



NEWSLETTER



**Kings County
Farm Service Agency
680 Campus Dr Ste C
Hanford, CA 93230
Phone (559) 585-8732
FAX (559) 584-8715
www.fsa.usda.gov**

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

County Committee
Vicki Dias
Peter Rietkerk
Ceil Howe III
Michael Miya-Advisor

County Director
Kathy Sargent

Staff
Joan Avila
Winifred Brogan
Nathan Olson
Lillian Sanchez
Julie Thomas

**Farm Loan Manager
(located in Visalia office)**
Tom Roberts

Farm Loan Staff
Patricia Miller
Slade Childers

**For a list of local
offices, visit
www.fsa.usda.gov/ca**

November 2011

County Newsletter #3

County Committee Voting Begins

Ballots for this year's county committee election for the Hanford/Kingsburg area were mailed to eligible voters on Nov. 4, 2011. The boundaries of the voting area for this year are located south to Kansas Avenue, west to 16th Avenue, north to the Fresno County Line, and east to 1st Avenue. Voters must complete their ballots and return them to the Farm Service Agency county office by the close of business on Dec. 5, 2011. If mailed, ballots must be postmarked by midnight Dec. 5, 2011. The candidates are:

- **Ralph Alcalá Jr.** – Partner in Alcalá Farms – farms row and nut crops in South Hanford area
- **Vicki Dias** – Partner in Dias & Dias – farms row crops and has dairy in Kingsburg area
- **Brian Medeiros** – Partner in Medeiros & Son Dairy – farms row crops and has dairy in South Hanford area

Eligible voters in the Hanford/Kingsburg area who have not received a ballot should contact the FSA county office staff.

Voter Requirements - Persons meeting requirements below, are eligible to vote:

1. Legal voting age and have an interest in a farm or ranch as any of the following: an individual, an authorized representative of an entity, spouses when property is owned jointly or in community property states.

2. Participates or cooperates in any FSA program that is provided by law.

Each voter must sign where indicated on their own ballots when voting. FSA-211 - Power of Attorney forms do not apply to voting.

Direct & Counter-Cyclical (DCP) & Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program Signup

The 2012 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) enrollment period begins Jan. 23, 2012 and ends June 1, 2012. Please remember you will need to supply our FSA office with the following, if applicable:

- new leases or deeds for property that has been added to your farming operation
- current rental agreements for property you will be enrolling (if previous agreements have been renewed)
- updated partnership papers or operating agreements if there have been changes to members and/or shares
- new bank account information

In order to better serve all producers, we will be taking appointments for signup.

Changing Banks or Accounts??

Almost all Farm Service Agency payments are made electronically using Direct Deposit.

To keep the system running smoothly, it's critical to keep the county office staff up to date on changes you might make in your financial institutions.

If you have changed accounts or institutions that might affect the direct deposit of your FSA payments, contact the FSA county office so we can update our files to insure continued uninterrupted service.

Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE)

The sign-up for 2010 losses began **Nov. 14, 2011** and will end **June 1, 2012**.

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments 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 at least a 10% crop production or quality loss, or both. All economically significant crops grown by a producer are eligible, **except** grazed crops.
- Any farm in which disaster-related conditions reduced the actual crop year production on the farm to 50 percent or less than normal production of the farm.

Hispanic and Women Farmers

A process to resolve the claims of Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who believe they were discriminated against when seeking USDA farm loans has been established. 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.

For additional information on this and other settlement issues contact:

Hispanic and Women Farmer Claims Process:

www.farmerclaims.gov or call
1-888-508-4429

Pigford – The Black Farmers Discrimination Litigation:

www.blackfarmercase.com or call
1-866-950-5547

Keepseagle - The Native American Farmers Class Action Settlement:

www.IndianFarmClass.com or call
1-888-233-5506

Disaster Assistance Programs / Risk Management

FSA disaster assistance programs include: Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) Program, Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP) and Tree Assistance Program (TAP). To be eligible for SURE, TAP, and ELAP, producers must purchase catastrophic risk protection insurance for all insurable crops, and NAP coverage for non-insurable crops.

Farm-Raised Fish means all fish being produced for sale by an eligible producer. In the case of honey, the term "farm" means all bees and beehives in all counties that are intended to be harvested for a honey crop by the eligible producer.

Producers who meet the definition of Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource Producer, or Beginning Farmer or Rancher, do not have to meet this risk management purchase requirement.

Farm Reconstitutions

When changes in farm 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.

Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by Aug. 1 for farms enrolled in the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program. Methods used for farm reconstitution are:

Estate Method — the division of bases, allotments and quotas for a parent farm among heirs in settling an estate
Designation of Landowner Method — may be applicable when part or all of a farm is sold or ownership is transferred. In order to use this method the land sold must have been owned for at least three years, or a waiver granted, and the buyer and seller must sign a Memorandum of Understanding
DCP Cropland Method — the division of bases in the same proportion that the DCP cropland for each resulting tract relates to the DCP cropland on the parent tract;
Default Method — the division of bases for a parent farm with each tract maintaining the bases attributed to the tract level when the reconstitution is initiated in the system.

FSA Signature Policy

Using the correct signature when doing business with FSA can save time and prevent a delay in program benefits. The following are FSA signature guidelines:

Spouses may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and CCC programs in which either has an interest, unless written notification denying a spouse this authority has been provided to the county office. Spouses shall not sign on behalf of each other as an authorized signatory for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations, or other similar entities.

For additional clarification on proper signatures contact your local FSA office.

Farm Records Changes

Although DCP signup will not begin until January 23, 2012, known changes for the 2012 crop year may be made now. Please call for an appointment and bring your leases, deeds or other documentation which will substantiate your requested changes.

NAP Deadlines and Program Changes for 2012

The Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) deadlines for various crops are approaching. Contact your local office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov for deadlines and details for your crops. When low yields, loss of inventory or prevented planting occurs due to natural disaster, NAP can provide financial assistance.

NAP coverage may be continued for each subsequent year for the same crop or crops, if the producer pays the applicable service fee by the next year's application closing date

Eligible producers must apply for coverage of noninsurable crops and pay the applicable service fees at their local FSA office. The service fee is \$250 per crop or up to \$750 per producer per administrative county, not to exceed a total of \$1,875 per producer with farming interests in multiple counties. Limited resource producers are not subject to annual fees.

- **NAP coverage is NOT available on any crop that is insurable in the County at any level of maturity. (No more young orchards) Beginning with the 2012 crop year, Pistachio crop coverage is no longer available under NAP. Please contact a crop insurance agent for coverage information.**
- **for annual crops, coverage begins the later of either of the following:
30 calendar days after the date CCC-471 is filed or the date the crop is planted, not to exceed the final planting date.**

2012 NAP Application Closing Dates		
Crops	Closing Date	Comments
Onions	12/1/2011	
Forage Crops , Intended Use of FG , Hay (Mechanically Harvested) Forage Crops , Intended Use of GZ , Grazing	12/1/2011	ALL Counties
Honey	12/1/2011	ALL Counties
Asparagus and Artichokes	12/15/2011	
Fruit - Nut Tree Crops: Cane berries, Cherries, Kiwi, Mint, Olives, Pears, Persimmons, Pomegranates, Most Strawberries	12/15/2011	Remember: NAP coverage is NO LONGER AVAILABLE for insured crops that have not reached age.
Apples	1/31/2012	
Annuals: squash, carrots, etc.	3/1/2012	
2013 NAP Application Closing Dates		
2013 Avocados & Citrus: Oranges, Lemons, Limes, Grapefruit, Tangelos, etc.	1/1/2012	First Application Closing Date for the 2013 NAP Citrus Crop Year



Please remember to report weather related crop damages to the FSA office and the local Agriculture Commissioners office. Damages should be reported to FSA within 15 days of when the damage is apparent to be considered timely. All prevented planting should be reported within 15 days of the final planting date for the crop.

Kings County FSA Office
680 Campus Drive Suite C
Hanford, CA 93230

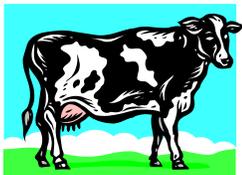


PRESORTED STANDARD
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Dates to Remember	
Nov. 24, 2011	Thanksgiving Day Holiday-County Office Closed
Dec. 5, 2011	County Committee ballots due back to County Office
December 26, 2011	Christmas Observed Holiday-County Office Closed
January 2, 2012	New Year's Day Observed Holiday – County Office Closed
January 23, 2012	Direct & Counter Cyclical (DCP) Signup Begins
April 30, 2012	Fall Seeded Acreage Reporting Deadline
June 1, 2012	Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program Deadline – 2010 Crop Year
June 1, 2012	Direct & Counter-Cyclical (DCP) Program / Average Crop Revenue Election Program (ACRE) Filing Deadline – 2012 Crop Year
Within 15 days	To be considered timely filed, damage to crops must be reported to the FSA office within 15 days after the damage occurs or the date the crop damage was apparent
Various Dates	See http://www.fsa.gov/Internet/FSA_File/important_dates.pdf for various NAP insurance purchase deadlines – (also see page 3)

Milk Income Loss Assistance Program (MILC) News

It is very important that participants in the Milk Income Loss Assistance Program review their contracts and determine whether they would like to make a change in their selected start month. Any production start month selection changes made by the dairy operation must be designated on form CCC-580M and must be received in the County Office on or before the 14th of the month before the production start date currently selected by the producers in the dairy operation. If the 14th of the month falls on a weekend, the dairy operation production start month must be made on the last business day preceding the weekend. In addition, any dairy operations which have had a change in their operation must also report those changes on form CCC-580M. Types of changes include changes in members and changes in shares. In order to retain your eligibility for the MILC program, please contact this office immediately if you have any type of change.



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all of 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, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (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 to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer