



NEWSLETTER



April 2011

**Los Angeles,
Orange, San
Bernardino County
FSA Office**

Address

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Lancaster, CA 93534

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Website

www.fsa.usda.gov
www.fsa.usda.gov/ca

Hours

Monday – Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**County Executive
Director**

Douglas Brand

County Staff

Marilynn Wells,
Program Technician

Farm Loan Manager

Thomas Hunton
(661) 336-0967 ext. 116

County Committee

Terry Munz
Richard Manassero
Paul Johnson
Patricia Van Dam

Advisor

Bennie Moore, Jr.

SURE – 2009 and Later

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters. **SURE sign up for crop year 2009 losses runs from January 10 to July 29, 2011. Deadlines for 2010 and 2011 crop years will be announced later.**

To be eligible for SURE payments, a producer is required to obtain crop insurance on all crops in all counties or, if crop insurance is not available, to participate in the Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) except for grazed acreage. This requirement does not apply for crops that are not of economic significance or where the administrative fee required to buy NAP coverage exceeds 10% of the value of the crop coverage.

Eligible farmers and ranchers who meet the definition of Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, or Beginning Farmer or Rancher are exempt from the risk management purchase requirement.

The following conditions are required to trigger SURE payments:

- at least one crop of economic significance must suffer a 10% production loss due to an eligible disaster condition
- crop of economic significance is a crop that has contributed or would have contributed at least 5% or more of the total expected revenue from all crops on the farm
- producers in counties declared disaster counties by the Secretary of Agriculture, or in contiguous counties, or those who show proof of an individual loss of at least 50% are eligible to receive SURE payments for crop producer or crop quality losses.

Losses are measured with consideration to the whole-farm revenue, which includes crop insurance indemnities and commodity program payments, so that producers are not paid more than once for the same loss.

Note that due to the need to wait for end of year market price data to make SURE final calculations, SURE assistance payments lag the crop year's end by one full year.

If you would like additional clarification call or stop by your local FSA office.

2011 DCP Signup

Enrollment for the 2011 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) has begun and will continue through **June 1, 2011**. USDA urges producers to make use of the eDCP automated website to sign up, or producers can visit any USDA Service Center to complete their 2011 DCP contract.

USDA 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 2011, eligible producers may request partial direct payments as an advance on the total amount.

ACRE Program

The optional ACRE Program provides a safety net based on state revenue losses and acts in place of the price-based safety net of counter-cyclical payments under DCP. The June 1, 2011, signup deadline is mandatory for all participants. USDA will not accept any late-filed applications.

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**NOTICE
TO HISPANIC
AND/OR
WOMEN
FARMERS OR
RANCHERS**

**COMPENSATION
FOR CLAIMS OF
DISCRIMINATION**

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.

To register your name to receive a claims packet, call the Farmer and Rancher Call Center at 1-888-508-4429 or visit: www.farmerclaims.gov

The claims package will have detailed information about the eligibility and claims process.



USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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A farm's payment is based on a revenue guarantee calculated using a 5-year average state yield and the most recent 2-year national price for each eligible commodity.

An ACRE payment is issued when both the state and the farm have incurred a revenue loss.

The total number of planted acres for which a producer may receive ACRE payments may not exceed the total base on the farm. In exchange for participating in ACRE, in addition to not receiving counter-cyclical payments, a farm's direct payment is reduced by 20%, and marketing loan rates are reduced by 30%.

The decision to enroll in the ACRE Program is irrevocable. The owner of the farm and all producers on the farm must agree to enroll in ACRE. Once enrolled, the farm shall be enrolled for that initial crop year and will remain in ACRE through the 2012 crop year.

Acreage Certification

Time is nearing for producers to certify their 2011 acreage. Filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs.

Failed acreage must be reported within 15 days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date.

Acreage reports are required for many Farm Service Agency programs. For crops enrolled in programs other than NAP (Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program), acreage reports are to be certified by the April 30th deadline on small grains and a July 15th deadline on all other crops.

Acreage reports on crops covered by NAP are due in the county office by the earlier of April 30th for small grains and July 15th for all other crops, or 15 calendar days

before the onset of harvest or grazing of the specific crop acreage being reported.

Adjusted Gross Income

USDA and the Internal Revenue Service have established an electronic information exchange process for verifying compliance with the adjusted gross income (AGI) provisions for farm programs. Written consent is required from each producer or payment recipient for the tax review process. No actual tax data will be included in the report that IRS sends to FSA.

This ensures that payments are not issued to producers whose AGI exceeds certain limits. The limits set in the 2008 Farm Bill are \$500,000 nonfarm average AGI for commodity and disaster programs; \$750,000 farm average AGI for direct payments; and \$1 million nonfarm average AGI for conservation programs.

Participants in CCC programs subject to average AGI rules must submit form CCC-927 (Individual) and/or CCC-928 (Legal Entity) to the Internal Revenue Service by June 15 to avoid interruption of program benefits. These forms may be obtained from local FSA and NRCS offices or online at: <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainservlet>.

Conservation Loan Program

The Conservation Loan (CL) program provides farmers with the funding necessary to implement approved conservation measures on their land. The available limit for a direct CL is \$300,000, and the limit for a guaranteed CL is \$1,119,000.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will work with applicants to develop a conservation plan containing approved conservation practices, such as water conservation structures, forest cover, permanent pastures, manure digesters and other installations.

For more information on a potential Conservation Loan, call the local FSA office and make an appointment with a farm loan officer.



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 for compensation.

To register for a claims package or 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.blackfarmcase.com or call 1-866-950-5547

Keepseagle - The Native American Farmers Class Action Settlement:

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

Farm Loan Programs

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 or ranch, direct and guaranteed loans are currently available.

Ask your lender about an FSA loan guarantee if you've had a setback and your lender is reluctant to extend or re-new 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 can reach a maximum indebtedness of \$1,119,000.

To find out more about FSA loan programs, contact the county office staff.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

The noninsured crop disaster assistance program (NAP) is a federally funded program that helps producers reduce their risk when growing food and fiber crops, specialty crops and crops for livestock feed. These benefits are only available for crops for which the catastrophic level of crop insurance is not available. Application for coverage must be filed by the applicable crop's application closing date.

Production records for all crops must be reported to FSA no later than the acreage reporting date for the crop for the following year. FSA requires that any production reported in a loss year be verifiable according to Agency specifications.

NAP Losses must be reported within 15 days of loss.

Changing Banks

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 service.

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Paul Johnson who was recently reelected to the County FSA Committee. Paul represents Local Administrative Area (LAA) 1, the high desert area of San Bernardino County. Susan Harter was reelected as 1st Alternate to the committee.

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

Dates to Remember

April 30	Acreage Reporting Deadline – Small Grains
May 30	Office Closed – Memorial Day
June 1	DCP/ACRE Deadline
July 4	Office Closed – Independence Day
July 15	Acreage Reporting Deadline
July 29	SURE Filing Deadline

Selected Interest Rates for April 2011

90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating - Direct	2.750%
Farm Ownership-Direct	5.000%
Conservation Loans	5.000%
Farm Ownership-Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.500%
Emergency	3.750%
Farm Storage	2.750%
Sugar Storage	4.000%
Commodity Loan 1996 – Present	1.250%

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PRESORTED STANDARD
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PERMIT #22

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 head, any designated agency official or the Secretary of Agriculture, USDA, Washington, DC 20250. Assistance in filing a complaint can be obtained by calling or visiting any FSA office.

Appeal Process – After an FSA official makes a decision on your request or application for USDA services, you will be sent a letter informing you of the decision and options you can pursue if you disagree. Generally, appellants have 3 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.

Reasonable Accommodations – Will be made, upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impaired or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, please call this office @ 760 352 3531.

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.