January 2011

Humboldt /Del Norte California Farm Service Agency

5630 S. Broadway
Eureka, CA 95503
707-442-6058 x 2 phone
707-442-7514 fax
www.fsa.usda.gov/CA

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

FSA Office Staff

Katie Delbar,
County Executive Director

Dolores Mayorga

Farm Loan Team

Belle Davis,
Farm Loan Manager

Karri Bartolomei,
Farm Loan Officer Trainee

Danya Hildebrand

Humboldt Del/Norte County Committee:

Peter Bussman

Patrick Fulton

Joey Borges

Richard Wetherell

Gary Belli

Kara Miller

Happy New Year and Welcome 2011!

SURE Signup

Signup for the 2009 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) began Jan. 10, 2011. SURE provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters. For SURE, all crops must be covered by crop insurance, NAP or eligible for waivers.
A farm enrolled in SURE is eligible when either:

- a portion of the farm is located in a county covered by a qualifying natural disaster declaration (USDA Secretarial Declarations only) or a contiguous county; or,
- the actual production is less than 50% of the normal production.

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Gary Belli! Gary was elected to represent farmers from Ferndale, Petrolia and Southern Humboldt County on the committee. Gary was elected to his 1st consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area [5] are:

Gary Belli- Elected to the county committee (COC)

Congratulations to Patrick Fulton! Patrick was re-elected to represent farmers from Loleta, Eureka and central Humboldt County on the committee. Gary was elected to his 2nd consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area [4] are:

Patrick Fulton - Elected to the county committee (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 in February to determine who will serve as the county committee chairman and vice-chairman.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

The noninsured crop disaster assistance program (NAP) is a federally funded program that helps producers reduce their risk when growing food and fiber crops, specialty crops and crops for livestock feed. These benefits are only available for crops for which the catastrophic level of crop insurance is not available. Application for coverage must be filed by the applicable crop's application closing date.
Production records for all crops must be reported to FSA no later than the acreage reporting date for the crop for the following year. FSA requires that any production reported in a loss year be verifiable according to Agency specifications. *NAP Losses must be reported within 15 days of loss.*

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. FSA 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.

Farming Operation Changes

If you have bought or sold land, or if you have added or dropped rented land from your operation, make sure you report the changes to the office as soon as possible. You need to provide a copy of your deed or recorded land contract for purchased property. Failure to maintain accurate records with FSA on all land you have an interest in can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. Making the record changes now will save you time in the spring. Update signature authorization when changes in the operation occur. Producers are reminded to contact the office of a change in operations on a farm so that records can be kept current and accurate.

Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation Compliance

Landowners and operators are reminded that in order to receive payments from USDA, compliance with Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions are required. Farmers with HEL determined soils are reminded of tillage, crop residue, and rotation requirements as specified per their conservation plan.

Producers are to notify the USDA Farm Service Agency prior to conducting land clearing or drainage projects to insure compliance. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in the loss of eligibility and all Federal payments.

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.

Power of Attorney

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., FSA has a power of attorney form available that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. If you are interested, please contact our office or any FSA office near you for more information.

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.

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.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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.

Farm Loan Programs

The Farm Service Agency is committed to providing family farmers with loans to meet their farm credit needs. If you are having trouble getting the credit you need for your farm, or regularly borrow from FSA, direct and guaranteed loans are currently available.

Ask your lender about an FSA loan guarantee if you've had a setback and your lender is reluctant to extend or renew your loan.

IRS Form 1099-G

Producers annually receive CCC-1099-Gs detailing payments producers have received from the Commodity Credit Corporation. The annual report of program payments on CCC-1099-Gs is a service intended to help our customers report taxable income. It is not intended to replace the producers' responsibilities to report income to IRS.

FSA staff cannot interpret IRS regulations or advise producers about which payments to report on their income tax returns. However, county office staff can review payments for accuracy.

CA Small Farm Conference

Beginning and smaller farmers note that the 2011 California Small Farm Conference will be held this year March 6-8 in San Jose. Scholarships for expenses are available with a deadline for applications on January 10, 2011. For further information about workshops and a program schedule visit www.californiafarmconference.com

According to the website: "The California Small Farm Conference is the state's premier gathering of small farmers, agricultural students, farmers' market managers and others involved in the small farm industry. The three day educational conference includes day-long short courses and on-farm tours; focused workshops; engaging keynote addresses and numerous networking opportunities. Everything you need to plan a Big Future."

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 your 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.

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USDA United States Department of Agriculture

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Interest Rates January 2011	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating - Direct	1.750%
Farm Ownership - Direct	4.500%
Conservation Loan	4.500%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.500%
Emergency – Actual Loss	3.750%

Dates to Remember	
Jan. 17	Martin Luther King's Birthday
Feb. 21	George Washington's Birthday
Mar. 1	NAP Closing date for Annuals
Mar. 6-8	CA Small Farm Conf. San Jose