

**March 2010**

# ***Yuma/La Paz County News***

**Yuma/La Paz County  
USDA Service Center**

**Yuma/La Paz County  
FSA**

2197 S. 4<sup>th</sup> AVE #104  
Yuma, AZ 85364  
928-782-0860 (phone)  
928-782-0930 (fax)  
www.fsa.usda.gov/\*\*

**Hours**

Monday - Friday  
7:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**County Committee**

Mike Blohm  
Bill Daily  
Joe Martinez  
Nathan Rovey  
Jesus Tovar

County Committee meets  
2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of month

**Staff**

James Reinertson (CED)  
Barb Erlemann  
Brenda Raney  
Raney Brown



**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.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainser.vlet>

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 person-

al labor or active personal management that altogether qualifies as a significant contribution to the farming operation;

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

**SURE SIGNUP FOR CROP PRODUCTION  
LOSS**

Signup for the 2008 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments program (SURE) began on January 4, 2010. SURE 2008 is 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>.

### **DAIRY ECONOMIC LOSS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

The Dairy Economic Loss Assistance Program (DELAP) provides a one-time payment to assist dairy producers who have recently experienced low milk prices and high production costs.

No application to receive DELAP program benefits is required if a dairy operation or producer's records are currently available in a Farm Service Agency (FSA) county office from previous participation in a fiscal year 2009 dairy program administered by the agency. FSA will use existing production data maintained by the FSA county office for the months of February through July 2009 to calculate and issue payments.

Dairy producers who do not have production records at the FSA county office, and who have not been contacted to obtain such data for the months of February through July 2009, may apply to receive DELAP benefits during the 30-day application period beginning Dec. 17, 2009. The deadline to submit requests for DELAP program benefits was January 19, 2010.

DELAP eligibility requirements are available at the county office or on line at [http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA\\_File/delap09.pdf](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/delap09.pdf)

### **MARKETING ASSISTANCE LOANS**

Marketing Assistance Loans for crop years 2009 through 2012 are available to producers who share in the risk of producing the crop. To be eligible, you must maintain beneficial interest in the crop through the time of application. Beneficial interest means retaining the ability to make decisions about the commodity; re-

sponsibility for loss or damage to the commodity; and title to the commodity. Once beneficial interest in a commodity is lost, the commodity is ineligible for loan even if you regain beneficial interest

Commodity loan eligibility also requires you comply with conservation and wetland protection requirements; beneficial interest requirements, report how you use cropland acreage on the farm and ensure that the commodity meets Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) minimum grade and quality standards. For commodities to be eligible they must have been produced by an eligible producer, be in existence and in a storable condition and be merchantable for food, feed or other uses as determined by CCC. The quality of the commodity in farm storage must be maintained throughout the term of the loan.

Producers do not have to participate in the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program to be eligible for commodity loans.

Violating provisions of a marketing assistance loan may trigger administrative actions, such as assessing liquidated damages, calling the loan and denial of future farm-stored loans.

The most common violations are removing or disposing of a commodity being used as loan collateral without prior authorization and providing an incorrect quantity certification.

### **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, go to <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>. This service is not affiliated with the US Department



of Agriculture.

### **COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTION RESULTS**

Congratulations to Jesus Tovar & Rosario Hurtado!

Jesus was re-elected to represent farmers from LAA 1 on the county committee. Jesus was elected to his 3rd consecutive term. Rosario was elected to represent farmers from LAA 4. Rosario was elected to his 1<sup>st</sup> year term.

The election results for Local Administrative Area [#] are:

Jesus Tovar — Elected to the county committee (COC),

Rosario Hurtado-Elected to the county committee (COC)

Joe Martinez - 1<sup>st</sup> alternate to COC,

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.

The committee members will hold their organizational meeting soon to determine who will serve as the county committee chairman and vice-chairman.

### **UPDATE:**

Mr. Hurtado was asked to chair the State Committee, Joe Martinez was 1<sup>st</sup> alternate for LAA 4 therefore he replaced Mr. Hurtado on the COC. Welcome Joe.

### **BANK ACCOUNT CHANGES**

Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into your bank account. In order for timely payments to be made, producers need to notify the FSA county office if your account has been changed or if another financial institution purchases your bank. Payments can be delayed if the FSA office is not aware of updates to your account and routing numbers.

### **SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS**

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision

impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the county FSA office staff directly or by phone.

### **APPEAL PROCESS**

After an FSA official makes a decision on your request for USDA services or application, you will be sent a letter informing you of the decision and options you can pursue if you disagree.

Generally, program participants have three choices — an informal review with the original agency decision-maker, an opportunity for mediation and finally an appeal to the next level of authority within the agency.

### **FSA SIGNATURE POLICY**

Husbands and wives may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation programs in which either has an interest. This option is automatically available unless a written request for exclusion is made to the county office staff by either spouse.

There are exceptions to the rule, where spouses may not sign on behalf of each other for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations or other similar entities

Individual signatures are also required on certain Farm Loan Program and Farm Storage Facility Loan documents.

For more clarification on spousal signature authority, feel free to contact your local FSA office.

### **CUSTOMER STATEMENT**

January signals the beginning of a new year, and a time to starting thinking about filing taxes. Producers who have signed up for a USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account will be able to access their farm data via their Customer Statement

The Customer Statement puts a range of USDA services and programs into a single report that's at your fingertips and available online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week

It allows USDA customers to view their participation, application and payment status in various commodity and conservation programs; information on farm loans; and conservation plan and land unit information.

Visit our Web site:  
[http://www.fsa.usda/\\*\\*](http://www.fsa.usda/**)



[Name] County FSA Office  
Address Line 2  
Address Line 3



PRESORTED STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
CITY, STATE  
PERMIT #XXX

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Selected Interest Rates for April 2008	
90-Day Treasury Bill	2.25 %
Farm Operating - Direct	3.250 %
Farm Ownership - Direct	4.875 %
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	4.00 %
Emergency	3.750%

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