

Farm Service Agency

Address:

USDA Service Center
44811 Date Ave., Ste. B
Lancaster, CA 93534

Telephone:

(661) 942-9549 ext. 2
Fax: (661) 942-5503

Web Sites:

FSA: www.fsa.usda.gov
USDA: www.usda.gov
Farm Bill:
www.usda.gov.farmbill

Hours:

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

County Committee:

Paul Johnson
Richard Manassero
Terry Munz
Patricia Van Dam

Advisor:

Bennie Moore, Jr.

County Executive**Director:**

Douglas Brand

Staff:

Marilynn Wells, PT
Holleen Self, PT

Los Angeles-Orange-San Bernardino Counties

FSA NEWS

July 2009

Newsletter 4

NOMINATIONS ACCEPTED FOR 2009 COUNTY FSA COMMITTEE ELECTION

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) is looking for candidates for the farmer-elected County FSA Committee election this fall.



County FSA Committee members play a crucial role in helping the county office staff implement the Farm Bill Programs. Right now, producers can have an impact on the election of the county committee by nominating eligible candidates by the **August 3, 2009**, deadline.

It is critical that we ensure all eligible producers, especially women and under-represented ethnic groups, have an equal opportunity to be a candidate. Farmers and ranchers who are eligible to participate in these USDA farm programs elect a 4-person committee, which reviews county office operations and makes some of the decisions on how to apply the programs locally. This grassroots approach gives farmers and ranchers a much-needed voice in how federal actions affect their farming communities and their farming operations.

The area served by our FSA Committee is divided into four Local Administrative Areas (LAAs). One member on the committee represents each LAA and serves a 3-year term. This year, LAA #3 (Orange County and Southern Los Angeles County) and LAA#4 (Northern Los Angeles County) are up for election.

Individuals may nominate themselves or others as candidates. Also, organizations representing socially disadvantaged minorities and women farmers or ranchers may also nominate candidates. To become a nominee, eligible individuals must complete and 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 2009 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on **August 3, 2009**.

FSA will mail ballots to producers beginning November 6, 2009. The completed ballots are due back at the local county office by December 7, 2009, either via mail or in person.

If you are interested in being a candidate in this year's election, please contact our office before August 3rd to request a nomination form. Nomination forms are available at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>. Spanish versions of the nomination form and election material are also available.

IN THIS ISSUE:

- 2009 County FSA Committee Elections
- DCP Signup Deadline
- MILC Program Changes
- MILC Payment Rates
- Acreage Reporting Deadline Extended
- NAP Program
- Program Compliance
- Help Available to Stressed Farmers

DCP & ACRE Signup Deadline

Signup for the 2009 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment (DCP) Program has been extended until August 14, 2009. Signup in the ACRE option is also available through August 14, 2009. FSA will not accept any late-filed applications.

FSA computes DCP Program 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 2009, you may request to receive advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment for each commodity associated with the farm. Counter-cyclical payment rates vary depending on market prices and are issued only when the effective price for a commodity is statutorily set below its target price.

The new ACRE Program is an option for eligible DCP farms that allows participants to receive additional payments based on crop revenue reductions instead of only low national prices. Revenue considers both yields and prices, so the reductions can be attributed to low yields and/or low prices. Note that there must be both a revenue reduction for the farm and at least a 10% revenue reduction for the State.

Changes to your MILC Program Contracts



Dairy operations are reminded that they are required to notify their county FSA office immediately of any changes that potentially affect the terms, conditions, or participants

under the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC). Changes include, but are not limited to changes to the starting month, death of producer on the contract, new member joining the operation, member leaving the operation, transfer of shares by sale or other transfer action, or reconstitution.

If you would like to change your production start month for FY2009 through 2012, you must request the change on or before the 14th of the month before the:

- month originally designated as the production start month
- newly selected start month.

For example, if your FY2010 start month is March 2010 and you would like to change it to October 2009, you would have to request the change on or before September 14, 2009. If you would like to change your FY2010 start month from March 2010 to July 2010, you would have to request the change on or before February 14, 2009.

Changes must be made in advance of payment rates being known by the public for both the original production start month that the dairy operation is changing from and the start month that the dairy operation is changing to. Otherwise, the production start month can only be changed for the following fiscal year.

Any changes or modifications to an existing MILC contract (CCC-580) must be made by completing and filing a CCC-580M form with our FSA Office.

MILC Program Payment Rates

Listed below are the MILC payment rates for Fiscal Year 2009 (October 2008 through June 2009). On the last day of each month, the MILC payment rate (applicable for the prior month) will be posted at:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=prsu&topic=mpp-mi>



MILC Payment Rates for Fiscal Year 2009

| | |
|---------------|---|
| October 2008 | \$0.00000 |
| November 2008 | \$0.00000 |
| December 2008 | \$0.00000 |
| January 2009 | \$0.00000 |
| February 2009 | \$1.51352 |
| March 2009 | \$2.00561 |
| April 2009 | \$1.58628 |
| May 2009 | \$1.46725 |
| June 2009 | Rate will not be announced until August 1, 2009 |

For more information about the MILC program, you should contact our County FSA Office or visit our FSA website at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>

Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) Coverage

The Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) was designed to reduce financial losses that occur when natural disasters cause a catastrophic loss of production or prevented planting of an eligible crop by providing coverage equivalent to Federal Catastrophic (CAT) Crop insurance. Statute limits NAP to each commercial crop or agricultural commodity, except livestock, for which CAT is not available.

In order to be eligible for new disaster assistance programs, like SURE, producers are required to timely purchase, at a minimum, CAT coverage for all insurable crops and/or NAP coverage for all non-insurable crops on their entire farm.

The closing dates for Los Angeles, Orange, and San

Bernardino counties are summarized for the specific crops as shown below:

| NAP Crops | 2009 Application Closing Dates |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Forage/Hay Crops (Intended use as Hay – Mechanically Harvested) | Sept. 1, 2009 |
| Value Loss and Controlled Environment Crops (Nursery, Aquaculture, Christmas Trees) | Sept. 1, 2009 |
| Strawberries | Oct. 1, 2009 |
| Honey | Dec. 1, 2009 |
| Onions | Dec. 1, 2009 |
| Forage Crops (Intended use of Grazing) | Dec. 1, 2008 |
| Almonds, Apricots, Kiwis, Cherries, Mint, Olives, Nectarines, Peaches, Pears, Grapes, Pistachios, Plums, Walnuts | Dec. 15, 2009 |
| 2011 Avocados/Citrus | Jan. 1, 2010 |
| Apples | Jan. 31, 2010 |
| All other 2010 Annual Crops | March 1, 2010 |

NAP coverage for 2010 costs \$250 per crop, but not more than \$750 per producer per county, or not more than \$1,875 total per producer for all counties. The administration fee(s) must be paid by the above application closing dates. Limited resource producers are not subject to annual fees.

Producers who already have coverage on 2009 NAP crops may choose to continue coverage on the same crop or crops for 2010, if the applicable service fee is submitted by the application closing date. A new CCC-471 application for coverage is not required to be signed when applying for continuous coverage. Producers who choose to add a new crop(s) from previous year's coverage or changing crop shares must file a new CCC-471 with signatures and pay the applicable service fee.

To be eligible for a NAP payment, producers must notify the FSA Office within 15 calendar days after a disaster has affected the NAP crop.

For more information regarding 2009 NAP coverage, contact our County FSA Office and ask for Holleen.

Acreage Reporting Deadline Extended

For 2009, the final crop acreage reporting dates for most crops are being extended to **August 14, 2009**. Late fees will not be applied if acreage reports are filed by August 14th 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.

2009 Program Compliance

Compliance and spot checks will once again be utilized during the 2009 crop year. Instead of locally selecting farms, contracts, deficiency loans, etc. for spot check and review, a nationwide selection of producers is used to achieve a statistical sampling of participating producers. Spot check selections are to be conducted based on a producer's participation in Conservation Reserve Program, Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, Loan Deficiency Program, Milk Income Loss Contract Program, and other programs.

State and County Offices shall view and print their producer spot check lists as posted on the designated web site. If an entity is selected from the national database that is no longer farming or participating in the 2009 crop year, a notation shall be made on the spot check list. For more information about the new spot check selection procedure, feel free to contact your local Farm Service Agency office for additional clarification.

Help Available to Stressed Farmers

In the past year, the economy, inclement weather, drought and other factors have hurt many farming operations around the country. These events pushed some farmers to the emotional breaking point. Watching their livelihood being threatened is difficult for farmers and ranchers and especially for those who care about them.

The National Suicide Prevention Hotline is available to help. If you know a farmer or rancher who is under stress and is reluctant to ask for help, or if you just need to talk to someone, call 1-800-273-TALK (8255). Your call will be routed to the crisis center nearest you, where trained staffers are available 24/7. This nationwide service is free and confidential. Help is just a phone call away.

For more information, go to <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>. **This service is not affiliated with the US Department of Agriculture.**

Dates to Remember

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| July 3, 2009 | Office Closed – Celebrating Independence Day |
| August 3, 2009 | Nomination deadline for 2009 COC Elections |
| August 14, 2009 | DCP & ACRE Signup Deadline |
| August 14, 2009 | Acreage Reporting Deadline |
| | |

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Farm Service Agency
Los Angeles-Orange-San Bernardino County FSA Office
44811 Date Ave., Suite B
Lancaster, CA. 93534

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 (661) 942-9549.

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.