

May 2015

USDA e-News

California Edition



United States Department of Agriculture

*Welcome to USDA e-News, California Edition, a multi-agency newsletter
providing California's producers and other interested parties
with current information.*

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Featured Item

Crop Insurance Premium Subsidies Now Linked to Conservation Compliance Provisions – Do They Apply To You?

The 2014 Farm Bill re-linked the highly erodible land conservation and wetlands conservation provisions to crop insurance premium subsidies. USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Farm Service Agency (FSA) are urgently reminding all producers to file form AD-1026 with their local FSA office to maintain eligibility for federal crop insurance premium support. Producers must have this certification complete by **June 1, 2015**, to be eligible for premium subsidy during the 2016 reinsurance year. If producers do not have an AD-1026 on file with FSA by June 1, 2015, producers can obtain crop insurance, but will be responsible for the full premium amount for all policies and plans of insurance obtained for the 2016 reinsurance year. Check out the Five Steps to Meet Conservation Compliance [website](#). More information is available in this [Affiliated Persons Fact Sheet](#), on [RMA website](#), on [FSA website](#) and on [NRCS website](#). Don't delay, the deadline is fast approaching.

Updates

FSA Seeking County Committee Nominations

FSA is accepting nominations from individuals interested in serving on their local County Committee. To be eligible you must reside in the County and farm in the administrative area within the county that will be voting in 2015. These elections provide farmers and ranchers the opportunity to run for and be elected to represent producers in their community as an elected

member of their local FSA County Committee. For more information or obtain a nominating form, contact your [local FSA office](#). The nomination period closes on **August 3**.

California Dairy Industry Outreach Meetings

USDA has announced that it will hold three public outreach meetings throughout California in May 2015 to provide a forum to review proposals USDA received for the establishment of a Federal Milk Marketing Order (FMMO) for California. All meetings will begin at 9 a.m. (Pacific Time) at the following locations:

- **Tuesday, May 5, 2015**
California State University, Chico
Bell Memorial Student Union, Room 203
Corner of West 2nd and Chestnut Streets, Chico, CA 95927
- **Wednesday, May 6, 2015**
Piccadilly Inn Airport
5115 E. McKinley Avenue, Fresno, CA 93727
- **Thursday, May 7, 2015**
Los Angeles County Farm Bureau
41228 12th Street West, Palmdale, CA 93551

USDA will explain the FMMO rulemaking process during the outreach meetings and welcomes all interested parties to attend any or all of the meetings. Attendees may RSVP and view proposals and meeting agendas at the [FMMO California outreach website](#). Those requiring reasonable accommodations for participation in the meetings should contact Diane Hirsch by e-mail at dhirsch@fmmaseattle.com or by phone at (425) 487-6009.

Sales Closing Date Nears for Crop Insurance Programs

USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) reminds producers that the final dates to apply for crop insurance on most insurable planted crops are fast approaching. Producers need to purchase, review, or modify their crop insurance policies before these sales closing dates have passed. Crop insurance provides protection against crop production losses due to natural perils such as drought, hail, and excessive moisture. The last day to buy or change a policy for potatoes (summer planted) in San Joaquin County is **May 31, 2015**. Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance agents. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers and online at the RMA [Agent Locator](#).

Census of Horticultural Specialties & Floriculture Continues

Enumerators are still collecting data for the 2014 Census of Horticultural Specialties to gather detailed information on horticultural production and sales in California. Producers can fill out the form online at www.agcensus.usda.gov, or return their form by mail. NASS will publish the Census of Horticulture results in December 2015 and the annual Floriculture Crops report on June 4, 2015. For more information about the Census of Horticulture, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov or call Curt Stock in the Pacific Regional Field Office at 916-498-5161.

Two Major Mid-Year NASS Surveys Coming Soon

During the next several weeks, USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will conduct two major mid-year surveys, the June Agricultural Survey and the June Area Survey. The agency will survey farmers across California to determine crop production and supplies levels in 2015. NASS gathers the data for the June Agriculture Survey online, by mail and/or by phone. For the June Area Survey, agency representatives will visit randomly selected tracts of land and interview the operators of any farm or ranch on that land. Growers will provide information on crop acreage – including biotech crops—as well as grain stocks, livestock inventory, cash rents, land values, and value of sales. NASS will compile and analyze the survey information and publish the results in a series of USDA reports, including the annual *Acreage* report and quarterly *Grain Stocks* report, both to be released June 30, 2015. Survey data contribute to NASS's monthly and annual *Crop Production* reports, as well as the annual *Small Grains Summary* and USDA's monthly *World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates*. For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Pacific Regional Field Office at 1-800-851-1127.

Funding Opportunities

Funds Available for Farm Labor Housing

USDA Rural Development is now accepting pre-applications for Farm Labor Housing (FLH) loans and grants to construct new off-farm units or purchase and rehabilitate existing non-FLH properties. Nationally, there is \$26.6 million available in loans and grants. Complete details are available in the March 25 [Federal Register notice](#) or on Rural Development's [website](#). Pre-applications are **due by June 23, 2015**. Questions can be directed to [Debra Moretton](#) at 530-885-6505 ext. 109.

Farm to School Grant Program

USDA Food and Nutrition Service announced funds are available to support the [Farm to School Grant Program](#). The purpose of the program is to assist eligible entities in implementing farm to school programs that improve access to local foods in eligible schools. The [request for application](#) (RFA) for fiscal year 2016 funding is now available. More information is available in USDA's [press release](#), or in the [application guidance](#).

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands and their related benefits. The 2014 Farm Bill consolidated three previous conservation easement programs into ACEP to make it easier for diverse agricultural landowners to fully benefit from conservation initiatives. Under the Agricultural Land Easements component, NRCS helps Indian tribes, state and local governments and non-governmental organizations protect working agricultural lands and limit non-agricultural uses of the land. Under the Wetlands Reserve Easements component, NRCS helps to restore, protect and enhance enrolled wetlands. For more information please see the [webpage](#).

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) moves to Continuous Funding Model

To help support a continuous sign-up, planning and obligation process, applications for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) are now accepted year-round, and will be evaluated for funding based on the FY2015 batching schedule. Funds will be distributed according to an allocation schedule that will provide a source of funding for each of the designated batching periods. Applicants may apply for NRCS programs at any time during the year. Application batching periods will close on the third Friday of the month according to the batching period schedule below:

- Batching Period 4 – June 19, 2015
- Batching Period 5 – July 17, 2015

Energy Grants Still Available to Help with Drought Related Projects

USDA Rural Development's Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) can help with a variety of energy efficiency and renewable energy projects – including those to assist with the impacts of California's drought. Efficient irrigation pumps, diesel motor replacement and solar panels are all eligible uses of REAP funds. Grants can cover up to 25% of the project cost up to \$500,000, and loan guarantees for up to 75% of the project cost up to \$25 million are available depending on the project. The next funding deadline is **June 30, 2015**. More information is available on [Rural Development's website](#) or by contacting [Steven Nicholls](#) at 530-792-5805 or [Lupe Valdes](#) at 209-722-4119 ext. 119.

Reports & Publications

NASS Reports

- [Raisin Grape Overhead Trellis Report](#) (05/05/2015)
- [Almond Subjective Forecast](#) (05/05/2015)
- [Crop Production](#) (05/12/2015)
- [Fruit & Nut Review](#) (05/15/2015)
- [Field Crop Review](#) (05/15/2015)
- [Processing Tomato Report](#) (05/28/2015)
- [Livestock Review](#) (05/29/2015)
- [Poultry Report](#) (05/29/2015)

Other Activities & Events

New Farmers, We're Here for You

New and beginning farmers and ranchers are as diverse as American agriculture itself. New farmers are growing traditional crops and new varieties, organic produce and heirloom products. They are part of row-crop farms - employing cutting-edge technology and equipment - and community supported agriculture programs - delivering fresh products directly to their

neighbors. They are raising beef, pork, dairy cattle, poultry, and fish on operations of every size. This web site is just the beginning. [What will you find here?](#)

California Farm to School Conference

The California Farm to School Conference will be held **May 4 - 6, 2015** at Asilomar in Pacific Grove, CA. The conference will offer a series of workshops, panels and discussions that will be of significant educational and networking value to attendees. Representatives from all facets of the farm to school movement, including farmers, distributors, government representatives, procurement officers, educators, and food program administrators will be attending. Please see <http://www.cafarmtoschoolconference.org/> for more information.

Elections for Administrative Committee for Pistachios

The Administrative Committee for Pistachios (Committee), which administers the Federal marketing order for pistachios grown in California, Arizona and New Mexico, is conducting elections to seat new members for the term of office that expires on June 30, 2017. The positions to be filled include five producer members; two each in District 1 and District 2, and one in District 4, and their alternate producer members. In addition to the producer member positions, a handler member and that member's alternate position also need to be filled. The handler position can be filled by a handler from any of the four Districts covered by the Federal marketing order. USDA, which oversees the administration of the marketing order, is working with the Committee to enhance the diversity of the Committee and is encouraging eligible women, minorities, and people with disabilities to consider running for office. If you would like more information on the marketing order or the nomination and election process, please contact Bob Klein, Manager of the Committee, at (559) 255-6480, or Andrea Ricci, USDA, at (559) 487-5901.

Elections for the California Walnut Board

The California Walnut Board (Board), which locally administers the Federal marketing order for California walnuts, is conducting elections to seat new members for the term of office that expires on August 31, 2017. USDA, which oversees the administration of the marketing order, would like to encourage all growers and handlers to participate in the Board elections. In an effort to enhance the diversity of the Board, USDA encourages eligible women, minorities, and people with disabilities to seek position on the Board. If you would like more information on the marketing order or the nomination and election process, please contact Dennis Balint, Executive Director of the Board, at (916) 932-7070, or Andrea Ricci, USDA, at (559) 487-5901.

About Us

Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

- [Find a Program](#)

Farm Service Agency (FSA)

- [When Disaster Strikes](#)
- [Managing Credit Needs](#)
- [Commodity Support](#)

- [Direct/Counter-Cyclical and Revenue Programs](#)
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Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

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National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)

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- [Agriculture Surveys](#)

Risk Management Agency (RMA)

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Rural Development (RD)

- [Overview of Programs](#)

Contact Us

If you would like to receive a copy of future newsletters or if you have relevant information for California producers that you want to include in a future issue of this newsletter, please email one of the contacts listed below. Please be advised that not all activities may be published.

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