



March, 2012

Kern county FSA News

A Thank You to Kern County Producers

It is with mixed emotions which I am writing this article. As of March 2, 2012 I will be retiring from the USDA-Farm Service Agency after 31 years of service between Tulare & Kern Counties, 18 of which were spent in Kern.

It has been a great pleasure serving the farmers and ranchers of Kern County and a wonderful experience I will always treasure. I have seen fathers retire and sons and daughters take over the business. Others, farming is their life and still loving every minute of it. You are special people that put love, blood, sweat and dedication into farming. I have learned so much from all of you which is priceless knowledge both personal and business, and I thank you all for that.

I will miss working with all of you and hope you will say Hi when you see me out and about.

Respectfully
Joann Esser, CED Retired

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Louie Crettol. Louie was elected to represent farmers from Wasco, Delano, and Shafter areas on the county committee. Louie was elected to his 1st consecutive term. Other results for Local Administrative Area 2 are:

Leroy Espericueta— 1st alternate to COC.

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

The committee members held their organizational meeting in January to determine who will serve as the county

committee chairperson and vice-chairperson. Please see information in left column.

Get GovDelivery – Instant News, Updates

Farm Service Agency offices are adopting an instant delivery, electronic option. Producers can now enroll in the new GovDelivery system which will provide notices, newsletters and reminders via email, rather than costly paper copies delivered through the mail.

FSA, like many other organizations, is working smarter and more efficiently. Conversion to electronic notifications via email helps conserve resources and save taxpayer dollars.

County Committee ballots will continue to be mailed to all eligible producers. Subscribe right now to receive your free e-mail updates instantly by going to: www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe.

How to Sign Up for GovDelivery – Free Service / Quicker Information

Producers, owners and others interested in keeping up to date with important FSA program deadlines and information are strongly encouraged to sign up for GovDelivery. This new instant communication system allows newsletters, deadline reminders and bulletins to be sent right to your email address. Here are the simple steps to sign up.

- 1) To subscribe to updates, go to www.fsa.usda.gov
- 2) On the right side of the page under STAY CONNECTED, enter your email address in the box SIGN UP FOR UPDATES.
- 3) Click GO.
- 4) Under SUBSCRIPTION TOPICS, click the plus symbol (+) next to UPDATES BY STATE AND COUNTY.
- 5) Click the plus symbol (+) next to California.

**USDA
Kern County FSA**
5000 California Ave
Suite 100
Bakersfield, CA 93309
(661) 336-0967

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

Nathan Maragoni
District Director

Joann Esser
County Executive Director

Tom Hunton, Farm
Loan Manager

Albert Ghilarducci
COC Chairperson

Ben Ansolahere
COC Vice Chairperson

Louie Crettol
COC Voting Member

Jeff Bowen
COC Voting Member

Catherine Fanucchi
Minority Advisor



- 6) Click the check box next to "CALIFORNIA STATE OFFICE NEWSLETTER AND UPDATES."
- 7) Click the check box next to the COUNTY OR COUNTIES you wish to subscribe to.
- 8) Scroll to the bottom of the page and click SUBMIT. A subscription notification will be sent to your email address.
- 9) If you do not receive an email notification, check your junk mail folder and mark the email as "not junk" to ensure proper delivery of future emails.

We Need Your Email Address

To help conserve resources and reduce taxpayer expense, we have discontinued mailing out FSA newsletters. In order to stay connected and not miss deadlines and announcements, please provide your email address to our FSA Office. You can provide your email address to us by phone, mail or email.

Kern County FSA Office
 5000 California Ave Suite 100
 Bakersfield, CA 93309
 (661) 336-0967 Telephone
 (661) 336-0857 Fax
donald.mckinney@ca.usda.gov

DCP/ACRE Sign-up

2012 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) enrollment opened on Jan. 23, 2012 and closes on June 1, 2012. Call now for an appointment at the local office. Here are some **IMPORTANT REMINDERS:**

1) All producers planting on **DCP base** acres must be identified on the DCP/ACRE contract and receive a proportionate share of DCP/ACRE payment for the farm.

2) Changes on the farm after enrolling June 1st in DCP/ACRE **must** be reported to your local FSA office including: ownership changes, producer changes (individuals and entities) and changes in crop shares arrangements.

Note: All changes must be made by Sept. 30, 2012.

Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE)

The sign-up for 2010 SURE losses continues through **June 1, 2012**.

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters that occurred in the crop year 2010. SURE is available to eligible producers on:

Farms in counties with Secretarial disaster declarations, including contiguous counties, that have incurred crop production or quality losses, or both, and includes all crops grown by a producer nationwide, except grazed crops.

Any farm in which, for the crop year, the actual production on the farm because of disaster-related conditions is 50 percent or less than normal production of the farm.

Actively Engaged

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 FSA.

Normally the stockholder or a member of a legal entity **must** make contributions of active personal labor and/or active personal management for the farming operation. The contributions are to be performed on regular basis, must be identifiable, and separate from the contributions of others.

The exception to this rule for a stockholder or member of a legal entity only occurs when both of the following apply:

1) 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

NOTICE TO HISPANIC AND/OR WOMEN FARMERS OR RANCHERS

COMPENSATION FOR CLAIMS OF DISCRIMINATION

If you believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) improperly denied farm loan benefits to you between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic, or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation.

To register your name to receive a claims packet, call the Farmer and Rancher Call Center at 1-888-508-4429 or visit: www.farmerclaims.gov

The claims package will have detailed information about the eligibility and claims process.



USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Farm Reconstitutions

At FSA, farms are “constituted” to group all tracts having the same owner and the same operator under one farm serial number. When changes in the 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. NOTE: to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by August 1, 2012 for farms enrolled in specific programs. If not signed into programs then the deadline to request a recon is June 1, 2012.

management; and
 2) The total direct payments received by the legal entity and each of the members can't exceed \$40,000.

Payment Limitations

Several FSA programs are subject to payment limitation provisions. Violation of any of these provisions may subject the producer to loss of payment and possible prosecution.

The following are current FSA program payment limitations;

<u>PROGRAM</u>	<u>LIMIT</u>
DCP Program	\$40,000
DCP CC / ACRE	\$65,000
CRP	\$50,000
SURE, LIP, LFP	\$100,000
NAP	\$100,000
LDP, Market Gain	No Limit

Payment Eligibility

Note that specific eligibility criteria exist for the DCP and ACRE programs. Contact your nearest county FSA Office for further information regarding these and other provisions:

- 1) actively engaged,
- 2) cash-rent tenant rule and
- 3) foreign persons.

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 and applications for payment for all crops must be reported to FSA no later than the acreage

reporting date for the crop for the following year. *NAP Losses must be reported within 15 days of loss.*

Contact your FSA County Office for deadlines and more information.

2013 Application Closing Dates

<u>All other annuals</u>	<u>3/1/13</u>
Apricots, Asparagus, Cane Berries, Cherries, Mint, Nectarines, Peaches, Pears, Persimmons, Plums, Pomegranates, Strawberries,	

NOTE: Coverage no longer available for young trees.

	<u>12/15/12</u>
<u>Fall Planted Garlic</u>	<u>10/1/12</u>
<u>Processed Onions, Honey</u>	<u>12/1/12</u>
<u>Fall Planted Seed Crops</u>	<u>8/1/12</u>
Forage Crops/ Permanent Pasture	

Forage Crops, Intended Use of Forage, Hay <u>(Mechanically Harvested)</u>	<u>12/1/12</u>
<u>Forage Seed Crops (Alfalfa, Clover, Grass, Etc.)</u>	<u>9/1/12</u>
Value Loss and Controlled <u>Environment Crops</u>	<u>9/1/12</u>

2014 Crop Year Citrus Crops:

Lemons, Limes, Grapefruit, <u>Tangelos</u>	<u>1/1/13</u>
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NOTICES OF LOSS;

In case of damage to any NAP covered crop at least one producer having a share in the unit must file a Notice of Loss in the FSA County Office;

- 1. For prevented planting claims within 15 days after the final planting date.
- 2. For low yield claims and allowable value loss the EARLIER of;
 - a) 15 days after the disaster occurrence or date of loss or damage to the crop becomes apparent.
 - b) 15 days after the normal harvest date

Kern County FSA Office
 5000 California Ave Suite 100
 Bakersfield, CA 93313-0711



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Average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) Provisions

For 2012, there are now four qualifying levels for AGI provisions as follows;

- 1) **\$500,000 Nonfarm Income**- if a person or legal entity has AGI nonfarm income that exceeds \$500,000, the person or legal entity is ineligible for all commodity program payments and benefits.
- 2) **\$750,000 Farm Income**- if a person or legal entity has AGI farm income that exceeds \$750,000, the person or legal entity is ineligible for DCP direct payments only.
- 3) **\$1,000,000 Nonfarm Income**- if a person or legal entity had AGI nonfarm income that exceeds \$1,000,000, the person or legal entity is ineligible for all conservation program benefits unless at least 66.66% of total AGI is average adjusted gross farm income.
- 4) **\$1,000,000 Total Farm and Nonfarm Income**- if a person or legal entity has AGI farm and nonfarm income that exceeds \$1,000,000, the person or legal entity is ineligible for 2012 direct payment under DCP

Form CCC-931 must be completed to authorize the AGI certification process in conjunction with the IRS. The average AGI is based on the average adjusted gross income for the three taxable years preceding the complete taxable year. For the 2012 program year, the three taxable years for AGI would include 2008, 2009 and 2010.

Dates to Remember	
Ongoing	GovDelivery
April 30, 2012	Certification of Small Grains Deadline
June 1, 2012	DCP Signup Deadline
June 1, 2012	Reconstitution Deadline for Non-Program Farms
June 1, 2012	2010 SURE Signup Deadline
July 15, 2012	Certification of all Other Land Uses Deadline
August 1, 2012	Reconstitutions Deadline for Program Farms
NAP Notice of Loss; 15 Days After Occurrence of Natural Disaster	
Or Loss Becomes Apparent	

FSAWEBSITE:
www.fsa.usda.gov

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⁴ 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."