



NEWSLETTER



July 2011

Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino County FSA Office

Address

44811 Date Ave., Ste. B
Lancaster, CA 93534

Telephone

(661) 942-9549 ext. 100
(661) 942-5503 fax

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.

2011 FSA County Committee Nomination Deadline

County committees (COC) play a crucial role in helping the county office staff implement the Farm Bill. Due to the important services that COC members provide, producers are encouraged to participate in the FSA county committee election process by nominating an eligible candidate by the **August 1, 2011**, deadline.

To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign form FSA-669A. The form and other valuable information about FSA county committee elections are available online at:

http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/fsa0669a_committeeelectform.pdf

FSA COC members make decisions on disaster and conservation programs, emergency programs, commodity price support loan programs and other important agricultural issues. Members serve three-year terms. Committees consist of three to five members who are elected by eligible local producers.

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 #2 (Redlands area and Inland Empire area of San Bernardino County) is 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.

If you are interested in being a candidate, please contact our office at (661) 942-9549 ext. 100. The deadline date to nominate a candidate is August 1, 2011.

2009 SURE Program Deadline

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters. The deadline to sign up for the SURE program for crop year 2009 losses is **July 29, 2011**. No late-filed applications will be approved.

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.

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.

If you would like to apply for the 2009 SURE program, please contact our FSA Office at (661) 942-9549 ext. 100.

Crop Certification Deadline

The annual requirement of reporting to the FSA office can be referred to as crop reporting, acreage reporting, or crop certification. 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. All cropland on the farm must be reported to receive USDA FSA benefits. *(Continued on Page 2- Certification)*

(Continued from Page 1- Certification)

The certification form FSA-578, Report of Acreage, must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. The producer certification deadline for most crops is July 15th.

Disaster Assistance

The Farm Service Agency would like to remind crop and livestock producers throughout states that have recently experienced severe damage from heavy rains, flooding, wildfires and tornadoes that FSA programs are available to assist with recovery.

FSA administers several important programs that help producers recover from disaster damage and livestock deaths. Among the key programs available to address impacts from disasters are the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), and Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP), the Noninsured Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) Program.

Fact sheets for all of these programs can be found at www.fsa.usda.gov; click on Newsroom, then Fact Sheets.

We encourage all who have suffered a disaster due to the recent severe weather conditions to read the fact sheets and visit their local FSA county office so they get a quick start in the recovery process.

Compliance Spot Checks

Compliance spot checks will be conducted on 2011 crops. Instead of locally selecting farms, contracts, deficiency loans, etc. for review, a nationwide selection of producers is employed. 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, etc.

For more information about the spot check selection procedure, feel free to contact your local Farm Service Agency office for additional clarification.

FSA Farm Loans

FSA 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 regularly borrow from FSA, direct and guaranteed loans are currently available.

Ask your lender about an **FSA Guaranteed Loan** if you've had a setback and your 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** can reach a maximum indebtedness of \$1,119,000. Producers are encouraged to apply early so that a loan can be processed and funded in a timely manner.

FSA employees will help you complete the necessary application and other forms, and help you understand what information is required, where to find it or who to contact to get it. To find out more about FSA loan programs, contact Tom Hunton, Farm Loan Manager, at (661) 336-0967 ext. 116.

Beginning and Limited Resource Farmers

FSA assists beginning farmers and or members of socially disadvantaged groups to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's median size.

Each member of an entity must meet the eligibility requirements. Loan approval is not guaranteed. Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit www.fsa.usda.gov

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.



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2012 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. NAP provides coverage equivalent to catastrophic (CAT) insurance. Statutes limit NAP coverage to each commercial crop or agricultural commodity, except livestock, for which CAT is not available.

Application deadlines for 2012 NAP coverage for a variety of crops are coming up in the next few months. The closing dates for Los Angeles, Orange, and San Bernardino counties are summarized for the specific crops below:

NAP Crops	2012 Application Closing Dates
Strawberries	Oct. 1, 2011
Forage/Hay Crops (Intended use as Hay – Mechanically Harvested)	Dec. 1, 2011
Honey	Dec. 1, 2011
Onions	Dec. 1, 2011
Forage Crops (Intended use of Grazing)	Dec. 1, 2011
Almonds, Apricots, Kiwis, Cherries, Mint, Olives, Nectarines, Peaches, Pears, Grapes, Pistachios, Plums,	Dec. 15, 2011
2013 Avocados/Citrus	Jan. 1, 2012
Apples	Jan. 31, 2012
All other 2012 Annual Crops	March 1, 2012

The cost for coverage is now \$250 per crop per producer with a \$750 cap per county, not to exceed \$1,875 per producer for all counties.

Producers who already have coverage on 2011 NAP crops may choose to continue coverage on the same crop or crops for 2012, if the applicable service fee is submitted by the application closing date.

Producers who choose to add a new crop(s) or delete a 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.

For more information and specific NAP crop deadlines, contact our FSA office.

Rural Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency makes loans to rural youths to establish and operate income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5,000.

Loan requirements are:

- US citizenship or legal resident alien
- 10 to 20 years of age
- Reside in a rural area, city or town (population 50,000 or less)
- Inability to obtain a loan from other sources
- Ability to conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work.
- Demonstrate a capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor. The project supervisor must recommend the project and the loan, along with providing adequate supervision.

For more information on Youth Loans, contact Tom Hunton, Farm Loan Manager at (661) 336-0967 ext. 116.

Hispanic & 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 is being established.

If you believe that the USDA improperly denied farm loan benefits to you during certain time periods 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 claims process and other settlement issues contact:

Hispanic and Women Farmer Claims Process: www.farmerclaims.gov or 1-888-508-4429

Pigford - Black Farmers Discrimination Litigation: www.blackfarmerscase.com or 1-866-950-5547

Keepseagle - Native American Farmers Class Action Settlement: www.IndianFarmClass.com or 1-888-233-5506



Dates to Remember	
July 15	Acreage Reporting Deadline
July 29	2009 SURE Sign-up Deadline
Aug. 1	COC Election Nomination Deadline
Sept. 5	Office Closed – Labor Day
Oct. 10	Office Closed – Columbus Day
Various Dates	NAP – Application Closing Dates

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Los Angeles, Orange,
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NAP Reminders: Notice of Loss: 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 and complete a CCC-576 Notice of Loss Form. Production must be submitted no later than July 15, 2011 for the 2010 crop year. If you have not previously submitted your 2010 crop production, please submit your production records or contact our office.

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.

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.