

September 2012



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Tulare County FSA Updates

DEAR PRODUCERS: Welcome to the new GovDelivery bulletins and updates service from your County FSA office. Note that you are welcome to request to receive bulletins from more than one county and can add or remove individual subscriptions at any time.

Tulare County

FSA Office
3530 W. Orchard Ct.
Visalia, CA 93277-7055

Phone: 559-734-8732 Ext. 2
Fax: 559-732-2805

Hours

Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

County Committee Chairperson

Charlie Pitigliano, Jr.

Vice-Chairperson

Mark Heuer

Member

Craig Ainley

Advisor

Alex Garcia,

County Office Staff

Theresa Barajas, PT
Slade Childers, FL PT
Becky Garcia, CPT
Pat Miller, FLO
Yvonne Newman, PT
Danielle Parreira, PT
James Smith, PT
Kelly Solis, PT
Lorraine Wilson, PT

Farm Loan Manager

Tom Roberts

County Executive Director

Kaye Rydberg

FSA Uses Check Scanners To Process Customer Payments

FSA/CCC is implementing OTCnet, an electronic method for processing customer check payments. When a check is submitted for payment either in person or through the mail, the check will be converted into an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Within 24 hours, the funds may be debited from the producer's account. Please see the U.S. Department of Treasury notices posted in the Service Center or visit the following Department of Treasury site for detailed information: <http://fms.treas.gov/otcnet/legal.html>.

What is OTCnet? OTCnet is a web-based online application process for converting paper checks presented to FSA into electronic debits to the producer's checking account. Benefits include reducing lost/misplaced checks, less paper handling, improved customer relations, more efficient check clearing process and reducing the potential for human error.

Emergency Farm Loans

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides emergency loans to help producers recover from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding, other natural disasters or quarantine.

Emergency loan funds may be used to:

- Restore or replace essential property
- Pay all or part of production costs associated with the disaster year
- Pay essential family living expense
- Reorganize the farming operation
- Refinance certain debts

Further information and applications for the loan programs described are available at the office. Contact the Farm Loan Staff for an appointment or more information.

Youth Loans

FSA makes loans to rural youths to establish and operate income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5000.

Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

- Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) or a legal resident alien
- Be 10 years to 20 years of age
- Comply with FSA's general eligibility requirements
- Reside in a rural area, city or town with a population of 50,000 or fewer people
- Be unable to get a loan from other sources
- Conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work as outlined above
- Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor. The project supervisor must recommend the project and the loan, along with providing adequate supervision.

Stop by the office for help preparing and processing the application forms. The Farm Loan staff can help you with questions you may have about a particular program.

Preventing Fraud

The Farm Service Agency supports the Risk Management Agency in the prevention of fraud, waste and abuse of the Federal Crop Insurance Program. FSA has been, and will continue to, assist RMA and insurance providers by monitoring crop conditions throughout the growing season. FSA will continue to refer all suspected cases of fraud, waste and abuse directly to RMA. Producers can report suspected cases to the FSA office, RMA, or the Office of the Inspector General.

Hispanic and Women Discrimination Claims

The process to resolve claims of discrimination by USDA asserted by some Hispanic and women farmers is nearing the phase when a claims packet will be made available for potential claimants. A court supervised third-party administrative process is available for claimants to submit claims and receive compensation for losses they may have incurred as a result of discrimination in loan making and loan services. If you believe you have been discriminated against by USDA between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic or female, call the toll-free number or visit the website to receive a claims packet or get further information. You can call **1- 888-508-4429** or visit www.farmerclaims.gov. Once the claims period is announced claimants will have 180 days (6 months) to complete the claim form and submit the claims.

Farm Loan Interest Rates for September 2012

Farm Operating Loans - Direct **1.125%**

Farm Ownership Loans - Direct **3.0%**

Emergency Loans - **2.125%**

Dates To Remember

October 8	Columbus Day - Office Closed
October 31	2013 NAP Application for Coverage Closing Date for Camelina
December 1	2013 NAP Application for Coverage Closing Date for Forage Crops Grazing/Forage and Onions
December 15	2013 Crop Reporting deadline for Native Grasses Kiwi Pomegranates Asian Pears Persimmons Quince

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9450, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay).