

Farm Service Agency

Address:

USDA Service Center
65 S. Main Street Suite 106
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(805) 434-0398 ext. 2
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Web Sites:

FSA: www.fsa.usda.gov
USDA: www.usda.gov
Farm Bill:
www.usda.gov/farmbill

Hours:

Monday-Friday
8:00 AM-4:30 PM

County Committee:

Michael Strouss
Lonnie Twisselman
Tom Ikeda

Advisor:

Open

County Executive**Director:**

Jennifer L. Anderson

Staff:

Stacy Alcorn, PT
Caitlyn Madrid, PT
Jody Gouff, PT
Jose Guevara, PT

IN THIS ISSUE:

- LFP Signup Underway
- DCP Signup Underway
- ACRE Option
- NAP Deadlines
- Farm Storage Facility
Loan Changes
- Biomass Crop
Assistance Program
- Power of Attorney

San Luis Obispo County

FSA NEWS

November 2009

Newsletter 1

Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP)

USDA's FSA recently announced that producers may now begin applying for benefits under the provisions of the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP). LFP is a permanent disaster program, authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill, replacing previous ad-hoc livestock disaster assistance programs and is funded through the Agricultural Disaster Relief Trust Fund.



LFP provides payments to eligible livestock producers that have suffered livestock grazing losses due to qualifying drought or fire. For drought, the losses must have occurred on land that is native or improved pastureland with permanent vegetative cover or a crop planted specifically for grazing. The drought losses must also have occurred during the normal grazing period for the specific type of grazing land in the county. For fire, LFP provides payments to eligible livestock producers that have suffered grazing losses on rangeland managed by a federal agency if the eligible livestock producer is prohibited by the federal agency from grazing the normal permitted livestock on the managed rangeland due to a qualifying fire.

Eligible livestock under LFP include beef cattle, alpacas, buffalo, beefalo, dairy cattle, deer, elk, emus, equine, goats, llamas, poultry, reindeer, sheep and swine. For losses due to drought, qualifying drought ratings are determined using the U.S. Drought Monitor located at <http://www.drought.unl.edu/dm/monitor.html>.

For LFP, livestock or forage losses must have occurred on or after January 1, 2008, and before October 1, 2011. Note that there are assistance application deadlines for each crop year during that multi-year period. San Luis Obispo County had a qualifying drought for both the 2008 and 2009 feed years. The deadline to complete the application and all eligibility data for the 2008 feed year is December 10, 2009 and for the 2009 feed year the deadline is January 30, 2010.

For more information or to apply for LFP, please call our FSA county office to schedule an appointment. General information can also be obtained on the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov.

2010 DCP Signups

Enrollment for the 2010 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) has begun and will continue through June 1, 2010. USDA urges producers to make use of the eDCP automated website to sign up, or producers can visit any USDA Service Center to complete their 2010 DCP contract.

USDA 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 2010, eligible producers may request to receive advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment. USDA will issue advance direct payments beginning Dec. 1, 2009. Counter-cyclical payment rates vary depending on market prices. Counter-cyclical payments are issued only when the effective price for a commodity is below its target price. The effective price is the higher of the national average market price received during the 12-month marketing year for each covered commodity and the national average loan rate for a marketing assistance loan for the covered commodity.

The ACRE Option

The optional ACRE Program provides a safety net based on state revenue losses and acts in place of the price-based safety net of counter-cyclical payments under DCP. A farm's payment is based on a revenue guarantee calculated using a 5-year average state yield and the most recent 2-year national price for each eligible commodity. For 2010, the 2-year price average will be based on the 2008 and 2009 crop years.

An ACRE payment is issued when both the state and the farm have incurred a revenue loss. The payment is based on 83.3 percent (85 percent in 2012) of the farm's planted acres times the difference between the State ACRE guarantee and the state revenue times the ratio of the farm's yield divided by the state expected yield. The total number of planted acres for which a producer may receive ACRE payments may not exceed the total base on the farm. In exchange for participating in ACRE, in addition to not receiving counter-cyclical payments, a farm's direct payment is reduced by 20 percent, and marketing assistance loan rates are reduced by 30 percent.

The decision to enroll in the ACRE Program is irrevocable. The owner of the farm and all producers on

the farm must agree to enroll in ACRE. Once enrolled, the farm shall be enrolled for that initial crop year and will remain in ACRE through the 2012 crop year.

The June 1, 2010, deadline is mandatory for all participants. USDA will not accept any late-filed applications.

Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP)

The NAP program provides financial assistance to producers on non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occur due to a natural disaster for crops which catastrophic risk protection level of crop insurance is not available.



At the time of application, producers must pay a nonrefundable service fee for the eligible NAP crop by the application closing date. **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.**

NAP Crops	2010 Application Closing Dates
All Vegetable Crops	Aug. 1, 2009
Fall Planted Seed Crops	Aug. 1, 2009
Garbanzo Beans	Sept. 1, 2009
Value Loss Crops (ie. Cut Flowers)	Sept. 1, 2009
Strawberries	Oct. 1, 2009
Grazing Acreage & Forage/Hay Crops	Dec. 1, 2009
Honey, Onions	Dec. 1, 2009
Almonds, Apricots, Asparagus, Cane berries, Kiwis, Persimmons, Cherries, Mint, Olives, Nectarines, Peaches, Pears, Grapes, Pistachios, Plums, Walnuts	Dec. 15, 2009
2011 Citrus Crops (2-6 years old)	Jan. 1, 2010
All other annual Crops	March 1, 2010

Production must be submitted no later than July 15, 2010 for the 2009 crop year. If you have not previously submitted your 2009 crop production you must make an appointment with our office or you will not be eligible for benefits.

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.

Farm Storage Facility Loan Changes

The Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program allows producers of eligible commodities to obtain low-interest financing to build or upgrade farm storage facilities.

The new maximum principal amount of a loan through FSFL is \$500,000. Participants are now required to provide a down payment of 15 percent, with CCC providing a loan for the remaining 85 percent of the net cost of the eligible storage facility. New loan terms of 7, 10 or 12 years are available depending on the amount of the loan. Interest rates for each term rate may be different and are based on the rate which CCC borrows from the Treasury Department.

Early partial disbursement will be available after a portion of the construction has been completed. The final fund disbursement will be made when all construction is completed. The maximum amount of the partial disbursement will be 50 percent of the projected and approved total loan amount.

Applications for FSFL must be submitted to the FSA county office that maintains the farm's records. An FSFL must be approved before any site preparation or construction can begin. The following commodities are eligible for farm storage facility loans:

- Corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley or oilseeds harvested as whole grain
- Corn, grain sorghum, wheat, oats or barley harvested as other-than-whole grain
- Hay
- Renewable biomass
- Fruits (including nuts) and vegetables
- Cold storage facilities

For more information about FSFL please contact our FSA office or visit our website at: www.fsa.usda.gov.

Biomass Crop Assistance Program

The new Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) is for biomass conversion facilities and those who own, chip and transport biomass material to these facilities.

Chippers and producers with conversion facilities contracts to prepare and deliver materials can apply for matching payments under the collection, harvest, storage and transportation (CHST) component of BCAP. Once an agreement is signed between FSA and a biomass conversion facility and funding is provided, the facilities can begin accepting materials under this program.

The matching CHST payments are paid at a rate of \$1 for \$1 per dry-ton equivalent received by a qualified

biomass conversion facility, not to exceed \$45 per dry-ton equivalent. A biomass owner is eligible to receive payments for two years. The purpose of the matching payments is to assist biomass handlers with the CHST cost of delivering biomass to a qualified biomass conversion facility. Once a facility becomes qualified, eligible material owners who deliver biomass to that facility may be eligible to receive CHST payments.

Eligible material owners or producers, who market eligible material to a qualified biomass conversion facility, may apply for the matching CHST payment at their FSA county office. An application must be submitted and approved before the eligible material is sold or delivered to a qualified biomass conversion facility. After the product is delivered, a material handler must provide FSA with documentation of product quantity, quality and payment rate. County offices will validate payment requests with information in the county office and information provided under the terms of MOUs with the qualified biomass conversion facilities. CHST payments will not be authorized until appropriate environmental analysis is completed. Contact the California State FSA Office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov for more information.

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.

Dates to Remember

November 11, 2009	Office Closed – Veterans Day
November 26, 2009	Office Closed – Thanksgiving Day
December 1, 2009	NAP deadline – Grazing and Forage Crops
December 7, 2009	Last day to return voted ballot for election
December 15, 2009	NAP deadline – Various Crops
Within 15 Days	NAP Notice of Loss. Must report damage within 15 days of damage



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SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS

Special accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impaired, or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, please call our office at (805) 434-0398 Ext. 2.

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 official or the Secretary of Agriculture, USDA, Washington, D.C. 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.