



USDA SERVICE CENTER NEWS

KINGS COUNTY FARM SERVICE AGENCY

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*****NEW*****

2008 Disaster Programs Require Crop Insurance or NAP

If you believe that you had a loss for the 2008 crop year – READ THIS!

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. If you have an owner who receives a share of the crop, their share must also meet these requirements in order to be eligible to apply for 2008 disaster benefits.**

Due to the late passage of the Farm Bill in May, 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 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 grazing losses due to drought on land that is either native or improved pastureland with permanent vegetative cover or planted to a crop specifically for grazing. Additionally, losses due to wildfire will be covered on public lands on which the producer is prohibited from grazing the normal permitted livestock on the managed rangeland.
- **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 from natural disaster 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 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 coverage.

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.

Sign Up Underway for the 2008 DCP

DEADLINE - September 30, 2008

Producers have until September 30, 2008 to sign up for the 2008 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program (DCP). Producers can fill out their 2008 DCP contract at any USDA Service Center or Farm Service Agency County Office. Sign-up can also be completed online by going to <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/edcp> and clicking on "Access eDCP Service." You can choose payment options, assign crop shares and sign and submit contracts from any computer with Internet access. You can also view and print submitted contract options.

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 base associated with the farm. FSA will issue advance direct payments as soon as practical after enrollment. Final direct payments will be issued after Oct. 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).

For all eligibility requirements or addition information, contact your local office. If you have not yet received an appointment card, please call to schedule an appointment.

Crop Reporting Deadline Extended

For 2008, the final crop reporting date for spring seeded crops has been extended to August 15, 2008. Late fees will not be applied for spring seeded crops if acreage reports are filed by August 15 and all other reporting requirements are met according to Handbook 2-CP. Fall seeded reporting dates were not extended. 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.

Crop Disaster Program

Signup underway for 2005, 2006 & 2007 years

The Kings County Farm Service Agency office is accepting applications for the 2005-2007 Crop Disaster Program (CDP). CDP provides benefits to farmers who suffered quantity and quality losses from natural disasters and related conditions that occurred in 2005, 2006 OR 2007. Producers who incurred qualifying losses in 2005, 2006 or 2007 must choose only one year to receive benefits. 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. No ending date has been announced for the signup. In order for us to provide better customer service to you, please call us for an appointment @ (559) 585-8732 Ext # 2 prior to coming into the office.

County Committee Elections



Farm Service Agency county offices are seeking interested farmers to serve as candidates for the local County Committee elections to be held this fall. The Committee is a direct link between USDA farm programs and local agricultural producers. The County Committee system helps shape nation-wide procedures into programs that work at the local level by making decisions that directly impact farmers. Persons nominated should actively participate in the operation of a farm or ranch. Eligible persons include operators, owners and other tenants farming/ranching in the area up for election. The deadline to nominate a candidate for the Kings County Farm Service Agency Local Administrative Area 12 (Hanford/Kingsburg) representative is August 1, 2008. The boundaries of Area 12 are located south to Kansas Avenue, west to 16th Avenue, north to the Fresno County Line, and east to 1st Avenue. Nomination forms can be obtained by calling 582-1071 ext. 2 or at the agency's office at 680 Campus Drive, Suite C in Hanford. Each form must be signed by the eligible voter and by the person s/he nominates. **The forms must then be returned to the Farm Service Agency by August 1, 2008.** Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters no later than November 3, 2008 and must be returned to the county office or postmarked by December 1, 2008. The top vote recipient will represent Local Administrative Area 12 for the next three years, beginning January 1, 2009. For additional questions about elections or voter eligibility, please contact the county office or visit our website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>. Click on the News & Events tab & County Committee Elections for more information.

Prevented Planting and/or Failed Acreage

For 2008, County Committee may accept requests for prevented planting and/or failed acreage, if timely filed by August 15. Documentation must be provided to show reason for loss and must be related to natural disaster. Farm visits will not be required if claims can be verified, and all other requirements are met.

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 your county office staff about a FSA loan. The Farm Loan Program for Kings County is administered from the Tulare County office. Farm Loan staff may be contacted at (559) 734-8732.

Farm Bill Programs Deadlines

- **2008 Disaster Programs – Buy-In Deadline September 16**
- **2008 Acreage Reports:** For crops other than small grains (wheat, barley, and oats) **August 15, 2008.**
- **2008 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP): September 30, 2008.**
- **2005 - 2007 Crop Disaster Program:** Signup closing has not yet been announced.

WEBSITE INFORMATION AVAILABLE

For more information on any of the above programs, please visit our website at www.fsa.usda.gov

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