

**SOLANO-NAPA COUNTY FSA NEWS**

June 2008

**County Committee**

Richard Hamilton (LAA 2)  
Craig Gnos (LAA 3)  
Linda Neal (LAA 1)  
Craig Nakahara, Advisor

**County Executive Director**

Lynda Janne

**Contact Numbers**

707-678-1931 or 944-0622  
FAX 707-678-5001

**County Office Staff**

Laura VanHoose, ext 106  
Bonnie Nogales, ext 102  
Billie Escamilla, ext 100  
**FSA Field Rep**  
Bob Currey, ext 110

**IMPORTANT DATES**

7/2/08: Signup for haying/grazing CRP  
7/15/08: Last date to timely file report of spring-seeded & perennial crops  
7/16/08: Deadline for LCP & LIP Signup  
8/1/08: Last day to submit Nominations for COC (LAA2)

**County Committee Elections**  
*"FSA Counts on You"*

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.

Candidate nominations for the FSA county committee election will be accepted June 15 through Aug. 1, 2008.

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>

For the 2008 COC election, the Solano-Napa Committee is now accepting nominations for Local Administrative Area (LAA) 2, currently represented by Richard Hamilton.

Boundaries of LAA2 are: *Portion of Solano county west of Interstates 505 and 80 and south of Air Base Parkway and Hay Rd, combined with portion of Napa county west of Butts Canyon Rd, south to Pope Valley Rd, Chiles & Pope Valley Rd, Lower Chiles Valley Rd, Hwy 128, Hwy 121, and Wooden Valley Rd.*



**Reminder: JULY 15, 2008 is the last day to timely file your spring seeded acreage report.**

Crop acreage reports are required for several FSA programs, to include the Non-Insured Assistance Program, Direct & Counter Cyclical Program, Loan Deficiency Program, etc.

**SIGNUP DEADLINE for LCP & LIP JULY 18**



The signup period for 2005 through 2007 LCP and LIP will end COB July 18, 2008. All applications MUST be received by the deadline. There are no late-filed provisions.

## **FOOD, CONSERVATION & ENERGY ACT OF 2008**

On May 22, 2008, the Food Conservation & Energy Act of 2008 (Farm Bill) was passed. This bill included provisions regarding the 2008 Direct & Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) and other provisions that relate to eligibility. The 2008 DCP will be very similar to the previous DCP. Payment limitation provisions for the 2008 year, including AGI requirements, are also similar to the previous year. New payment limitation rules, such as attribution, will not be effective until 2009.

FSA will be announcing a signup period in the near future for the 2008 program year. Producers who need to update or file new Farm Operating Plans for payment limitation purposes should contact this office now for an appointment.

## **FARM RECONS EXPLAINED**

In program terminology, farms are constituted to group all tracts having the same owner and the same operator 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. The following are the different methods used when doing a farm recon. Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by Aug. 1 for farms enrolled in the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program.

**Estate Method** — the division of bases, allotments and quotas for a parent farm among heirs in settling an estate;

**Designation of Landowner Method** — may be used when (1) part of a farm is sold or ownership is transferred; (2) an entire farm is sold to two or more persons; (3) farm ownership is transferred to two or more persons; (4) part of a tract is sold or ownership is transferred; (5) a tract is sold to two or more persons; or (6) tract ownership is transferred to two or more persons. In order to use this method the

land sold must have been owned for at least three years, or a waiver granted, and the buyer and seller must sign a Memorandum of Understanding.

**DCP Cropland Method** — the division of bases in the same proportion that the DCP cropland for each resulting tract relates to the DCP cropland on the parent tract;

**Default Method** — the division of bases for a parent farm with each tract maintaining the bases attributed to the tract level when the reconstitution is initiated in the system.

If DCP direct payments have already been issued on a particular farm, the reconstitution will be effective for the next year, unless the payments are refunded.

**It is each producer's responsibility to report their farm operation completely and accurately.**

If you have bought, sold, or are renting different land (this is not only cropland, but also rangeland), make sure you report the changes to your FSA office as soon as the change occurs. For farm owner changes, you will need to provide a recorded deed.

Take the time to review the forms on file in this office. Your payment eligibility forms (502's) should provide an accurate picture of your operation. The same shares should carry through on crop reporting shares, etc. In addition, it's just as important that all your commodity contracts, accounts with businesses that provide receipts for FSA documentation, etc., are in the same "name" of the entity as represented by our farm records.

Failure to maintain accurate records with FSA on all land you have an interest in can lead to possible program ineligibility and fines if you are participating in our programs.

Corporations and like entities are required to submit copies of yearly corporate minutes so our office can verify officers, members, shares, signature authority, and notate any changes in the operation.

Please do not hesitate to contact this office with any questions on this important issue.

## **SODBUSTER – READ BEFORE TILLING**

The term “sodbusting” is used to identify the plowing up of erosion-prone grasslands for use as cropland. Sodbuster violations are unauthorized tillage practices on highly erodible lands that converted native vegetation such as rangeland or woodland, to crop production after Dec. 23, 1985. 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 FSA programs.

Before producers clear, plow or otherwise prepare areas not presently under crop production for planting, they are required to file an AD-1026, indicating the area to be brought into production.

If Natural Resources Conservation Service indicates on a CPA-026 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.

In addition, producers and the producer’s affiliates have to file an AD-1026 with the staff in the administrative or control county office before any farm program payments can be made. The AD-1026 is the producer’s signed certification that HELC, as well as wetland conservation, provisions will not be violated.

## **YOU PROTECT AGAINST FRAUD**

The Farm Service Agency has joined with the Risk Management Agency to prevent fraud, waste and abuse in the Federal Crop Insurance Program. FSA has been, and will continue, assisting RMA and insurance providers by monitoring crop conditions throughout the growing season. In addition, FSA will refer all suspected cases of fraud, waste and abuse to RMA. Producers can report suspected cases to the county office staff, RMA office, or the Office of the Inspector General.

## **CROP DISASTER PROGRAM SIGNUP CONTINUES**

Eligible farmers who suffered crop loss damage before Dec. 31, 2007, can still apply to receive disaster assistance. Multi-peril crop insurance or NAP coverage for the year of loss is a requirement. No ending date has yet been announced for CDP. Later

this summer FSA will begin making payments to producers for quality losses under CDP.

For more disaster program information go online at: <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov>

## **ELIGIBLE CRP/CREP ACREAGE ALLOWED TO HAY or GRAZE**

USDA has authorized certain acreage enrolled under the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) to be available for hay and forage after the primary nesting season ends for grass-nesting birds. Some of the eligible land or forage of the land must be reserved for wildlife and any land that is used under this authority must have a conservation plan. The most environmentally-sensitive land enrolled in CRP will not be eligible. The land will be subject to a site inspection to ensure compliance with the conservation plan. No rental payment reduction will be assessed on contracts being utilized for this critical use. However, a \$75 fee will be charged to process the required contract modification.

Signup began June 2, 2008. This modification for critical feed use is only for 2008. All forage use must be completed no later than November 10, 2008. For more information and to signup contact your local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office.

## **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.

**US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Solano-Napa County Farm Service Agency  
1170 North Lincoln Street, Suite 109  
Dixon, California 95620**

**COUNTY FSA OFFICE HOURS: 8am-4:30pm Monday-Friday  
Closed on Holidays**

**Closed: Friday, July 4 – Independence Day  
Monday, Sep 1 – Labor Day  
Monday, Oct 13 – Columbus Day**

The Solano-Napa County Committee (COC) regularly scheduled meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at 1 PM in the county FSA office. These are public meetings.

**IMPORTANT WEB PAGES**

**USDA Homepage: [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)  
Farm Service Agency: [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)  
California State FSA Homepage: [www.fsa.usda.gov/ca/](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ca/)  
Risk Management Agency: [www.rma.usda.gov](http://www.rma.usda.gov)  
Natural Resource Conservation Service: [www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov)  
Solano County Ag Commissioner: [www.solanocounty.com](http://www.solanocounty.com)  
Napa County Ag Commissioner:  
<http://www.co.napa.ca.us/Gov/Departments/DeptDefault.asp?DID=26400>**

*Special accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment. If special accommodations are required, please call the FSA office and we will be happy to make any arrangements that are needed.*

*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.*