



July 2011

**California
Santa Barbara-
Ventura County FSA
Office**

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Fax: (805) 928-9644
www.fsa.usda.gov/ca

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

**Santa Barbara-
Ventura County Staff:**
County Executive Director
Brenda Farias
Program Technicians
Alex Hernandez
Daisy Lopez
Farm Loan Technician
Tarry Hetzel
Farm Loan Officer
Gary Troester
Farm Loan Officer
Trainee
Victor Manuel Hernandez
Student Intern
Kayla Gardener

Ventura Office Hours:
1ST & 3RD Wed. of the month
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

*Located at the
USDA/RCD Building

3380 Somis Rd,
Somis, CA 93066

Note: Make an appointment. We will cancel office hours if we don't have any scheduled appointments.

SURE – 2009 and Later

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters. **SURE sign up for crop year 2009 losses runs to July 29, 2011. Deadlines for 2010 and 2011 crop years will be announced later.**

If you have any questions regarding the 2009 SURE program, please do not hesitate to call our office as soon as possible.

COC Election Nomination

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committee starts with the nomination of eligible candidates.

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. This form is available at USDA Service Centers and online at:

http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/fsa0669a_commiteelectform.pdf

Nomination forms for the 2011 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on Aug. 1, 2011.

Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in an FSA program may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee. Individuals may nominate themselves or others as a candidate. Additionally, organizations representing minority and women farmers or ranchers may nominate candidates. Nomination forms are filed for the county committee of the office that administers a producer's farm records.

Disaster Assistance

The Farm Service Agency would like to remind crop and livestock producers throughout states that have recently experienced severe damage from flooding, wildfires and tornadoes that FSA programs are available to assist with recovery.

FSA administers several important programs that help producers recover from disaster damage and livestock deaths. Among the key programs available to address impacts from disasters are the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP), the Noninsured Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) Program.

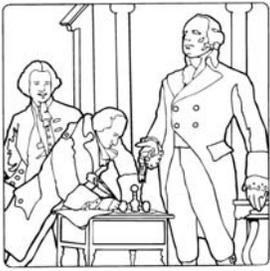
Fact sheets for all of these programs can be found at www.fsa.usda.gov; click on Newsroom, then Fact Sheets.

We encourage all who have suffered a disaster due to the recent severe weather conditions to read the fact sheets and visit the local FSA county office so they get a quick start in the recovery process.

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, or regularly borrow from FSA, direct and guaranteed loans are currently available. 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 \$1,119,000. Producers are encouraged to apply early so that a loan can be processed and funded in a timely manner. FSA employees will help you complete the necessary application and other forms, and help you understand what

(Continued on page 2: Farm Loan)



FSA Signature Policy

Husbands and wives may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation programs in which either has an interest. This option is automatically available unless a written request for exclusion is made to the county office staff by either spouse.

There are exceptions to the rule, where spouses may not sign on behalf of each other for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations or other similar entities.

Individual signatures are also required on certain Farm Loan Program and Farm Storage Facility Loan documents.

For more clarification on spousal signature authority, feel free to contact your local FSA office.



(Continued from page 1: Farm Loan) information is required, where to find it or who to contact to get it. To find out more about FSA loan programs, contact the county office staff for an appointment with a farm loan officer.

Payment Limitations

Anyone that plans to participate in 2011 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 previously was called a CCC-502.

Contributions

All partners, stockholders, or members with an ownership interest in the legal entity must make a contribution, whether compensated or **not** compensated, for active--*

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

*Note: there are exceptions for spouses.

Additional information on payment limitations is available at FSA county offices or on line at: www.fsa.usda.gov

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 Row Crops is 15 days before harvest and July 15th for all other crops.

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. Failure to report prevented planting acreage could result in loss of benefits for the SURE program or possibly other disaster assistance programs.

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.

NAP Enrollment

To maintain eligibility for several FSA disaster assistance programs, producers must obtain crop insurance or NAP coverage before a disaster strikes. Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) applications for coverage must be filed using Form CCC-471 and applicable service fees must be paid by the closing date. Application closing dates vary by crop, please refer to page 4 “Dates to Remember” for specific crop deadlines and feel free to call our office if you have further questions.

Producers must obtain NAP or crop insurance coverage on all crops in order to remain eligible for the agency’s Disaster Assistance Programs such as SURE, TAP, and ELAP. Producers must purchase at least catastrophic (CAT) level of insurance for all insurable crops. LFP requires coverage only on grazed acres NAP provides coverage to producers for non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters. Crops eligible for NAP coverage are those for which crop insurance is not available, including fruits and vegetables, aquaculture, pecans, turf grass and forage crops just to name a few.

Sodbusting

Farmers and ranchers should be aware that if they use highly erodible land for crop production without proper conservation measures, they risk losing eligibility to participate in Farm Service Agency programs.

Before producers clear, plow or otherwise prepare areas not presently under crop production for planting, they are required to

(Continued on page 3: Sodbusting)



GIS

As part of a program to digitally map the nation's farms and fields, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has established the Common Land Unit (CLU) as a standardized GIS (Geographic Information Systems) data layer that has allowed mapping to be integrated easily on a nationwide basis. The Farm Service Agency manages this CLU data layer through a distributed database environment for all field service centers throughout the country.

Using GIS provides for more consistent and more accurate land measurements, such as field acreage and acreage boundaries of conservation practices, such as riparian buffers. With high quality digital imagery, new land use changes (farm transfers and land subdivisions) can be easily updated. Maps can be created in either paper or digital format for FSA customers or the public.

More information about the Common Land Unit and NAIP imagery can be found by visiting on-line, APFO (Aerial Photography Field Office) at www.apfo.usda.gov.

(Continued from page 2: Sodbusting) file an AD-1026, indicating the area to be brought into production.

If Natural Resources Conservation Service indicates that the area will be highly erodible land, the producer will be required to develop and implement a conservation plan on the affected acreage, before bringing land into production. For more information about the new spot check selection procedure, feel free to contact your local office for additional clarification.



ECP Sign-up

USDA Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) provides emergency funding and technical assistance for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters and for carrying out emergency water conservation measures in periods of severe drought. Funding for ECP is appropriated by Congress.

Land Eligibility

County FSA committees determine land eligibility based on on-site inspections of damage, taking into account the type and extent of damage. For land to be eligible, the natural disaster must create new conservation problems that, if untreated, would:

- impair or endanger the land;
- materially affect the land's productive capacity;
- represent unusual damage which, except for wind erosion, is not the type likely to recur frequently in the same area; and
- be so costly to repair that Federal assistance is or will be required to return the land to productive agricultural use.

Conservation problems existing prior to the applicable disaster are ineligible for ECP assistance. In addition the applicant must:

- Complete a Request for Cost-Shares Form (AD-245)
- have a restoration cost of at least \$5000
- complete an Initial Onsite inspection prior to approval and a Final onsite inspection prior to payment

Payments

ECP program participants receive cost-share assistance of up to 75 percent (socially disadvantaged applicants can receive more) of the cost to implement approved emergency conservation practices. Cost-sharing on damage however, is **not** authorized for:

- Rehabilitation of stream banks, channels, levees, dikes and structures within streams
- Removing debris that does not interfere with normal farming operations or that might be removed with the applicant's labor and equipment without seriously disrupting seasonal operations on the farm
- Restoring minor damage that the applicant can correct without federal assistance
- Land between any levee or stream
- Land susceptible to frequent damage due to its location

Sign-up Period

Producers affected by the Excessive rain - December 17th - 22nd of 2010 and continuing through March 18th - 26th of 2011 can sign-up for ECP compensation between July 20th and August 9th, 2011. Please call our office if you have any questions or concerns.

Controlled Substances

The conviction for a controlled substance violation adversely affects the eligibility of participants in most programs administered by FSA and NRCS. These programs include, but are not limited to: direct and counter-cyclical payments, price support loans, loan deficiency payments, market loan gains, storage payments, farm facility loans, and Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program payments or disaster payments.

The period of ineligibility is dependent upon the circumstances of the violation and the terms of the conviction. A person convicted of growing, cultivating and storing a controlled substance will be ineligible for up to 5 years from the date of conviction. A person convicted for possession or trafficking of a controlled substance may be ineligible depending upon the court decision and history of past violations.

For more information or any other questions, feel free to contact our office.

Santa Barbara/Ventura
 County FSA Office
 920 E. Stowell Road
 Santa Maria, CA 93454



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

Selected Interest Rates for July 2011	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating - Direct	2.375%
Farm Ownership - Direct	4.750%
Limited Resource	5.000%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.500%
Emergency	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility:	
7 year	2.375%
10 year	3.000%
12 year	3.250%

Dates to Remember	
29 Jul	2009 SURE Deadline
1 Aug	End NAP Signup for Fall Planted Seed Crops
1 Aug	COC Nomination Due in County Office
1 Sept	End NAP for Signup Value loss and controlled environmental crops...includes cut flowers and Strawberries
1 Dec	End NAP Signup for Forage Crops, Intended Use of FG, Hay (Mechanically Harvested) Forage Crops, Intended Use of GZ, Grazing and Honey
15 Dec	End NAP Signup for Fruit-Nut Tree Crops: Almonds, Apricots, Cane Berries, Cherries, Grapes, Kiwi, Mint, Nectarines, Olives, Peaches, Pears, Persimmons, Pistachios, Plums, Pomegranates, and Walnuts

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