



July 2009

San Benito/Santa Clara FSA News

USDA

Hollister Service Center

San Benito/Santa Clara County FSA
2337 Technology Pkwy Suite A
Hollister, CA 95023

(831) 637-4360 (phone)
(831) 636-7643 (fax)

www.fsa.usda.gov/CA

Hours
Normal office hours are:
Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Due to staff shortage office may at times be closed. You MUST make an appointment to ensure you will be served.

County Committee
Wayne Shingai, LAA1
Nenette Corotto, LAA2
Joseph Gonzales, LAA3

Staff
Jeannine Leyva, CED
Rebekah Reische, PT

Farm loan staff are headquartered in the Salinas Service Center (831) 424-7377 (phone)

NRCS is co-located in the Hollister Service Center, in Suite C. Dial extension 3 to reach NRCS staff.



Seeking Nominations for County Committee – Santa Clara County

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. In combined counties in some years, two seats may be up for election.

Nominations

Candidate nominations for the FSA county committee election will be accepted June 15 through Aug. 3, 2009.

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=ce>.

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. 3, or postmarked by midnight Aug. 3, 2009.

Voting

Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters beginning Nov. 6, and must be returned to the county office by the close of business on Dec. 7, or postmarked by midnight Dec. 7, 2009.

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 felony
 - Dishonorably discharged from any branch of the armed services.

For additional clarification about county committee elections, contact our office and ask for Jeannine at (831) 637-4360 Ext.100

NAP Coverage – Plan for 2010

Sales Closing Dates for Next Year's Crops Fast Approaching

2010 NAP Sales Closing Dates

August 1, 2009

- Fall-planted seed crops, small grains

September 1, 2009

- Forage crops (hay)
- Mushrooms
- Floriculture
- Ornamental nursery
- Christmas trees
- Turf grass sod
- Ginseng

December 1, 2009

- Onions
- Honey
- Forage crops (native grass)

December 15, 2009

- Tree & vine crops (apples, cherries, etc)
- Strawberries & caneberries
- Asparagus

March 1, 2010

- All other annuals (vegetables)

NAP coverage is NOT available on any crop that is insurable in the County

- *crops which cannot meet minimum production requirements*
- *young trees*

NAP can soften financial losses caused by natural disasters, but only if you've applied for coverage and paid the application fee in advance. NAP kicks in when natural disasters result in a catastrophic loss (more than 50%) of production or prevented planting (more than 35% of intended acreage) of an eligible crop. NAP coverage is available for crops for which FCIC insurance is not offered.

Eligible Crops

- Includes all types of crops that are not traditionally insurable, such as vegetables, hay, forage (native pasture), mushrooms, floriculture, & Christmas trees
- *If you are not sure whether a crop is insurable in our county, contact our office or a crop insurance agent*

Eligible Natural Disasters

- Unusual weather conditions such as drought, freeze, hail, excessive moisture
- Adverse natural occurrence such as earthquake or flood
- Must occur before or during harvest, be documented, and directly affect the crop

Eligible Producers

- Your average adjusted gross nonfarm income (that of any individual or entity) cannot exceed \$500,000
- You must file all eligibility forms including a Farm Operating Plan and Highly Erodible Land Conservation Certification

Applying for Coverage

- Service fees must be paid in advance by the sales closing date and are NOT REFUNDABLE even if you fail to later plant the crop or meet eligibility criteria
- Service fees are \$250 per crop per county, not to exceed \$750 per producer per county
- Each person with a share in the crop must purchase coverage for their own share
- Limited resource producers may request a waiver of service fees; ask us for the criteria

Annual Reporting Requirements for NAP

- Report all acres planted by the EARLIER OF: April 30 for hay/grain crops, July 15 for spring-seeded crops, or 15 days prior to the onset of harvest for all crops.
- Provide verifiable production records showing the quantity of all harvested production for all uses (including salvage) during the year no later than the acreage reporting date of the following year
- Your records must be verifiable and clearly show final, total net production or we may assign production or deny the claim
- *Failure to report acreage & production information may result in reduced or zero NAP assistance*

Approved Yields & Payments

- Your approved yield is the average of your annual production divided by your crop acreage for the last 4-10 years. *If you do not provide acreage & production records for at least 4 prior years, your approved yield may be substantially reduced.*
- Loss is determined by comparing your actual production for the year to your expected production (which is based on your approved yield).

- NAP covers the amount of loss that EXCEEDS 50% of your expected production.
- The NAP payment is calculated using your acres, approved yield, net production, 55% of an average market price established by FSA, & a reduction factor if the crop is unharvested or prevented from being planted



If a Natural Disaster Strikes

- You must file a Notice of Loss form CCC-576 within 15 calendar days of the natural disaster or date damage became apparent
- You must request an appraisal if the damaged crop will be unharvested or used differently than intended & must leave all acres intact until the appraisal is completed & the acreage released
- *Late-filed notices of loss that do not allow on-site verification of the crop and the cause of loss will NOT be eligible*
- You must file an application for payment no later than the acreage reporting date of the following year.

Contact the office for more information on NAP & crop insurance.

Farm Reconstitutions

For FSA program purposes, tracts having the same owner and the same operator are grouped under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation take place, a farm reconstitution is necessary.

The reconstitution—or recon—is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by **August 1** for farms enrolled in specific programs.

Contact your FSA office to discuss the various methods of Reconstitution including: the Estate Method, the Designation of Landowner Method, the DCP Cropland Method and the Default Method.

DCP & ACRE Signup Deadline

Signup for the 2009 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment (DCP) Program has been extended until **August 14, 2009**. FSA will **NOT** accept any late-filed applications. Signup in the ACRE option is also available through August 14, 2009.

FSA 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 2009, you may request to receive advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment for each commodity associated with the farm. Counter-cyclical payment rates vary depending on market prices and are issued only when prices fall below a threshold level.

The electronic DCP (or eDCP) service will save you time, reduce paperwork and speed up contract processing at FSA offices. It is available to anyone eligible to participate in the DCP Program. To access this on-line service, you must have an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires filling out an online registration form at www.eauth.egov.usda.gov followed by a visit to the local USDA Service Center for identity verification.

Changes in Payment Limitations

The applicability of payment limitation provisions have expanded over the last 39 years to include more programs. See below for key changes.

New forms for 2009 and subsequent years
Anyone that plans to participate in 2009 programs is required to submit a completed CCC-902, CCC-926, and CCC-901, if applicable, for payment eligibility and payment limitation purposes. The form used prior to 2009 was named CCC-502.

Another change for 2009, all must make a contribution in an entity

All partners, stockholders, or members with an ownership interest in the legal entity must make an active contribution, whether compensated or **not** compensated. That active contribution must include:

- personal labor, or
- active personal management,
- or a combination of active personal labor and active personal management to the farming operation;

Note: that there are exceptions for spouses.



Dates to Remember	
Continuous	Continuous Conservation Reserve Program
June 15, 2009	COC Nomination period opens
April 27 to August 14, 2009	ACRE program signup period
Aug. 3, 2009	Deadline to file COC Nomination
Aug. 14, 2009	DCP / ACRE Signup Deadline
Selected Interest Rates for June 2009	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	2.25%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	4.25%
Farm Ownership Loans — Down Payment	1.50%
Emergency Loans	3.75%

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.

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."