

December 2013



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## TULARE COUNTY FSA UPDATES

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### Tulare County FSA Office

3530 W. Orchard Ct  
Visalia, CA 93277-7055

Phone: 559-734-8732 Ext 2  
Fax: 559-732-2805

**County Executive Director:**  
Kaye Rydberg

**Farm Loan Manager:**  
Tom Roberts

**Program Technicians:**  
Theresa Barajas, PT  
Slade Childers, FLPT  
Becky Garcia, CPT  
Pat Miller, FLO  
Yvonne Newman, PT  
Danielle Parreira, PT  
Kelly Solis, PT  
Lorraine Wilson, PT

**Next County Committee Meeting:** January 23, at

### NEW COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTION BALLOTS TO BE MAILED

The County Committee Election ballots that were mailed to producers on Nov. 4 were incorrectly printed with the producer's name and address on the back of the ballot. County committee elections must use a secret ballot so the misprinted ballots cannot be used. Please destroy or recycle the misprinted ballot. If you have already voted, your ballot will be destroyed unopened.

**New ballots will be mailed to producers on December 20, 2013.** These ballots will indicate that they are the corrected ballot in several places, including on the outside of the mailing, on the ballot and on the outside of the return envelope.

**The corrected ballot must be returned to the Tulare County FSA Office or postmarked by January 17, 2014.** All newly elected county committee members will take office February 18, 2014. All county committee members whose term expires on Dec. 31, 2013, will have their term extended to January 31, 2014.

County committee members are an important component of the operations of FSA and provide a link between the agricultural community and USDA. Farmers and ranchers elected to county committees help deliver FSA programs at the local level, applying their knowledge and judgment to make decisions on commodity price support programs; conservation programs; incentive indemnity and disaster programs for some commodities;

9:00 am

emergency programs and eligibility. FSA committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws.

To be an eligible voter, farmers and ranchers must participate or cooperate in an 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.

The candidate in this year's election is:  
Stanley Noble is nominated in LAA2

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## **FSA ADVISES PRODUCERS TO ANTICIPATE PAYMENT REDUCTIONS DUE TO MANDATED SEQUESTER**

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is reminding farmers and ranchers who participate in FSA programs to plan accordingly in FY2014 for automatic spending reductions known as sequestration. The Budget Control Act of 2011 (BCA) mandates that federal agencies implement automatic, annual reductions to discretionary and mandatory spending limits. For mandatory programs, the sequestration rate for FY2014 is 7.2%. Accordingly, FSA is implementing sequestration for the following programs:

- Marketing Assistance Loans;
- Loan Deficiency Payments;
- Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program;
- 2013 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payments;
- 2013 Average Crop Revenue Election Program;

These sequester percentages reflect current law estimates; however with the continuing budget uncertainty, Congress still may adjust the exact percentage reduction. Today's announcement intends to help producers plan for the impact of sequestration cuts in FY2014.

At this time, FSA is required to implement the sequester reductions. Due to the expiration of the Farm Bill on September 30, FSA does not have the flexibility to cover these payment reductions in the same manner as in FY13. FSA will provide notification as early as practicable on the specific payment reductions.

For information about FSA programs, visit our office or go to [www.fsa.usda.gov/](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/).

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## **FSA SIGNATURE POLICY**

Using the correct signature when doing business with FSA can save time and prevent a delay in program benefits. The following are FSA signature guidelines:

- Spouses may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and CCC programs in which either has an interest, unless written notification denying a spouse this authority has been provided to the county office
- Spouses shall not sign on behalf of each other as an authorized signatory for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations, or other similar entities.

For additional clarification on proper signatures contact our office.

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## INCREASED GUARANTEED LOAN LIMIT

The Farm Service Agency maximum loan limit for the Guaranteed Loan Program has increased to \$1,355,000 effective Oct. 1, 2013. The limit is adjusted annually based on data compiled by the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

The lending limit is adjusted every year according to an inflation index. The maximum combined guaranteed and direct farm loan indebtedness will also increase to \$1,655,000.

As a reminder, the one-time loan origination fee charged on FSA guaranteed Farm Ownership and operating loans is 1.5 percent of the guaranteed portion of the loan.

Producers with questions should contact our Office and ask to speak with someone on the Farm Loan staff. 559-734-8732

Selected Interest Rates for December 2013:

Farm Operating Loans - Direct - 1.875%

Farm Ownership Loans - Direct - 4.125%

Emergency Loans - 2.875%

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## BEGINNING FARMER LOANS

FSA assists beginning farmers 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 median size.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at our office. You may also visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

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## DATES TO REMEMBER

**December 25** - Christmas Day Office Closed

**January 1** - New Year's Day Office Closed

**January 2** - Crop Reporting deadline for Honey

**January 15** - Crop Reporting deadline for; Avocados, Blueberries, Grapefruit, Lemons, Mandarins, Minneola Tangelos, Navel Oranges, Orlando Tangelos, Sweet Oranges, Valencia Oranges, Strawberries (planted 8/16/13 through 11/15/13)

**March 1** - 2014 NAP application closing date for Annuals (Green Beans, Herbs, Squash, Carrots, Peppers, Broccoli, Brussel Sprouts, etc...)

**March 15** - Crop Reporting deadline for Fall seeded; barley, Camelina, Oats, Wheat - also; Alfalfa Seed, Almonds, Apples, Cherries, Figs, Fresh Apricots, Fresh Freestone Peaches, Fresh Nectarines, Pears, Plums, Processing Apricots, Processing Cling Peaches, Processing Freestone Peaches, Prunes, Walnuts

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If you have questions about FSA activities, please view our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page or you may also [Search](#) our web site. These features are designed to assist you in obtaining the information you are seeking.

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