



June 2008

# Madera County News

## Madera County USDA Service Center

**Madera County FSA**  
425 N. Gateway Dr. Ste. E  
Madera, CA. 93637-3187  
559-674-4628 (phone)  
559-674-1170 (fax)  
www.fsa.usda.gov/

**Hours**  
Monday – Friday  
7:30 a.m. – 4:30

County Committee  
Lance Shebelut  
Ryan Jones  
Dave Gill  
Advisor – Reise Soares

**Staff**  
Joe Grillo – CED  
Ted Van Steyn - COT

Program Technicians  
Debbie Cook  
Audrey Hibdon  
Nancy Talley

Loan Department  
Melanie Fry  
Chantal Haun

**NRCS**  
Rob Roy  
Jenny Gabor  
Dennis Dudley  
Garry Ford

## Sign-up Deadline for LIP & LCP

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) has announced that livestock producers have until **July 18, 2008**, to enroll in the 2005 - 2007 Livestock Compensation Program (LCP) and Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP). Signup began on Sept. 10, 2007, for the two programs that provide aid to livestock producers who suffered eligible livestock or livestock feed losses between Jan. 1, 2005, and Dec. 30, 2007, because of a natural disaster.

For more information please contact your local FSA office for program sign-up details.

## Crop Disaster Signup Continues

Eligible farmers who suffered crop loss damage before Dec. 31, 2007, can still apply to receive disaster assistance.

FSA continues to accept applications and make payments for quantity losses under the Crop Disaster Program (CDP), for losses that occurred before the end of the 2007 calendar year. Later this summer FSA will begin processing quality applications

For more disaster program information go online at: <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov>

## County Committee Elections "FSA Counts on You"

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

Each year, an election is held in an LAA to replace the committee member whose three-year term is expiring. In counties with three

LAAs, one seat is up for election. This year the Madera County Local Administrative Area number Three (LAA3) is scheduled for election. LAA3 consists of the entire county east of Highway 99.

## Nominations

Candidate nominations for the FSA county committee election will be accepted June 15 through Aug. 1, 2008.

Producers who are residents in the LAA holding the election and who participate or cooperate in an FSA program and are of legal voting age may be nominated to serve on the county committee.

Individuals may nominate themselves or others as candidates. Also, organizations representing socially disadvantaged minorities and women farmers or ranchers may also nominate candidates.

The nomination form, FSA-669A, is available at the county office or may be downloaded from <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=newsroom&subject=landing&topic=cce>.

To be valid, the nomination form must be signed by the person being nominated, indicating agreement to serve if elected. The completed nomination form must be returned to the county office by the close of business on Aug. 1, or postmarked by midnight Aug. 1, 2008.

## Voting

Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters beginning Nov. 3, and must be returned to the county office by the close of business on Dec. 1, or postmarked by midnight Dec. 1, 2008.

Agricultural producers of legal voting age can vote if they participate or cooperate in any FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises and conducts the farming operations on an entire farm can also vote.





No one can be denied the right to vote because of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital or family status.

### ***Candidate Eligibility***

To hold office as a county committee member, a person must meet the basic eligibility criteria:

- Participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA
- Be eligible to vote in a county committee election
- Reside in the LAA in which the person is a candidate
- Not have been:
  - Removed or disqualified from the office of county committee member, alternate or employee
  - Removed for cause from any public office or have been convicted of fraud, larceny, embezzlement or any other felony
  - Dishonorably discharged from any branch of the armed services.

For additional clarification about county committee elections, contact your local county office staff.

### ***Crop Reporting***

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 benefits from the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, marketing assistance loans and Loan Deficiency Payments.

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 spring seeded crops is July 15.

### **CRP & NAP Certification**

Conservation Reserve Program acreage must be reported to receive annual rental payments. And, crop acreage for Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) must also be reported.

### **Prevented Planting:**

Prevented planting is to be reported no later

than 15 calendar days after the final planting date.

### **Failed Acreage:**

Reports of failed acreage must be filed before disposition of the crop, and producers must be able to establish to the satisfaction of the county committee that the crop failed and was prevented from being replanted through the normal planting period because of natural disaster conditions.

### ***2008 Compliance***

Compliance and spot checks will once again be utilized during the 2008 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, etc.

### ***Controlled Substances***

Program participants convicted under federal or state law of any planting, cultivating, growing, producing, harvesting or storing a controlled substance are ineligible for program payments and benefits.

If convicted of one of these offenses, the program participant shall be ineligible during that crop year and the four succeeding crop years for direct and counter-cyclical payments, price support loans, loan deficiency payments, market loan gains, storage payments, farm facility loans, Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program payments or disaster payments.

Program participants convicted of any federal or state offense consisting of the distribution (trafficking) of a controlled substance shall, at the discretion of the court, be ineligible for any or all program payments and benefits:

- for up to 5 years after the first conviction
- for up to 10 years after the second conviction
- permanently for a third or subsequent conviction.

Program participants convicted of federal or state offense for the possession of a controlled substance shall be ineligible, at the discretion of the court, for any or all program benefits, as follows:

- up to 1 year upon the first conviction
- up to 5 years after a second or subsequent conviction.



### ***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. If you want a crop loan, a power of attorney form will need to be completed for husband and wife, if both do not come into the office to sign the forms on the day the loan is disbursed.

### ***Online Services***

Producers, if you have Internet access you can electronically log on, fill out and print a variety of FSA paper forms in the comfort of your home as your schedule allows. You can also register for secure electronic access that will allow you to electronically sign and transmit some forms directly to the county office staff. If you are new to the website, first you will want to obtain a Level 2 USDA Service Center Customer ID and password at: <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/> and then click on "Create an Account Page" link.

USDA e-Authentication is the system used by USDA agencies to enable customers to obtain accounts that will allow them to access USDA Web applications and services via the Internet. This includes things such as submitting forms electronically, completing surveys online, and checking the status of your USDA accounts.

If you already have a Customer ID and password, then click on the following e-Forms website at:

[http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainser\\_vlet](http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainser_vlet) and then click on the "Sign In" button. A disclaimer window will open and after you



read the "Warning message" click on the "Continue" button.

Then the USDA Web services page will open to the e-Authentication login page. Enter your login User ID and password and then click on the "Login" button. To sign and transmit forms electronically, you must sign-up and get a User ID and password.

Submitting an e-Form is convenient. You can access information anytime day or night seven days a week. It's faster and forms and applications can be submitted and received in the county office in a matter of minutes, not days or weeks.

### ***Special Accommodations***

Reasonable accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment to attend or participate in meetings or events sponsored by the Farm Service Agency. If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in one of our events, please call the FSA county office and we will be happy to make any needed arrangements.

**This office will be closed July 4<sup>th</sup> in observance of Independence Day!**



Selected Interest Rates for June 2008	
Farm Operating - Direct	3.125 %
Farm Ownership - Direct	4.875 %
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment Beginning Farmer or Rancher	4.00 %
Emergency	3.750 %

Dates to Remember	
June 15	Candidate nominations for the FSA county committee begin
July 4	Office Closed
July 15	Final date to report spring seeded crops
July 18	LCP and LIP signup closes

Visit our Web site at  
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/>

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program 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 program. (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 to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.