

# Farm Service Agency

Imperial County

## FSA NEWS

July 2008

**Address:**

USDA Service Center  
177 N. Imperial Avenue  
El Centro CA 92243

**Telephone:**

(760) 352-3531 ext. 2  
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**Web Sites:**

FSA: [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)  
USDA: [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)  
Farm Bill:  
[www.usda.gov.farmbill](http://www.usda.gov.farmbill)

**Hours:**

Monday-Friday  
8:00 AM-4:30 PM

**County Committee:**

Curt Corda  
Gary Mamer  
Mike Palmer

**Advisor:**

Raul Rodriguez, Jr.

**County Executive**

**Director:**

Rosalinda Singh

**Staff:**

Carmen Perez, PT  
Julia Contreras, PT  
Rogelio Araujo, PT

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### NOTICE: 2008 Disaster Programs Requires Crop Insurance or NAP Coverage

#### Eligibility “Buy-In” Deadline is September 16, 2008

The recently-enacted Farm Bill legislates 2008 disaster programs covering losses to crops, trees/vines/bushes, forage, and other losses due to adverse weather. These programs require the crops you planted, grew, produced or were prevented from planting to have been covered by federal crop insurance or FSA’s Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). *All of your crops on all of your acreage must be covered, not only those acres that suffered losses.*

Due to the late passage of the Farm Bill on May 22, 2008, you will be given an opportunity to “buy-in” to the disaster program by paying a \$100/crop catastrophic crop insurance or NAP service fee for any 2008 crops that are not already covered by crop insurance or NAP.

This eligibility “buy-in” must be completed by September 16, 2008 at your FSA Office to satisfy the requirement for total CI/NAP coverage. Note that it does not provide you with crop insurance indemnities or NAP benefits. Once this requirement is met, you may be eligible for one or more of the following 2008 programs:

- **Supplemental Revenue Program (SURE):** Covers crop revenue losses from quantity or quality deficiencies in disaster declared counties, contiguous counties, or in cases where the overall production loss exceeds 50%.
- **Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP):** Compensates livestock owners for forage losses due to drought. Additionally, losses due to wildfire will be covered on public lands.
- **Tree Assistance Program (TAP):** Provides for partial reimbursement for replanting, salvage, pruning, debris removal and land preparation for orchardists and nursery tree growers if losses exceed 15%.
- **Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish (EALHF):** Emergency relief to producers of livestock (including horses), honey bees, and farm-raised fish. Covers losses from disasters such as adverse weather or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires not adequately covered by any other disaster program. This program is authorized at the discretion of the Secretary.

Another 2008 disaster program authorized by the Farm Bill is the **Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)** for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality. This is the only disaster program that **does not** require crop insurance or NAP. *(Continued on Page 2 – 2008 Disaster Programs)*

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Further details of all of these disaster programs, including signup information, will be provided at a later date. Note that additional requirements exist for disaster programs eligibility.

**Bottom Line:** To be eligible for Disaster Programs in 2008, you must pay the fees for the eligibility buy-in at your FSA Office by **September 16, 2008**. Contact this office for more information.

### ***County Committee Nomination Deadline***

County committees play a crucial role in helping county office staff implement the 2008 Farm Bill. Due to the importance of County Committee members and their roles, producers are encouraged to participate in the 2008 FSA County Committee election process by nominating an eligible candidate by the **August 1, 2008** deadline.



FSA County Committee members make decisions on disaster and conservation programs, emergency programs, commodity price support loan programs and other important agricultural issues. Nationwide, there are more than 7,800 farmers and ranchers serving on FSA County Committees. Committees consist of three to five members who are elected by eligible local producers.

The area served by our County Committee is divided up into three Local Administrative Areas (LAAs). One member on the committee represents each LAA and serves a 3-year term. Each year, an election is held in an LAA to replace the committee member whose three-year term is expiring. This year, LAA #3 (Bard/Winterhaven/Palo Verde area) is up for election.

To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign form FSA-669A. The form and other valuable information about FSA county committee elections are available online at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>; click on News & Events, then County Committee Elections. Nomination forms for the 2008 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on **August 1, 2008**.

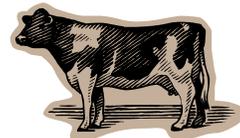
Individuals may nominate themselves or others as candidates. Also, organizations representing socially disadvantaged minorities and women farmers or ranchers may also nominate candidates.

FSA will mail ballots to producers beginning November 3, 2008. The voted ballots are due back at the local county office either via mail or in person by December 1, 2008. Newly elected committee members and alternates take office January 1, 2009.

If you are interested in being a candidate in this year's election, please contact our office before August 1<sup>st</sup> to request a nomination form. Nomination forms are also available at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>. Spanish versions are also available.

### ***Signup Deadline for the 2005, 2006, and 2007 Livestock Programs***

Livestock owners have until July 18, 2008, to enroll in the 2005 - 2007 **Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)**. Signup began on September 10, 2007. This program provides financial aid to livestock producers who suffered livestock losses due to natural disasters from January 1, 2005 to December 31, 2007.



To be eligible for LIP you must enroll by close of business **July 18, 2008**. No late filed applications will be accepted!

If you would like to apply, feel free to call our office at (760) 352-3531 ext. 2.

### ***Signup Underway for 2008 DCP***

The Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 authorized the 2008 Direct & Counter-cyclical Program (DCP). Producers have until **September 30, 2008** to sign up for the 2008 DCP.



FSA computes DCP payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2008, eligible producers may request to receive an advance payment of 22 percent of the direct payment for each commodity associated with the farm. FSA will issue advance direct payments as soon as practical after enrollment. Final direct payments will be issued after October 1, 2008. Counter-cyclical payments vary depending on market prices, and are issued only when the effective price for a commodity is below its target price (which takes into account the direct payment rate, market price and loan rate).

Sign-up period for 2008 DCP is very short, so please contact this office as soon as possible to schedule an appointment to complete this very important task.

## **Crop Disaster Program**

Signup underway for Quality Losses



Signup for quality losses under the Crop Disaster Program (CDP) began on June 23, 2008. Producers can apply for crop quality losses at their local FSA office.

County FSA Offices have been conducting sign up since last fall for *quantity losses* for the 2005-2007 crops, and now we are ready to conduct sign up for *quality losses*.

The CDP provides benefits to farmers who suffered losses to their 2005-2007 crops from natural disasters and related conditions. Producers who incurred qualifying quantity or quality losses in 2005, 2006 or 2007 may receive benefits for only one of these years. However, producers may apply for benefits for losses to multiple crops as long as the losses occurred in the same crop year.

Only producers who obtained crop insurance coverage or coverage under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the year of loss will be eligible for CDP benefits. Producers must have suffered quality losses of at least 25 percent to be eligible for CDP Quality Loss. Producers may receive assistance for both quantity and quality losses. However, the total quantity and quality assistance, together with any crop insurance or NAP payment received for the same crop and the value of the crop production not lost, must not exceed 95 percent of the total value of the crop absent the disaster. For all eligibility requirements or addition information, contact your local FSA office.

## **Farm Reconstitutions**

In Farm Service Agency terms, farms are **constituted** to group all tracts having the same owner and the same operator under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation take place, a farm **reconstitution** is necessary.

The reconstitution—or recon—is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. To be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by **August 1** for farms enrolled in the Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program. If 2008 DCP direct payments have already been issued on the farm, the reconstitution will be effective for 2009 unless the payments are refunded. Also reconstituted farms must re-enroll in the DCP **within 30 days**, but no later than **September 30, 2008**.

## **New Crop Certification Deadline**

For 2008, the final crop acreage reporting date for all crops other than small grains has been extended to **August 15, 2008**. Late fees will not be applied if acreage reports are filed by August 15 and all other reporting requirements are met. Filing an accurate and timely report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent loss of benefits for a variety of Farm Service Agency programs.

## **FSA Farm Loans**

The new Farm Bill provides increased limits on loans through FSA's Farm Loan Program. The maximum loan amount authorized for direct Farm Ownership (FO) loans and direct Operating Loans (OL) has been increased from \$200,000 to \$300,000.

In the FO program, the maximum loan term for the revised down payment program has been extended from 15 years to 20 years. Changes in the Down Payment Program mean the required down payment amount has been reduced from 10 percent to 5 percent and interest rates have been reduced to as low as 1.5% depending on the present FO interest rate. This program allows the agency to loan up to 45% of the purchase price with another lender providing 50% of the financing and the applicant contributing 5%.

FSA makes both direct and guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans to family-size farmers and ranchers who cannot obtain commercial credit from a bank, Farm Credit System institution or other lender. FSA loans can be used to purchase land, livestock, equipment, feed, seed and supplies. The loans can also be used to construct buildings or make farm improvements.

If you're having trouble getting commercial credit, check with FSA farm loan staff @ **661 336 0967 XT2** about an FSA loan.

## **Dates to Remember**

<b>July 18, 2008</b>	LIP Deadline
<b>August 1, 2008</b>	County Committee Nomination Deadline
<b>August 1, 2008</b>	Reconstitution Deadline
<b>August 15</b>	2008 Acreage Reports Deadline
<b>Sept. 16, 2008</b>	Disaster Eligibility Buy-In Deadline for 2008
<b>Sept. 30, 2008</b>	DCP Deadline
<b>Continues</b>	CDP 2005-2007 Sign Ups

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Farm Service Agency  
Imperial County FSA Office  
177 North Imperial Avenue  
El Centro CA 92243

# Important 2008 Farm Bill Information Inside

Visit our Web site at: [www.fsa.usda.gov/ca](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ca)

## SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS

Special accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impaired, or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, please call our office at (760) 352-3531.

## CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLAINT PROCESS

Any person, class or group of persons may file a discrimination complaint within 180 days of an alleged discriminatory action. Complaints may be filed in writing or orally with the agency head, any designated agency official or the Secretary of Agriculture, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250. Assistance in filing a complaint can be obtained by calling or visiting any FSA office.

*The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance programs. (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, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202)-720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*