



July 2006

Merced County News

Merced County USDA Service Center

Merced County FSA
2135 W. Wardrobe Ave
Suite B
Merced, CA 95340-6445
209.722.4119 ext.2
209.725.2964 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/

Hours
Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

County Committee
Bobby Deol
Lucy Nunes
Gary Preston
RoseAnn Serrano
Chet Sumpter

County Committee meets
3rd Wednesday of the
Month

Farm Program Staff

Mariann Cardoso
Gizela Meirinho-Gover
Lisandra Lima
Lydia Swilley

Laura Westerfield, CED

Farm Loan Staff

Phyllis Boyle
Chantal Haun
Jeffrey Kincaid

LaVon Treasure, FLM



Make a Difference

From June 15 through Aug. 1, farmers and ranchers can nominate eligible peers as candidates for election to the Merced County Farm Service Agency county committee.

This is an important time for the community because county committee members make decisions that have significant effects on you and the area's agricultural sector as a whole.

For example, committee members make decisions on applications for federal farm program and disaster payments. Committee members play a vital role by helping local farmers and rancher's weather tough financial times and natural disasters.

Also, committee members are responsible for hiring the county executive director – a key player in the delivery of farm programs.

County committee members make many other important decisions that affect local farmers and ranchers, such as whether haying and grazing should be allowed on Conservation Reserve Program land. Talk to a county committee member or the CED for details on the types of decisions county committee members make.

To hold office as a county committee member, a person must meet basic eligibility requirements. Contact the county office staff or visit <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/publications/elections> for details about candidate eligibility. Nomination forms can be obtained at the county office or online at the above address.

Remember, the nomination period runs June 15 through Aug. 1. Voting takes place in the fall. Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters by Nov. 3. Dec. 4 is the last day to return voted ballots to the county office. Newly elected committee members and alternates take office Jan. 1, 2007.

Make a Difference: Nominate and Vote!

Acreage Reporting

The timely filing of an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent loss of benefits for a number of programs, including Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program, Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program, as well as marketing assistance loans and loan deficiency payments.

To be timely, you must file an FSA-578 by **July 17, 2006**. There will be a **\$50.00** late fee per farm assessed for farms reported after this date.

To be considered timely, acreage reports for:

- prevented planted acreage must be filed no later than 15 calendar days after the final reporting date for the applicable crop
- failed acreage must be filed before the disposition of the crop.

We will accept crop certifications from farm operators, farm owners, persons authorized by power of attorney and tenants and sharecroppers, for which they have a share.

We will also accept from all producers crop acreage reports for any purpose.

DCP participants, you are required to file a complete report of acreage to be eligible for your DCP payments. Please call immediately to make an appointment or use the green spreadsheet in your USDA folder and the maps given to you during sign-up. Call (209) 722-4119 ext. 2, and make an appointment, **TODAY**.

Note to sweet sorghum producers. You must provide your seed receipts when reporting acreage planted to sweet sorghum. Only a few varieties are eligible for Price Support.



Requesting LDPs for 2006

To request 2006 crop loan deficiency payments, you must use the CCC-633 EZ, Loan Deficiency Payment Agreement and Request. Here's an explanation for each page of the form.

Page 1 – Producer's *intention to request* LDPs in the future:

- Must be signed before beneficial interest is lost.
- Terms and conditions for requesting LDPs.
- Covers all farms and all eligible crops in all counties.
- Submit one to the county office staff. Remind staff of other counties where you have farming interest.
- This is your intention to request an LDP in the future. It is not a request for payment.

Page 2 – Producer's *request for LDP* payment on feed grains, minor oilseeds, rice and pulses:

- Use after grain is harvested and in storage when you maintain beneficial interest. The LDP rate will be the rate in effect on the date page 2 is received in the office.
- Can use after beneficial interest is lost. LDP rate will be the rate in your administrative county office on the date beneficial interest was lost. Must provide production evidence.
- Use when you wish to receive LDP rate based upon date commodity was delivered to warehouse. You must maintain beneficial interest from harvest through delivery to the warehouse. Complete all required sections including item 23B.

Page 3 – Producer's *request for LDP* payment on *specific bales of cotton*. Bales lists must presented with payment request:

- Use to lock in a rate when in module. This is irrevocable. LDP rate is based on Average World Price lock-in.
- Use for gin direct LDP. LDP rate is based on AWP on the date cotton ginned.
- Use to lock-in AWP on specific date, after ginning and is irrevocable. The LDP rate is date page 3 received in county office.
- Use when previous other options not used and you have lost beneficial interest. LDP rate based on date you lost beneficial interest in the cotton.

Page 4 – Producer's *request for LDP* payment on *sheared wool, sheared mohair or unshorn pelts*:

- Use when wool or mohair is sheared and in storage. You maintain beneficial interest. LDP rate is based on date page 4 is received in county office.
- Use if beneficial interest is lost at shearing. LDP rate will be the rate in your administrative county office on the date beneficial interest was lost. Must provide production evidence.
- For unshorn pelts, page 4 is submitted within 60 days of slaughter. LDP rate is based upon date of delivery to slaughter company or buyer. Additional sheared wool and mohair and unshorn pelts information may be obtained from the county office.

Page 5 – Used when additional signatures are needed.

Additional items to remember

- The next time you're in the county office, please verify you've signed and submitted page 1 of the CCC-633 EZ.
- Submit CCC-633 EZ, page 2, 3 or 4 for each LDP payment in person, by fax, by mail or by filing electronically.
- Submit payment requests before the final loan availability date.
- You can use eLDP Web site to request LDP if you have Level 2 e-Authentication and page 1 has been received in the county office.
- Contact our office for details.
- Form can be found at <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainervlet>.
- FSA Web site for price supports is <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/daftp/psd/default.htm>.

2005 Counter-Cyclical Payments

In July, the 2005 final Counter-Cyclical payment rates for wheat, barley and oats will be announced. To date only advance payments on barley have been issued.

In October, the 2005 final Counter-Cyclical payment rates for corn, cotton, and grain sorghum will be announced. At the present time, cotton is on track to pay the maximum of .1373 cents per pound less any advances already received.

Signing for Entities

In simpler times, when a producer visited the county office to sign a form there was no question about how to sign. The producer simply signed his or her name on the dotted line.

In today's world of "entities" — trusts, limited liability companies, cooperatives, partnerships and corporations — signing Farm Service Agency and Commodity Credit Corporation forms isn't so simple.

First, you have to have a document on file at the county office saying you're authorized to sign for the entity. It could be a copy of the articles of partnership or articles of corporation or a valid FSA-211, Power of Attorney.

Second, you have to know how you're supposed to sign. In almost all instances, when you're signing for an entity, your signature has to include "by" or "for," indicating you're signing in a representative capacity.

For example, say you have a partnership, the John R. Smith & Sons Partnership, and you are authorized to sign for the partnership. Acceptable signatures include "by George C. Smith"; "by George C. Smith, Partner"; and "John R. Smith & Sons Partnership, by George C. Smith, Partner."

Remember, if you have established an entity for your operation, you can no longer sign forms and contracts as yourself. When you have signing authority for an entity, you have to sign forms on behalf of the entity, not yourself.

If you have questions about the proper way to sign forms and contracts for your entity, contact the county office staff. We can review the records and help determine the acceptable signature for your situation.

Toll-Free Number for Borrowers

Direct loan borrowers with USDA's Farm Service Agency can now check the status of their accounts around the clock using a new toll-free telephone number.

The toll-free number, 1-888-518-4983, is available in both English and Spanish. The system delivers information on active FSA loans 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

During the first call to the new system, borrowers will enter their tax identification number or

the Social Security Number associated with the loan. They also will need to enter their ZIP code. Borrowers will create a personal identification number (PIN) for security. Customers must enter their PIN every time they use the system and may change their PIN. The system menu helps users access helpful information. The system may also direct borrowers to contact their local FSA servicing office if action is necessary on their accounts.

CED's Corner

Many of you have or will soon realize Renae Lucas is no longer in the Merced Office. After fifteen years in the area, Renae clicked the heels of her ruby slippers and said "there's no place like home" and found her self in Erie, Kansas working at the Neosho County FSA office. While it isn't exactly home, it is a whole lot closer. We will all miss Renae and wish her well.

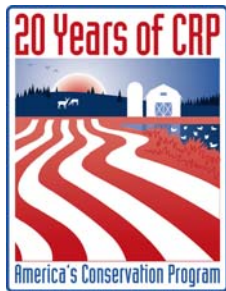
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY!

Renae's departure leaves us with more work than four people can handle. If you have a son or daughter who is looking to pick up a summer job, have them contact the office at (209) 722-4119 ext 2. We are looking for someone who is organized and versatile. We have twenty duck clubs to visit where we will identify wildlife food plants, and verify compliance with the Conservation Reserve Program. We also will be working on organizing retention files for shipment to San Bruno. Interested individuals can complete form FSA-675, Application for FSA County Employment. The form can be picked up at the FSA office or downloaded from our website www.fsa.usda.gov (EEO Employer)

Where is the Disaster Program to assist in losses from 2005 adverse weather? For a few short weeks it was working its way through Congress, but threats of a Presidential veto sidelined the discussion under the current emergency appropriations bill. The current administration has stated that there are "safety nets" built into the current farm bill; therefore there should be no need for ad hoc disaster programs. Hurricane affected states have received assistance. However producers of crops affected by; drought, flood, wind, freeze and other naturally occurring weather events are left with only multi-peril crop insurance (MPCI), non-insured crop disaster assistance (NAP), and Counter-Cyclical programs to offset their losses. Those who do not participate in these programs are left with nothing to fall back on.

Do you have comments or questions, email me at laura.westerfield@ca.usda.gov





MILC Payment Rates (per/cwt)	
October	\$0.0000
November	\$0.0000
December	\$0.0408
January	\$0.1054
February	\$0.1054
March	\$0.4080
April	\$0.8398
May	\$0.9248
June	\$0.9996
July	\$0.7990

Dates to Remember	
July 4	Independence Day Holiday. FSA offices closed.
July 17	Final certification date for all crops.
August 1	Deadline to submit COC nomination forms
August 1	Final date to request farm reconstitution for current fiscal year.
Sept. 1	NAP Sales Closing Date for forage crops and native pasture.
Sept. 4	Labor Day Holiday FSA office closed.
Sept.30	Final date to sign 2006 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program Contract.

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