

Modoc County News

**Modoc County
USDA Service Center**

Modoc County FSA
802 W 12th Street
Alturas, CA 96101
530-233-4391 (phone)
530-233-8869 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov

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

County Committee
Darrell DePaul
Kathy Ackley
Ron Schluter

Staff
Marlene Hamilton
Katherine Lewis (Yreka)
Christopher Lauppe



**New to the Alturas
Service Center:**
Greg Bettman, Range
Conservationist, who
was recently hired by
the Natural Resources
Conservation Service
and moved here from
New Mexico with his
wife and baby to join
Tom Hill, Engineer;
Larry Flournoy, Soil
Conservationist; and
Matt Drechsel, District
Conservationist.

LIVESTOCK COMPENSATION PROGRAM SIGN-UP NOW

Previously announced as a county that would not be offering this program, Modoc County livestock producers may now apply for monetary assistance under the recently approved 2007 LCP for pasture losses and increased hay purchase costs in calendar year 2007. All applicants must also meet FSA eligibility requirements concerning Wetlands, Highly Erodible Land, and payment eligibility. A sign-up deadline has not been announced but don't wait until the last minute. Maximum payment amounts are based on livestock numbers in Modoc County on 1/1/2007 with beef/buffalo/beefalo cows and bulls at \$10.66 per head, 500 lb and up beef/buffalo/beefalo at \$8.00 per head, all sheep and goats at \$2.67, and working horses at \$7.89 per head. Swine are also eligible with varying rates. Eligible payment amounts consider dryland pasture and rangeland acres and reduction in use due to drought, irrigated pasture loss due to no irrigation water availability in 2007, Forest Service and BLM allotment AUM use and reduction in 2007, and additional feed purchase costs in calendar year 2007 over calendar year 2006 with proper documentation. Contrary to prior LCP programs, the eligibility calculations of this program do not factor in irrigated pastures and cropland, or raised hay sold to others that could have been fed to the applicant's own livestock. This program is also approved for use in all counties surrounding Modoc and many other counties in the US. Contact our office for additional information and to make an appointment to apply.

CROP DISASTER PROGRAM

Farmers who obtained Multi-Peril Crop Insurance or NAP coverage (Noninsured Crop Assistance Program) for 2005, 2006 or 2007 are eligible to apply for disaster assistance payments under the Crop Disaster Program (CDP) for quantity losses that exceeded 30 percent in any of these years due to weather related causes. Producers with no insurance in any of these years are not eligible for assistance under CDP. This is the first time we have seen this provision! You were not required to have been paid under Crop Insurance or NAP to apply for this program. No sign-up deadline has been announced but don't wait until the last minute. FSA program eligibility requirements including Highly Erodible Land and Wetlands and Adjusted Gross Income apply to this program.

NASS Still Accepting Ag Census Reports

The Census of Agriculture is conducted every five years and the deadline for producers to turn the forms in was Feb. 4. However a large number of the census forms have not been returned according to National Agricultural Statistics Service Deputy Administrator Carol House. She says they're waiting for the rest of them and will give farmers until June 1 to turn them in before they start calling farmers and ranchers.

Responding to the census is required by law and the privacy of answers given is protected. "If a producer is not filling it out because they have a question, they're not quite sure how to go about it, they're not sure whether they're required to fill it out or not, please call," House says. "We've received 130,000 calls since census forms were sent out."

A toll-free help line is available at (888) 424-7828. The census can also be submitted online at www.agcensus.usda.gov.

Dates to Remember:

April 30 - Final date to timely report fall seeded crops.

May 26 – Memorial Day Holiday.

June 1 – Ag Census extended deadline.

July 4 - Independence Day Holiday.

July 15 – Final date to timely report spring seeded crops.

Ongoing – Continuous signup for Conservation Reserve Program.

Ongoing – Continuous signup for Com-Crop Disaster Program

Ongoing – Continuous signup for 2007 Livestock Compensation Program

Interest Rates:

90-Day Treasury Bills 2.25%

Direct Farm Operating Loans 3.25%

Direct Farm Ownership Loans 4.875%

Emergency Operating Loans 3.75%

Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher Loans 4.0%

Extending Wool, Mohair, Unshorn Pelt, and Honey MALs & LDPs

The Farm Bill extension signed by the President on December 26, 2007, authorized the Marketing Assistance Loan and Loan Deficiency Payment programs for the 2008 crop of graded and ungraded wool, mohair, and unshorn pelts through March 15, 2008. On March 14, 2008, S. 2745 was signed into law, and subsequently authorizes FSA to continue administering 2008 crop wool, mohair, and unshorn pelt MALs and LDPs through April 18, 2008. It is unknown how the new Farm Bill will treat wool producers.

Because the availability date for 2008 crop honey begins on April 1, 2008, FSA County Offices are authorized to accept 2008 honey MAL and LDP requests from April 1, 2008 through April 18, 2008.

Beginning / Limited Resource Farmers and Ranchers

FSA has funding to assist 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 average 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 from our Loan Officer, Katherine Lewis in Yreka. Her number is 530-842-6123 ext. 111. You may also visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

Reporting Crop Acreage

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.

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.

Crop reporting form FSA-578, Report of Acreage, must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. Producers need to file reports by April 30 for fall planted crops and July 15 for spring planted crops. Late filed reports are charged a fee for a farm visit for crop verification.

Prevented Planting:

Prevented planting needs to be reported no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date for the crop.

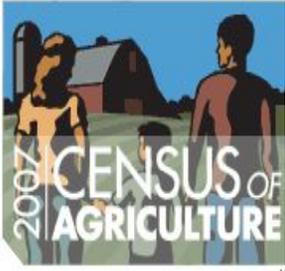
Failed Acreage:

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.

Farm Bill Extended to April 18th

Passage of the farm bill, currently being debated by Congress, has been delayed, requiring a 33-day extension that was recently passed and signed by President George W. Bush.

“America’s farmers deserve better than a series of short-term extensions here of our current law,” says Secretary of Agriculture Ed Schafer. “They need to know what farm policy is going to be so that they can make sound business decisions about what to plant this year and how they are going to finance it.” The current farm bill will now extend to April 18. Congress will have until that date to pass a consolidated bill.



Census Report still sitting on your desk? Don't wait for a phone call from the USDA-NASS department to remind you. Dig it out and send it in or report online before June 1. Bring it in to the Modoc Co. FSA office if you need some help filling it out. We have helped with several of these.

Aerial Photos:

Need a color aerial photo of your farm or ranch to provide to the Ag Commissioner for a spray permit? Need one to provide to your chemical or fertilizer applicator? Need one for your planning purposes? Contact Marlene in our office. No cost.



Conservation Compliance

All participants in USDA programs are required to have a conservation system in place on all the highly erodible land (HEL) that they operate. Several areas where problems can arise with complying with a conservation system are; renting new cropland, purchasing new land, breaking out additional cropland, planting different crops such as soybeans, and changing or removing existing conservation practices.

It is very important that you contact the FSA office before doing any of the above. Also, it is very important that you contact our office before modifying - tiling, draining, dredging, filling, or leveling - any wetland or drainage ditch. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in loss of all Federal payments and eligibility.

SIGNATURE AUTHORITIES

Proper signatures on Farm Service Agency contracts, applications and forms must be submitted before the document will be considered as filed. All entities, including revocable and irrevocable trusts, corporations, partnerships, estates, etc., must provide evidence of signature authority stipulating those individuals who are authorized to represent the entity. FSA cannot accept signatures without such documentation on file. Examples of acceptable evidence include trust agreements, corporate charters or resolutions, partnership agreements and court orders of appointment. Spouses can sign for one another on most program documents unless written notification denying a spouse this authority has been provided to the county office staff. For more information about appropriate signature authority, please contact our office.

Direct and Guaranteed Loans

The Farm Service Agency is committed to providing eligible family farmers with loans to meet their farm credit needs. If you are having trouble obtaining the credit you need for your farm, or you regularly borrow from FSA, direct and guaranteed loans are available now.

Ask your lender about an FSA loan guarantee if

you've had a setback and your lender is reluctant to extend or renew your loan. Producers are encouraged to apply early so that a loan can be processed and funded in a timely manner. Most of our loan programs have special funding available for minority, female and beginning farmers.

FSA 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 our Farm Loan Officer, Katherine Lewis, in Yreka

Katherine will also be in Alturas overnight in the middle of each month. Contact her for an appointment in Alturas or Tulelake.

Rural Youth Loans

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA) makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to establish and operate income producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be initiated, developed, carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organization or with a vocational teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and operated with the assistance of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. Contact Katherine for more details.

Banking Changes?

If you have changed banks and not notified FSA, your FSA program payment could be delayed. Payments are electronically transferred into your bank account, if we are not aware of changes to your account and routing numbers, there could be problems. In order to make timely payments, you need to notify the office if you close your account or if another financial institution purchases your bank. It is important that any changes in producer's account such as type of account, bank mergers, routing number or account numbers, be provided to the county office promptly to avoid possible payment delay.

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