

# Farm Service Agency

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USDA Service Center  
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**Telephone:**

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**Web Sites:**

FSA: [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)  
USDA: [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)  
Farm Bill:  
[www.usda.gov/farmbill](http://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

*Los Angeles-Orange-San Bernardino Counties*

# FSA NEWS

*January 2010*

*Newsletter 1*

## *Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE)*



Signup for the 2008 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments program (SURE) began on **January 4, 2010**. The 2008 SURE is for producers who suffered crop production losses during the 2008 crop year. This program is an important component of the farm safety net and will provide financial assistance to producers who have suffered crop losses due to natural disasters.

SURE provides crop disaster assistance payments to eligible producers on farms that have incurred crop production or crop quality losses. The program takes into consideration crop losses on all crops grown by a producer nationwide. SURE provides assistance in an amount equal to 60 percent of the difference between the SURE farm guarantee and total farm revenue. The farm guarantee is based on the amount of Federal Crop Insurance and Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage on the farm. Total farm revenue takes into account the actual value of production on the farm as well as insurance indemnities and certain farm program payments.

Producers with a farming interest physically located in a county that was declared a primary disaster county or contiguous county by the Agriculture Secretary must have suffered at least a 10 percent production loss on a crop of economic significance.

Producers must meet the risk management purchase requirement by either obtaining a policy or plan of insurance, under the Federal Crop Insurance Act or NAP coverage, for all economically significant crops. For 2008 crops, producers had the opportunity to obtain a waiver of the risk management purchase requirement through a buy-in provision. Producers considered socially disadvantaged, a beginning farmer or rancher, or a limited resource farmer may be eligible for SURE without a policy or plan of insurance or NAP coverage.

If there is no Secretarial Disaster Designation, individual producers may also be eligible for SURE if the actual production on the farm is less than 50 percent of the normal production on the farm due to a natural disaster. For SURE, a farm is defined as all crops in which a producer had an interest nationwide.

For more information on the new 2008 SURE program, please contact our County FSA Office at (661) 942-9549 ext. 100 or visit our website at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

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## County Committee Election Results



Congratulations to **Terry Munz** and **Richard Manassero** who were recently re-elected to serve on the Los Angeles-Orange-San Bernardino County FSA Committee. Terry Munz was re-elected to serve as a representative for northern Los Angeles County (LAA-4). Richard Manassero was re-elected to serve as a representative of southern Los Angeles County/Orange County (LAA-3). **Basilio Dorado** was elected to serve as 1<sup>st</sup> alternate in LAA-3 and **Bennie Moore, Jr.** was elected as 1<sup>st</sup> alternate in LAA-4.

The County FSA Committee is the farmer-elected body that is responsible for administrating USDA farm programs at the local level.

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

The County FSA Committee members will hold their organizational meeting in January to determine who will serve as the committee chairperson and vice-chairperson.

## Dairy Economic Loss Assistance (DELAP) Program



USDA recently announced the implementation of the new Dairy Economic Loss Assistance Program (DELAP). DELAP provides a one-time payment to assist dairy producers who have recently experienced low milk prices and high production costs.

No application to receive DELAP program benefits is required if a dairy operation or producer's records are currently available in a Farm Service Agency (FSA) county office from previous participation in a fiscal year 2009 dairy program administered by the agency. FSA will use existing production data maintained by the FSA county office for the months of February through July 2009 to calculate and issue payments.

Dairy producers who do not have production records at the FSA county office, and who have not been contacted to obtain such data for the months of February through July 2009, may apply to receive DELAP benefits during the 30-day application period beginning December 17, 2009. The deadline to submit requests for DELAP program benefits is **January 19, 2010**.

DELAP payment calculations will be based on each qualifying dairy operation's total pounds of production commercially marketed during the months of February 2009 through July 2009, multiplied by two, up to six million pounds per dairy operation. A national per hundredweight payment rate was calculated by dividing the available funding of \$290 million, less a reserve established by FSA.

Payments to eligible dairy producers are calculated by multiplying the established payment rate by the dairy producer's share of the dairy operation's eligible production payment quantity.

FSA began issuing DELAP payments in late December 2009.

DELAP eligibility requirements are available at the county office or on line at:

[http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA\\_File/delap09.pdf](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/delap09.pdf).

## Congratulations to Holleen Self

This is with very mixed emotions that I announce that Holleen Self has retired from FSA, effective December 31, 2009.



Holleen began her career with FSA in 1987. She has been an outstanding employee and has been invaluable to the farming community she serves. Her dedication shows in the wonderful working relationships she has developed with her co-workers and clientele. We are terribly sad to see her go, but wish her the very best of luck in this new chapter of her life!

## MILC Program Payment Rates

Listed below are the MILC payment rates for Fiscal Year 2010 (October 2009 through January 2010). 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 2010

October 2009	\$0.60300
November 2009	\$0.37350
December 2009	Be announced on February 1, 2010
January 2010	Be announced on March 1, 2010

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>

## ***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 on suicide prevention, go to <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>. This service is not affiliated with the US Department of Agriculture.

## ***Foreign Buyers Notification***



The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA.

All individuals who are not U.S. citizens, and have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA within 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form (FSA-153) could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, Realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

## ***Appeal Process***

After an FSA official makes a decision on your request for USDA services or application, you will be sent a letter informing you of the decision and options you can pursue if you disagree.

Generally, program participants have three choices — an informal review with the original agency decision-maker, an opportunity for mediation and finally an appeal to the next level of authority within the agency.

## ***Power of Attorney***

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., FSA has a power of attorney form available that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. If you are interested, please contact our office or any Farm Service Agency office near you for more information.

## ***Bank Account Changes***

Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into your bank account. In order for timely payments to be made, producers need to notify the FSA county office if your account has been changed or if another financial institution purchases your bank. Payments can be delayed if the FSA office is not aware of updates to your account and routing numbers.

## ***FSA Signature Policy***

Husbands and wives may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and CCC programs in which either has an interest. This option is automatically available unless a written request for exclusion is made to the county office staff by either spouse.

There are exceptions to the rule, where spouses may not sign on behalf of each other for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations or other similar entities.

Individual signatures are also required on certain Farm Loan Program and Farm Storage Facility Loan documents.

For more clarification on spousal signature authority, feel free to contact your local FSA office.

## ***Customer Statement***

January signals the beginning of a new year, and a time to starting thinking about filing taxes. Producers who have signed up for a USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account will be able to access their farm data via their Customer Statement.

The Customer Statement puts a range of USDA services and programs into a single report that's at your fingertips and available online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It allows USDA customers to view their participation, application and payment status in various commodity and conservation programs; information on farm loans; and conservation plan and land unit information.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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#### **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.*