



February 2008

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**Mendocino/Lake County Committee Members:****Tim Strong****David Mostin****Walter Stornetta****Stephanie Williamson****Dan Campbell****Betty Foster**

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# Farm Service Agency

## County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Stephanie Williamson and Dan Campbell who were elected to the Mendocino/Lake FSA County Committee. Stephanie will take the place of Richard LaMalfa who served in LAA 3 representing farmers and ranchers in Potter Valley, Redwood Valley and Ukiah areas. Dan Campbell was re-elected to his 2nd term serving in LAA 1 representing producer in Willits and Northern Mendocino County. FSA appreciates all producers who completed and returned their ballots. The County Committee system only works because of your participation. The County Committee will hold their organizational meeting on February 6, 2008 to determine who will hold the chair and vice-chair positions during the 2008 fiscal year.

## Sign-up Continues for 2005-2007 Disaster Programs

Sign-up continues for the Livestock Compensation Program (LCP), Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and Crop Disaster Program (CDP). Eligible ranchers and other livestock producers can apply to receive benefits under the Livestock Compensation Program and Livestock Indemnity Program and eligible farmers can sign-up for the Crop Disaster Program, if they suffered quantity losses to their crops. USDA will announce and conduct CDP sign-up for quality losses as soon as possible.

LCP compensates livestock producers for feed losses and LIP for livestock losses occurring between Jan. 1, 2005, and Feb. 28, 2007, due to a natural disaster. Producers in primary counties declared secretarial disaster areas or certain counties declared presidential disaster areas between Jan. 1, 2005, and Feb. 28, 2007, are eligible as are producers located in counties contiguous to those counties. Producers in a primary (or contiguous) county

that received an Administrator's Physical Loss Notice directly associated with a disaster declaration will also be eligible. Mendocino/Lake County producers will be eligible for years 2006 and 2007.

CDP provides benefits to farmers who suffered quantity and quality losses to 2005, 2006, or 2007 crops from natural disasters if the crop was planted before Feb. 28, 2007, or, in the case of prevented plantings, for crops that would have been planted before Feb. 28, 2007. Producers who incurred qualifying losses in 2005, 2006 or 2007 must choose only one year to apply for benefits. Producers may apply for benefits for losses to multiple commodities as long as the losses occurred in the same crop year. Only producers who obtained crop insurance coverage or coverage under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the year of loss will be eligible for CDP benefits. Producers must have suffered quantity losses in excess of 35 percent to be eligible for CDP. For program information or to sign-up contact the Mendocino/Lake County FSA office at (707) 468-9225 X 2.



*“FSA hopes to help reverse the declining numbers of farmers and ranchers across the United States.”*



## **Livestock, Crop Disaster Programs: 2007 Eligibility Date Extended**

As a result of a recent extension, now all 2007 livestock and crop year losses may be eligible for the 2005 through 2007 disaster programs. On Dec. 26, 2007, President George W. Bush signed the Department of State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2008 (2008 Act). The 2008 Act amended the previous Feb. 28, 2007, date and now allows for crops planted prior to Dec. 31, 2007, for the 2007 crop year, to be included for loss purposes under CDP. Similarly, under LIP and LCP, the 2008 Act extends the date livestock and livestock feed losses could have occurred in a primary or contiguous counted named in a Secretarial or Presidential disaster declaration to Dec. 31, 2007.

“This date change does not make 2008 crops planted in 2007 eligible for CDP, however it does benefit farmers in that it extends the eligibility date for crops planted in 2007 that were intended for harvest in the same crop year, and it adds 10 months to the amount of eligible time livestock losses can be considered for the new programs,” said CED Katie Delbar.

## **FSA Programs Open To Socially Disadvantaged Producers**

USDA’s Farm Service Agency in California is reaching out to women, ethnic and minority farmers in the state in an effort to get more of them involved in its programs.

FSA defines a socially disadvantaged (SDA) farmer, rancher, or agricultural producer as one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as a member of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities. SDA groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

FSA also reserves a portion of its direct and guaranteed loan funds each year for SDA loans for eligible participants. These loan programs are designed to help farmers purchase and operate family farms. “With these loan programs, FSA hopes to help reverse the declining number of farmers and ranchers across the United States and especially here in California,” said State Executive Director, John Smythe. “These loans help to encourage and assist them in owning and operating their own farms and ranches, participate in agricultural programs, and become integral parts of the agricultural community.”

Applicants must meet the eligibility requirements for a given program before FSA can extend program benefits. For more information on these programs and other programs available through FSA, contact the Mendocino/Lake County Farm Service Agency. USDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

## Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture.

Foreign investors, who buy, sell or hold a direct or indirect interest in U.S. agricultural land must report their holdings and transactions to the Farm Service Agency within 90 days of the closing. It requires any foreign person who:

- acquires or transfers any interest other than a security interest in agricultural land to submit a completed FSA-153 to the Secretary of Agriculture not later than 90 calendar days after the date of acquisition or transfer, or
- held any interest, other than a security interest, in agricultural land on February 1, 1979, to have submitted a report to the Secretary not later than August 1, 1979.

Failure to timely file or foreign persons who knowingly submitted a report that was incomplete, misleading, false or an inaccurate report can result in a penalty with fines up to 25% of the fair market value of the agricultural land on the date the penalty is assessed. County government offices, realtors, attorneys, and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

## Acreage Reporting

Acreage reporting time is here. Please remember that filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs.

Failed acreage must be reported within 15 days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date.

Acreage reports are required if you want to be eligible for Farm Service Agency programs. Producers enrolled in the 2008 Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) should have already receive or should expect their acreage reports in the mail. Please review your FSA-578's carefully as the acreage reported will be used for many FSA programs and can ultimately affect your payment.

### Mendocino/Lake County FSA Office Staff

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Belle Davis

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