



# Pinal County

Newsletter  
December, 2008



## USDA Service Center

Pinal FSA Office  
520 N Camino Mercado  
Suite 10  
Casa Grande, AZ 85222

Phone: (520) 836-1960  
FAX: (520) 836-1297

## Office Hours

Monday - Friday  
7:30 am - 4:00 pm

## County Committee

Don England, Jr., Chair  
Daniel Nowlin, V-Chair  
John O Nevitt, Member  
Alex Blaine, Advisor  
Vince LaPaglia, Advisor

## Farm Programs Staff

Debbie Hopkins, CED  
Lori Emmert, PT  
Shirley Ciskowski, PT  
Michelle Ontiveros, PT  
Angie Carranza, PT  
Kathy Fanning, PT

## Farm Loan Staff

Shawnee Stevenson, FLM  
Kent Erickson, FLO  
Patrick Fox, FLPT

## IN THIS ISSUE

Election Ballots Due

We Support our men and  
women in the  
Armed Forces



*May Peace and Joy fill your homes during this*



*Holiday*

*Season*

*From the staff*

*Of Pinal County Farm Service Agency*

*Debbie Hopkins, CED*

*Angie Carranza*

*Shirley Mallory*

*Lori Emmert*

*Patrick Fox*

*Kathy Fanning*

*Michelle Ontiveros*

*Kent Erickson, FLO*

*Shawneen Stevenson, FLM*

## County Committee Elections

Ballots were mailed in November to eligible voters, and must be returned to the county office by the close of business on Dec. 1, or postmarked by midnight Dec. 1, 2008.

Agricultural producers of legal voting age can vote if they participate or cooperate in any FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises and conducts the farming operations on an entire farm can also vote.

No one can be denied the right to vote because of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital or family status.

For additional clarification about county committee elections, contact your local county office staff. Ballots will be counted December 8<sup>th</sup> during County Committee Meeting

TV Converter Box Coupon Program

P O Box 2000, Portland, OR 97208-2000 \* by mail

Apply online: [www.DTV2009.gov](http://www.DTV2009.gov)

Apply by phone: 1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009)

Deaf or hard of hearing callers: English 1-877-530-2634 TTY

Spanish 1-866-495-1161 TTY

FAX: 1-877-DTV-4ME2

**Deadline: March 31, 2009**

## Beginning Farmers & Ranchers

If you are a farmer or rancher who has substantially participated in the farming operation for at least three years but no more than 10 years, you may qualify for beginning farmer targeted loan funds with the Farm Service Agency.

The program is designed to assist these farmers by providing direct and guaranteed loans when they are unable to obtain financing from commercial credit sources.

If you believe this program could be of benefit to you, please contact the county office for more information. FSA loan officials will be happy to arrange an appointment to meet with you and discuss your options.

## NAP Coverage – Plan for 2009

The Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) was designed to reduce financial losses that occur when natural disasters cause a catastrophic loss of production or prevented planting of an eligible crop by providing coverage equivalent to catastrophic (CAT) insurance. Statute limits NAP to each commercial crop or agricultural commodity, except livestock, for which CAT is not available.

The application deadline date for the 2009 coverage on fall seeded crops has been extended to **December 1, 2008**. In order to be eligible for disaster assistance programs, like SURE, producers are required to timely purchase, at a minimum, CAT coverage for all insurable crops and/or NAP coverage for all non-insurable crops on their entire farm.

NAP coverage for 2009 costs \$250 per crop, but not more than \$750 per producer per county, or not more than \$2250 total per producer for all counties.

Producers who already have coverage on 2008 NAP crops may choose to continue coverage on the same crop or crops for 2009, if the applicable service fee is submitted by the application closing date. A new CCC-471, application for coverage is not required to be signed when applying for continuous coverage of the same crop or crops.

## SURE Online Calculator

The 2008 Farm Bill includes a new disaster program known as the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) Program. For your convenience, FSA has placed a SURE calculator on its Web site at:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/fbapp?area=home&subject=landing&topic=landing>.

The calculator and instructions can be easily downloaded. Once the download is made, you will be able to calculate your estimated SURE Guarantee, estimated Expected Revenue, estimated Farm Revenue and estimated SURE payment.

**The calculator is a tool to help with calculations for SURE, it is not the approved software to compute and provide actual payment information.**

By using the calculator, producers and others may begin familiarizing themselves with SURE calculations which allows them to run various scenarios based on basic levels of insurance coverage versus buy up levels of insurance coverage. It is important to note that this calculator only addresses yield based crops and does not address value loss crops or those plans of insurance that are revenue based. It does not include calculations for situations such as prevented planting, first crop-second crop, or other scenarios.

***Note, FSA reminds users that the calculator and instructions are for informational purposes only. This calculator in no way provides exact FSA payments under SURE.***

## Farm Loan Year End Reviews

Producers that have a farm loan with FSA are reminded they must provide data for their Year-End Analysis (YEA) to their loan officer each year. Borrowers are urged to provide this information timely so that their files can be maintained. The office will contact you for the data you will need to provide us.

## Applications for FSA Farm Loan Assistance

Farmers and ranchers that intend to apply to the Farm Service Agency for loan assistance for the upcoming crop year are encouraged to file their applications as early as possible. Filing early will help ensure that your loan is processed and approved as early as possible so that planting decisions can be made. Failure to apply early can result in a delay in processing loans due to the volume of applications that must be processed in date order. Contact your local FSA Farm Loan Manager or Officer for more details and assistance in applying.

## Operating Loan Applications Needed Now

Farmers that plan to apply to the Farm Service Agency for annual operating loan assistance this year are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. The earlier an application for loan assistance is filed, the quicker the FSA staff can process your request. In addition, due to budget constraints, farmers that wait until later in the year to apply, often run the risk of finding out that our funding allocations have been utilized already. Farmers should also contact their FSA Farm Loan Manager or Officer for information as to what is required in order to have a complete loan application on file. Decisions on loans can not be made until a complete application is received.

## Online Services

Producers, if you have Internet access you can electronically log on, fill out and print a variety of FSA paper forms in the comfort of your home as your schedule allows. You can also register for secure electronic access that will allow you to electronically sign and transmit some forms directly to the county office staff. If you are new to the website, first you will want to obtain a Level 2 USDA Service Center Customer ID and password at: <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/> and then click on "Create an Account Page" link.

USDA eAuthentication is the system used by USDA agencies to enable customers to obtain accounts that will allow them to access USDA Web applications and services via the Internet. This includes things such as submitting forms electronically, completing surveys online, and checking the status of your USDA accounts.

If you already have a Customer ID and password, then click on the following eForms website at: <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainervlet> and then click on the "Sign In" button. A disclaimer window will open and after you read the "Warning message" click on the "Continue" button.

Then the USDA Web services page will open to the eAuthentication login page. Enter your login User ID and password and then click on the "Login" button. To sign and transmit forms electronically, you must sign-up and get a User ID and password.

Submitting an e-Form is convenient. You can access information anytime day or night seven days a week. It's faster and forms and applications can be submitted and received in the county office in a matter of minutes, not days or weeks.

## Changing Banks

Almost all Farm Service Agency payments are made electronically using **Direct Deposit**. This innovation has cut down on the number of missing and late payments and reduced the time required to move funds. It has been calculated that having a problem with a payment is 20 times greater with checks than with Direct Deposit. Another benefit is that Direct Deposit to your account can be made within 48 hours.

To keep the system running smoothly, it's critical to keep the county office staff up to date on changes you might make in your financial institutions.

If you have changed accounts or institutions that might affect the direct deposit of your FSA payments, contact the FSA county office so we can update our files to insure continued uninterrupted service.

***It is predicted that all future payments will not be issued from your local county office as in the past. The payments will be web based and will come from USDA payment center in Kansas City. To expedite your payments, please have a correct Direct Deposit on File in your Local FSA Office.***



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Pinal County Farm Service Agency  
520 N Camino Mercado, Suite 10  
Casa Grande, AZ 85222-5754

## IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES

December 1<sup>st</sup> Election Ballots Due

December 8<sup>th</sup> Pinal County Committee Meeting

FSA Homepage: [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)  
Arizona State FSA Homepage: [www.fsa.usda.gov/edso/az/az.htm](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/edso/az/az.htm)  
USDA eCommerce Home (forms web site): <http://www.sc.egov.usda.gov/Main.asp>

**NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT:** The United States 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, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the county office at the phone number listed above.

To file a complaint, write the Secretary of Agriculture, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250, or call (202) 720-7327 (voice) or (202) 720-1127 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Special accommodations will be made, upon request, for persons with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment upon request. If accommodations are required, please call Debbie Hopkins, CED, at 520/836-2028