



Farm Service Agency

June/July 2007

Sonoma/Marin County News
USDA Service Center

Sonoma/Marin County FSA

1301 Redwood Way, 190
Petaluma, CA 94954
707-664-8593 (phone)
707-794-7902 (fax)

Hours

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

County Committee

Cynthia Crane
Craig Jacobsen
Diane Starkey
Phil Dolcini
Richard Grossi

County Committee meets
The first Tuesday after
the first Monday of every
month

Staff

Lisa Velasquez
County Executive Director
Debbie Castle
Program Technician

January 2007 County Newsletter Articles

Introduction

- New Disaster Programs
- Acreage Reporting
- DCP Deadline
- Measurement Service
- COC Election Nominations
- Preventing Fraud & Waste
- CCC-633-EZ Reminder
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- 2007 National Compliance and Spot Check Review
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New Disaster Programs

As part of new legislation passed by Congress last month, a multi-program package to help farmers in California who have suffered losses over the past three years will soon be available.

Specific details are not yet available. As more information becomes available we will provide updates and information will soon be available online at: www.fsa.usda.gov. We anticipate that sign up will occur later this fall.

A few program specifics are:

Crop Disaster Program:

All crops are eligible. However, producers must have purchased crop insurance or coverage under the agency's Non-insured Assistance Program in order to qualify. Eligible losses are those that exceeded 35 percent and occurred in 2005, 2006, or 2007 (2007 crops must have been planted before Feb. 28, 2007) as a result of a natural disaster. The producer will choose one year for benefits. Quality loss assistance will be available for some crops as well.

Emergency Conservation Program:

Nationwide, \$16 million has been made available for the cleanup and restoration of farm and agricultural production lands. It is too soon to tell how this will be implemented in California.

Livestock Programs:

Producers choose for each livestock program one of three years for which they would receive benefits. Many California counties are eligible. For a complete list of eligible counties by year, visit www.fsa.usda.gov and select California from the state office menu at the top of the page.

The Livestock Compensation Program:

Provides benefits for producers in designated disaster counties for their added costs of procuring livestock feed in 2005, 2006 or 2007 (up to Feb. 28, 2007). Eligible livestock under the program are: dairy cattle, beef cattle, buffalo, beefalo, equine, poultry, elk, reindeer, sheep, goats, swine, deer, and catfish.



United States Department of Agriculture

....Disaster

The Livestock Indemnity Program

Makes payment available to producers that have incurred more than normal livestock losses between Jan. 1, 2005 and Feb 28, 2007, due to a disaster. A producer will select the losses in one year for benefits.

Dairy Programs:

The Dairy Assistance Program compensates producers for reduced milk production due to a natural disaster in a declared disaster county. Nationwide \$16 million is available.

Milk Income Loss Contract Program

This program extends the MILC program for one additional month, through Sept. 30, 2007.

ACREAGE REPORTING

The timely filing of an 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, Conservation Reserve 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 15, 2007.**

To be considered timely, acreage reports for:

- Prevented planted acreage must be filed no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date for the applicable crop
- Failed acreage must be filed before the disposition of the crop.

FSA 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.

Crop acreage reports from producers are accepted for multiple future applications.

DCP DEADLINE

The deadline to sign up for the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program-known as DCP- has been extended to **August 3, 2007.** Those producers who have eligible crop acreage base farms (traditionally farms with wheat, oats and barley history) and have not yet enrolled in the program have been given additional time to sign up their farms.

This is an annual program that requires a new signed contract every year. Current leases and legal documentation will be required to be completed **by August 3, 2007.** Crop reports identifying crops planted will be required. Late fees will apply if not completed timely. Call today to make an appointment to enroll your farm: 707-664-8593

MEASUREMENT SERVICE

Farmers who would like a guarantee on their crop plantings and land use acreages can make it official by using the FSA measurement service. Producers must file a request with the county office staff and pay the cost of a field visit to have state and referencing don on the farm.

Incorrect acreage self-certification can result in reduced program payments, penalty, or loss of eligibility.

COC ELECTION NOMINATIONS

From **June 15 through Aug. 1,** farmers and ranches can nominate eligible peers as candidates for election to the Sonoma-Marín County Farm Service Agency County Committee.

This is an important time for Local Administrative Area communities, 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 ranchers manage tough financial times and natural disasters.

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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 County Executive Director for details on the types of decisions county committee member 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. Nominations 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. 2. The last day to return voted ballots to the county office is Dec. 3. Newly elected committee members and alternates take office Jan. 1, 2008.

PREVENTING FRAUD & WASTE

The Farm Service Agency and Risk Management Agency are partners in preventing fraud, waste and abuse in the Federal Crop Insurance Program. FSA has been and will continue to, assist RMA and insurance providers by monitoring crop conditions throughout the growing season. In addition, FSA will refer all suspected cases of fraud, waste and abuse to RMA. Producers can report suspected cases to FSA or RMA.

CCC-633-EZ REMINDER

The Farm Service Agency currently uses the CCC-633-EZ form. It's a one size fits all form you can fill out to indicate your intention to receive loan deficiency payments for all your crops at the beginning of the crop year, long before you've lost beneficial interest.

The same form is then used to submit a request for an LDP any time during the loan/LDP availability period before or after losing beneficial interest.

For the 2006 crop year, the CCC-633 EZ and eLDP online requests are the only methods available to request LDPs.

Selected Interest Rates for June 2007

90-Day Treasury Bill	5.000%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	5.125%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	5.375%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	4.000%
Emergency Loans	5.125%
Farm Storage Facility Loans	4.625%
Sugar Storage Facility Loans	4.875%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	5.875%

FSA's 2007 National Compliance and Spot Check Review

FSA is committed to delivering accurate program payments to America's agricultural producers. The accuracy of payments not only benefits farmers and ranchers, but also maximizes taxpayer dollars and government efficiency.

As part of the 2007 National Compliance Review, FSA's national office is requiring local FSA county offices to conduct compliance reviews and spot checks of certain producers selected by the national office through a statistical sampling method. A statistical sample of FSA employees, County Committee (COC) and State Committee (STC) members have also been selected for review using this same process.

FSA may review a producer's operations in multiple states and counties, depending on the scope of the producer's operations. FSA will review both the accuracy of the representations made by the selected producers in connection with participation in FSA programs as well as the producer's compliance with applicable program requirements. The reviews may need to be conducted at various times throughout the year depending on the FSA Programs in which the producer is participating. FSA appreciates the cooperation of its customers as the agency continues to enhance its operations.

FSA's goal is to ensure that program dollars are delivered effectively and efficiently so America's farmers and ranchers can provide safe and abundant food, fiber and fuel for consumers at home and abroad.

United States Department of Agriculture
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 Sonoma-Marin County FSA Office
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Dates to Remember	
July 4th	Independence Day Holiday
July 15th	Acreage Reports Due
August 1st	COC Nominations Close
August 3 rd	DCP Sign Up Deadline

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (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, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C., 20250-9410, or call 202-720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

