



JUNE 2010

# Madera County FSA News

## USDA MADERA FSA

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**Hours**  
Monday - Friday  
8:00a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

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### 2010 FSA County Committee Elections

This year's COC elections are for candidates in LAA 2, Local Administrative Area 2 includes all Producers in Madera County west of Highway 99 and south of Avenue 14.

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to ALL farmers and ranchers, whether beginning or long established, with large or small operations. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

County Committee (COC) members are a critical component of FSA operations. The intent is to have the COC reflect the makeup of the producers and to represent all constituents. This means wherever possible, minorities, women or lower income producers need to be on the committee to speak for these underrepresented groups.

County committees provide local input on:

- Commodity price support loans and payments
- Conservation programs -Incentive, indemnity and disaster payments for some commodities
- Emergency programs
- Payment eligibility

FSA county committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws. County committee members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions.

Nov. 5, 2010 - Ballots mailed to eligible voters.

Dec. 6, 2010 - Last day to return voted ballots to the USDA Service Center.

Jan. 1, 2011 - Newly elected county committee members take office.

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

- 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.

To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign nomination form FSA-669A. The form includes a statement that the nominee agrees to serve if elected

Nomination forms for the 2010 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on Aug. 2, 2010.

Agricultural producers of legal voting age may be eligible to 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 of an entire farm may also be eligible to vote. More information about voting eligibility requirements can be found in the FSA fact sheet titled "FSA County Committee Election - Eligibility to Vote and Hold Office as a County Committee Member." Producers may contact their local USDA Service Center for more information.

*This office will closed July 5<sup>th</sup> in observance of Independence Day!*



Happy 4<sup>th</sup>  
of July



## Required Acreage Reports

**July 15<sup>th</sup> is the final date to report crop acreage.** Producers can maximize their opportunity for program benefit returns by filing their reports accurately and in a timely manner for all crops and land uses, including prevented and failed acreage.

Accurate acreage reports are necessary to determine and maintain eligibility for various programs, such as the **Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)** and newer programs authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill. Programs include the **Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE), Average Crop Revenue Election Program (ACRE), Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), Tree Assistance Program (TAP), and Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm Raised Fish Program (ELAP).**

Acreage reports are considered timely filed when completed by the applicable final crop reporting deadline, which may vary from state to state. Prevented acreage must be reported within 15 calendar days after the final planting date. Failed acreage must be reported before the disposition of the crop. Producers should contact their county FSA office if they are uncertain about reporting deadlines.

Late-filed provisions may be available to producers who are unable to meet the reporting deadline as required. Reports filed after the established deadline must meet certain requirements to be accepted and may be charged late fees.

Producers should visit their county FSA office to complete acreage reporting. For questions on this or any FSA program, including specific crop reporting deadlines and planting dates, producers should contact their county FSA office. More information on FSA programs is at: [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)

## 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, direct and guaranteed loans are currently available.

Ask your current commercial lender about an FSA loan guarantee 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 \$1,112,000. Producers are encouraged to apply early. FSA employees can help you complete the necessary application and other forms, and help you understand what information is required and where to find it. To find out more about FSA loan programs, contact the Merced County FSA office at (209) 722-4119.

## SURE Program

2008 applications are being taken at this time with **2009 applications still yet to come.** The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters incurred in the crop years 2008 through September 30, 2011. 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. However, crop insurance or NAP coverage is no longer required for crops that are not of economic significance or those where the administrative fee required to buy NAP coverage exceeds 10% of the value of the 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 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
- Crop is in a county declared a disaster county by the Secretary of Agriculture, or in contiguous counties, or producer shows proof of an individual loss of at least 50%.

SURE payments can apply to crop production 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

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for the same loss.

A SURE calculator is available at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=diap&topic=sure>. The calculator is not official, but is intended for educational use. A fact sheet and backgrounder are also available online.

### **NAP Coverage Deadlines**

Be sure to contact your local FSA office for the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) filing deadlines for your crops. NAP applications are due at different times according to the crop being insured. Producers should apply for NAP coverage using form CCC-471 (Application for Coverage). Related service fees are due when the application is filed. The application and service fee **MUST** be filed by the crop sales closing date.

The current service fee is \$250 per crop per county with a maximum of \$750 per producer per county. The fee cannot exceed a total of \$1875 per producer for individuals with farming interests in multiple counties. Limited resource producers may request a waiver for service fees.

*To stay eligible producers must submit their production and report their acreage by the acreage reporting date (small grains April 15 all other crops July 15). In case of a disaster you must notify the county office and file a CCC-576 within 15 days of the disaster occurrence or 15 days from loss is apparent.*

To qualify, a producer must share in the risk of producing an eligible crop.

### **Banking Changes?**

Almost all Farm Service Agency payments are made electronically using Direct Deposit. This innovation has cut down on the number of missing and late payments and reduced the time required to move funds. It has been calculated that having a problem with a payment is 20 times greater with checks than with Direct Deposit. Another benefit is that Direct Deposit to your account can be made within 48 hours.

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 uninterrupted service.

### **Farm Changes**

Changes in the farming operation that may affect any determination after the Direct and Counter Cyclical Program contract is signed, including, but not limited to, ownership changes, producer changes, or changes in the crop share arrangements on the farm, shall be reported to CCC (on the CCC-509) no later than September 30. The failure of producers to timely report changes may result in the loss of payments for all producers on the farm for the crop year covered by the contract and all producers on the contract will be required to refund to CCC payments received for the crop year, plus interest.

### **Proper Signature Requirements**

In order to sign a FSA document, an individual signing on behalf of a farming operation must submit acceptable documentation that provides the signature authority. Acceptable documentation may include CCC-902, partnership agreements, articles of incorporation, bylaws, trust agreements, resolutions, or FSA-211 (Power of Attorney). Failure to provide acceptable evidence may result in ineligibility.

### **Change of MILC Production Start Month**

Changes to the MILC production start month selected by the dairy operation **must** be made on or before the 14th of the month before the:

- month originally selected by the dairy operation as their MILC production start month
- newly selected MILC production start month for the dairy operation.

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 production start month that the dairy operation is changing to. Otherwise, the MILC production start month can **only** be changed for the following FY.

### **Fun Facts**

**How many glasses of milk can one cow produce in a year?**

46,000 - The average cow produces 2,100 pounds of milk a month.

**What nut is the peach related to?**

Almond - Almonds are stone fruits related to cherries, plums and peaches. California produces 80% of the world's supply of almonds.

Madera County FSA Office  
 425 N Gateway Dr, Ste E  
 Madera, CA 93637



PRESORTED STANDARD  
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
 Davis, CA  
 PERMIT #22

Happy  
 4<sup>th</sup> of July



| Dates to Remember |                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| July 5            | Office closed           |
| July 15           | Acreage Reports due     |
| July 15           | NAP Acreage Reports due |
| July 15           | NAP Production due      |
|                   |                         |

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