

September 2012



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## Kings County FSA Updates

DEAR PRODUCERS: Welcome to the new GovDelivery bulletins and updates service from your County FSA office. Note that you are welcome to request to receive bulletins from more than one county and can add or remove individual subscriptions at any time.

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### Kings County

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

**Phone:** 559-585-8732

**Fax:** 559-584-8715

**Office Hours:**

**Monday-Friday 8:00-4:30**

**County Executive Director:**

Kathy L Sargent

**Program Technicians:**

Joan Avila  
Winifred Brogan  
Nathan Olson  
Lillian Sanchez

**Farm Loan Manager:**

**(located in Visalia Office)**

Tom Roberts

**Farm Loan Staff:**

Patricia Miller  
Slade Childers

**County Committee:**

Peter Rietkerk  
Ceil Howe III  
Ralph Alcalá Jr.  
Michael Miya - Advisor

## Corcoran Area County Committee Election

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to ALL farmers and ranchers. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

County committee members are a critical component of the operations of FSA. They help deliver FSA farm programs at the local level. Farmers and ranchers who serve on county committees help with the decisions necessary to administer the programs in their counties. They work to ensure FSA agricultural programs serve the needs of local producers.

FSA county committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws. County committee members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions.

Since this only happens once a year, here is an election refresher. For election purposes, counties are divided into local administrative areas, or LAAs. Each LAA contributes one producer to serve a three-year term on the Farm Service Agency county committee.

This year LAA 1 is holding an election. This includes the area located south of Nevada Ave and east of 22nd Ave, as well as land south of Kansas Ave & east of 22nd Ave, as well as land south of Kansas Ave & south of 16th Ave. The nominated candidates are Brent Gilkey and Fred Holt. Producers in that area will be mailed an election ballot on or around **November 5, 2012**. Ballots must be returned or postmarked by **December 3, 2012** to be considered valid.

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## Direct Deposit Updates Required

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, please contact the FSA county office as soon as possible. Incorrect information on file with the county office may result in the delay of your payments.

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## Changes to IRS Forms 1099-G for Calendar Year 2012

In past years, IRS Form 1099-G was issued to show all program payments received from the Farm Service

Agency, regardless of the amount. For calendar year 2012, the 1099-G reporting will change.

IRS Form 1099-G (Report of Payments to Producers) will only be issued to producers whose reportable payments total \$600 or more for the calendar year. Additionally, if the producer has at least \$600 in reportable payments received from multiple FSA offices, only one Form 1099-G will be issued. Producers subject to voluntary withholding or backup (involuntary) withholding will receive the appropriate IRS form, even if combined payments are less than \$600.

The same changes will apply to producers and vendors who normally receive IRS Form 1099-MISC from FSA.

Any producer who receives less than \$600 in combined payments should consult a tax advisor to determine if these payments must be reported on their tax return.

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## FSA Farm Loans



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, contact your nearest FSA office for details about direct and guaranteed loans.

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

Farm ownership loans or farm operating loans may be obtained as direct loans for a maximum of up to \$300,000. Guaranteed loans have a maximum limit of \$1,214,000.

The one-time loan origination fee charged on FSA guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans is 1.5 percent of the guaranteed portion of the loan.

To find out more about FSA loan programs for Kings County, please contact the Farm Loan Team which is located in our Visalia office, to schedule an appointment. The phone number is (559) 734-8732.

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## Highly Erodible Lands and Wetland Compliance

Producers participating in most programs administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) are required to abide by certain stipulations on any land owned or farmed that is highly erodible or that is considered a wetland.

To be in compliance with the highly erodible land conservation and wetland conservation provisions, producers must agree, that they **will not**:

- Produce an agricultural commodity on highly erodible land without a conservation system;
- Plant an agricultural commodity on a converted wetland;
- Convert a wetland to make possible the production of an agricultural commodity.

Producers must notify the FSA and update Form AD-1026 if they plan to remove fence rows, convert woodlots to cropland, combine crop fields, divide a crop field into two or more fields, install new drainage, or improve or modify existing drainage. FSA will notify NRCS who will then provide highly erodible land or wetland technical determinations.

To get additional information on highly erodible land and wetland conservation compliance contact the FSA office or the NRCS office at a local USDA Service Center. Additional information about conservation programs offered by FSA can be found online at [www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation), and information on NRCS programs can be found at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>.

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## Conservation Programs from Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Are you interested in:

- Addressing problems on your land?
- Learning how you can improve your operation?
- Applying for cost-share funding for a project on your farm or land?

Then you should consider developing a conservation plan.

NRCS will be glad to assist you in developing a plan that will address your resource concerns. They will meet you at your location and work with you to solve potential issues. They will help you develop potential solutions and you make the ultimately make the decision on how to best address those issues.

Contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and see how we can help you 559-584-9209 ext.3

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## Hispanic and Women Discrimination Claims

The process to resolve claims of discrimination by USDA asserted by some Hispanic and women farmers is nearing the phase when a claims packet will be made available for potential claimants. A court supervised third-party administrative process is available for claimants to submit claims and receive compensation for losses they may have incurred as a result of discrimination in loan making and loan services. If you believe you have been discriminated against by USDA between 1981 and 200 because you are Hispanic or female, call the toll-free number or visit the website to receive a claims packet or get further information. You can call **1- 888-508-4429** or visit [www.farmerclaims.gov](http://www.farmerclaims.gov). Once the claims period is announced claimants will have 180 days (6 months) to complete the claim form and submit the claims.

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USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. 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 20250-9450, 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).