, and producers must be able to establish to the satisfaction of the county committee that the crop failed and was prevented from being replanted through the normal planting period because of natural disaster conditions.

ECP Sign-up

In accordance with federal regulations, the San Luis Obispo County FSA Committee assessed the damage in San Luis Obispo County, and determined that a disaster has occurred and warrants the implementation of the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP).

Heavy rains and excessive wind caused severe flooding, erosion, mud slides, and crop damage. From 12/16/10, through 12/23/10, the south part of San Luis Obispo County, mainly in the Nipomo area, received 12 to 13 inches of rain – which constituted a 50 year weather event. Other areas of the county were also affected by heavy rainfall totals during this period, ranging from 6-10 inches. The FSA County Committee will look at each application on a case-by-case basis to determine if the damaged farmland is subject to frequent damage from the natural disaster. In all cases, the COC will take into consideration all of the factors deemed relevant when making the land eligibility determination.

The following ECP practices have been approved by the National Office:

Practice	Description	Cost Share
EC-1	Debris Removal (Light)	75%
	Debris Removal (Medium)	75%
	Debris Removal (Heavy)	75%
EC-3	*Fencing	75%
EC-4	Conservation Structures (Irrigation systems, ponds, dams, pipelines)	75%

The sign-up period will end 30 days from the date of this notice. Please contact the FSA County Office for an appointment, or more information.

SURE PROGRAM

Currently applications for the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) are being taken for the 2009 Crop Year. Producers in need of financial assistance for crop production or quality losses due to a natural disaster have until **July 29, 2011** to submit an application for the 2009 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) program. FSA encourages producers to submit an application even if they feel they don't qualify.

SURE provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disaster that were incurred starting in the crop year 2008 through September 30, 2011. To be eligible for SURE payments, a producer is required to obtain crop insurance on all crops of economic significance in all counties or, if crop insurance is not available, to participate in the Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) except for grazed acreage.

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 are the conditions that 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
- the farm experiencing the loss must be in a county declared a disaster county by the Secretary of Agriculture, or in contiguous counties. Those who show proof of an individual loss of at least 50% are also eligible to receive SURE payments for production losses 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/Internet/FSA_File/sure_calculator_2008.xls

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

Hispanic and Women Farmers

A process to resolve the claims of Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who believe they were discriminated against when seeking USDA farm loans is being established. If you believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) improperly denied farm loan benefits to you during certain time periods between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic, or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation.

For additional information on this claim process, and other settlement issues, contact:

Hispanic and Women Farmer Claims Process www.farmerclaims.gov
or 1-888-508-4429

Pigford - Black Farmers Discrimination Litigation
www.blackfarmercase.com
or 1-866-950-5547

Keepseagle - Native American Farmers Class Action Settlement
www.IndianFarmClass.com
or 1-888-233-5506

NOTICE TO HISPANIC AND/OR WOMEN FARMERS OR RANCHERS COMPENSATION FOR CLAIMS OF DISCRIMINATION

If you believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) improperly denied farm loan benefits to you between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic, or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation.

To register your name to receive a claims packet, call the Farmer and Rancher Call Center at 1-888-508-4429 or visit: www.farmerclaims.gov

The claims package will have detailed information about the eligibility and claims process.



USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Farm Service Agency
 San Luis Obispo County FSA Office
 65 S. Main Street Suite 106
 Templeton, CA. 93465



PRESORTED STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
 Davis, CA
 PERMIT #22

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

2011 DATES TO REMEMBER

June 1	Deadline for Farm Record Changes	September 1	NAP 2012 Application for Coverage Closing Deadline for the following: All Vegetable Crops, Fall Planted Seed Crops, Garbanzo Beans, Value Loss Crops (i.e. Cut Flowers)
	ACRE Signup Ends		
	2011 DCP Enrollment Ends		
June 15	Deadline to submit Consent To Disclosure Of Tax Information Form CCC-927 (Individual) and /or CCC-928 (Legal Entity) to IRS	December 1	Grazing Acreage & Forage/Hay Crops Honey Crops Onion Crops
July 15	Crop Reporting Deadline for All crops other than small grains including CRP land, hay crops & grass for grazing	December 15	NAP 2012 Application for Coverage Closing Deadline for the following: Almonds, Apricots, Asparagus, Cane berries, Grapes, Kiwis, Persimmons, Cherries, Mint, Olives, Nectarines, Peaches, Pears, Pistachios, Plums, Strawberries & Walnuts
	2010 Production Reporting Deadline for NAP		
August 1	NAP 2012 Application for Coverage Closing Deadline for the following: All Vegetable Crops, Fall Planted Seed Crops	January 1, 2012	2013 Citrus: Valencias, Navels and Limes (No young trees are eligible)

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.