



Pinal County

Newsletter

January, 2010



USDA Service Center

Pinal FSA Office
520 N Camino Mercado
Suite 10
Casa Grande, AZ 85122

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

Office Hours

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

County Committee

Mark Hamilton, Chair
Daniel Nowlin, V-Chair
John O Nevitt, Member
Alex Blaine, 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

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

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We Proudly
Support our Men
and Women in the
Armed Forces.



DCP Signup Continues

Signup for the 2010 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment (DCP) Program continues until the **June 1, 2010 deadline.**
USDA will not accept any late-filed applications.

The electronic DCP (or eDCP) service will save you time, reduce paperwork and speed up contract processing at FSA offices. It is available to anyone eligible to participate in the DCP Program. To access this on-line service, you must have an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires filling out an online registration form at <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov> followed by a visit to the local USDA Service Center for identity verification.

Producers eligible for the DCP Program are also able to enroll in the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program or the Counter-cyclical Program. The enrollment period for the ACRE Program will begin in the spring. You may first enroll in the DCP Program, receive advance direct payments and then later modify your enrollment to the ACRE program or you may wait and elect to enroll in DCP and ACRE at the same time in spring 2010.

Producers will be required to complete New Adjusted Gross Income Documents for 2010.

It is imperative you call the office to schedule your appointment for enrollment.



2010

County Committee Election Results

We would like to express our appreciation for those who took the time and effort to vote in this year's County Committee Election. We are especially thankful to the candidates who showed dedication to the FSA Committee system by agreeing to run for the Committee position in Local Administrative Area 1 (Northeast Pinal County)

- John O. Nevitt, County Committee Member
- 1st Alternate, Mark Pace
- 2nd Alternate, Jamie Shaw
- Alex Blaine Advisor, pending State appointment confirmation.

County Committee members meet on January 20th to elect Chairman and Vice Chairman for duration of term.

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

EMERGENCY LIVESTOCK ASSISTANCE (ELAP)

Provides compensation to eligible producers of livestock, honey bees, and farm-raised fish for losses due to disease, adverse weather, or other loss conditions, including losses due to blizzards and wildfire that are not covered by LIP, LFP, or SURE. (This includes native pasture that is on non-federally owned lands [Privately owned & State Land])

LIVESTOCK FORAGE DISASTER PROGRAM (LFP)

Payments are available to producers of covered livestock for grazing losses due to: Drought conditions or Fire on rangeland managed by a Federal Agency, if the eligible livestock producer is prohibited from grazing the normal permitted livestock on the managed rangeland.

To be eligible for LFP, the producer must have purchased or obtained the following for the grazing land incurring the losses for which assistance is being requested:

- A policy or plan of insurance under the Federal Crop Insurance Act, including pilot programs such as the Pasture, Rangeland, and Forage Program.
- Non-Insured Crop Assistance Program (NAP) coverage by filing the required paperwork, and paying the administrative fee by the applicable State filing deadline.

If you do not have NAP coverage for 2009, please contact your FSA office for 'Equitable Relief Provisions' for 2009 Crop Year.

*LIVESTOCK DISASTER PROGRAM DEADLINE IS
JANUARY 30TH, 2010*

HELP AVAILABLE TO STRESSED FARMERS

In the past year, the economy, inclement weather, drought and other factors have hurt many farming operations around the country. These events pushed some farmers to the emotional breaking point. Watching their livelihood being threatened is difficult for farmers and ranchers and especially for those who care about them.

The National Suicide Prevention Hotline is available to help. If you know a farmer or rancher who is under stress and is reluctant to ask for help, or if you just need to talk to someone, call 1-800-273-TALK (8255). Your call will be routed to the crisis center nearest you, where trained staffers are available 24/7. This nationwide service is free and confidential. Help is just a phone call away.

For more information, visit

<http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>. This service is not affiliated with the US Department of Agriculture.

AGI AND ACTIVELY ENGAGED

USDA has finalized a Memorandum of Understanding with the Internal Revenue Service to establish an electronic information exchange process for verifying compliance with the adjusted gross income (AGI) provisions for farm programs. Written consent will be required from each producer or payment recipient for the tax review process. No actual tax data will be included in the report that IRS sends to USDA.

This agreement will ensure that payments are not issued to producers whose AGI exceeds certain limits. The limits set in the 2008 Farm Bill are \$500,000 nonfarm average AGI for commodity and disaster programs; \$750,000 farm average AGI for direct payments; and \$1 million nonfarm average AGI for conservation programs.

Participants in CCC programs subject to average AGI rules **must annually certify their eligibility to receive benefits** by either submitting a statement from a certified public accountant or an attorney, or by completing form CCC-926. This form may be obtained from local FSA and NRCS offices or online at: <http://forms.sc.gov.usda.gov/eforms/mainservlet>.

USDA has amended the rules that govern the requirements to be 'actively engaged' in farming. These rules apply to eligibility for payments under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) or Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) program administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

Every stockholder or member of a legal entity, such as a corporation, does not have to contribute labor or management if both of the following apply:

at least half of the interest in the legal entity is held by stockholders or members who are providing active personal labor or active personal management that altogether qualifies as a significant contribution to the farming operation;

total direct payments received, both directly and indirectly, by the legal entity and each of the members does not exceed \$40,000.

Controlled Substance

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium, poppies and other drug producing plants.



Items to review:

- Changes in Banking/Direct Deposit
- Address & Phone number
- Change in ownership/leases
- Signature Authority/ a change in how you operate under the new Farm Bill

Any of the above could delay your payments.

Please notify the office of any changes so we might update our records.

FOREIGN BUYERS NOTIFICATION

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA. All individuals who are not U.S. citizens, and have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form (FSA-153) could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, Realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

NAP (Non-Insured Assistance Program) Reminder

NAP Coverage Sales Closing Date

2010 Crop Year Sales (Application) Closing Dates are set by the state committee. Producers are required to apply for the NAP program prior to these dates in order to remain eligible for payments.

- **January 31, 2010**

Cucumbers, Grapes, Bermuda & Sudan Grasses, Herbs, Basil, Jojoba, Pecans, Chile Peppers and Raisins.

- **February 28, 2010**

Pinto Beans, Corn, Cotton, Okra, Olives, Peanut, Swt Potato, Pumpkins, Sorghum, and Squash.

Producers are reminded of these dates to ensure continued eligibility for the 2010 crop year.

Producers must: (1) Annually provide records of crop acreage, crop yields, and production evidence for NAP crop to be eligible; (2) Inform FSA **within 15 days of the date any disaster condition occurred or damage to the crop became apparent.** ****Producers must file this form even if they intend to harvest the crop.**

SURE SIGNUP FOR CROP PRODUCTION LOSS

Signup for the 2008 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments program (SURE) began on January 4, 2010. SURE 2008 for those who suffered crop production losses during crop year 2008.

SURE provides crop disaster assistance payments to eligible producers on farms that have incurred crop production or crop quality losses. The program takes into consideration crop losses on all crops grown by a producer nationwide. SURE provides assistance in an amount equal to 60 percent of the difference between the SURE farm guarantee and total farm revenue. The farm guarantee is based on the amount of crop insurance and Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage on the farm. Total farm revenue takes into account the actual value of production on the farm as well as insurance indemnities and certain farm program payments.

Producers with a farming interest physically located in a county that was declared a primary disaster county or contiguous county by the Agriculture Secretary must have suffered at *least a 10 percent* production loss on a crop of economic significance. Producers must meet the risk management purchase requirement by either obtaining a policy or plan of insurance, under the Federal Crop Insurance Act or NAP coverage, for all economically significant crops. Producers considered socially disadvantaged, a beginning farmer or rancher, or a limited resource farmer may be eligible for SURE without a policy or plan of insurance or NAP coverage.

If there is no Secretarial Disaster Designation, individual producers may also be eligible for SURE if the actual production on the farm is *less than 50 percent* of the normal production on the farm due to a natural disaster. For SURE, a farm is defined as all crops in which a producer had an interest nationwide.

For more information on the new SURE program, please visit the county office or <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

Pinal County FSA Office Closure:

January 19th Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday

Office will re-open January 20th

February 16th President Washington's Birthday, office re-opens February 17th



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Pinal County Farm Service Agency
520 N Camino Mercado, Suite 10
Casa Grande, AZ 85122-5754



IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES

- January 19th Office Closed Holiday Observed
20st Pinal County Committee Meeting
30th Livestock Disaster Program Deadline
31st NAP Closing Date
February 15th Office Closed Holiday Observed
17th Pinal County Committee Meeting
28th NAP Closing Date

June 1st deadline to enroll in DCP/CC Program *no late file available

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

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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