

December 2013

USDA e-News

California Edition



United States Department of Agriculture

Welcome to USDA e-News, California Edition, a multi-agency newsletter providing California's producers and other interested parties with current information.

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Updates

Seeking Fruit and Vegetable Industry Advisory Committee Nominations

Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is seeking nominations to the Fruit and Vegetable Industry Advisory Committee for 2013–2015. The purpose of the Committee is to examine the full spectrum of issues faced by the fruit and vegetable industry, and provide suggestions and ideas to the Secretary of Agriculture on how USDA can tailor its programs to better meet the fruit and vegetable industry's needs. Written nominations must be received on or before **December 26, 2013**. Nominations should be sent to Charles W. Parrott, Deputy Administrator, Fruit and Vegetable Program, AMS, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Room 2077–S, Stop 0235, Washington, DC 20250–0235; Fax: 202-720–0016; Email Charles.parrott@ams.usda.gov. For more information contact Pamela Stanziani, Designated Federal Official at 202-690–0182 or pamela.stanziani@ams.usda.gov.

Farm Service Agency County Committee Election Rescheduled

Due to a problem with the initial election ballot, FSA will provide a new election ballot to all eligible voters in the 2013 voting areas in mid-December. Additional details are anticipated soon.

Natural Resources Conservation Service Released New YouTube Videos

In four minutes or less viewers can meet a California farmer or rancher who is working with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to solve a conservation dilemma, meet the conservationist who assists, and watch the process they use to craft a solution. NRCS in California recently released four new short videos on YouTube, available here:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/NRCSCalifornia>. The videos follow a brief conservation planning journey for the following situations:

- Nutrient Management for Farmland Irrigation Systems
- Water Management for Greenhouses
- Hillside Orchard Drainage
- Conservation Planning for Access Roads on Forest Land

Grape Crush Survey Workbooks due January 10

The 2013 Grape Crush survey of grapes crushed and/or purchased began in November. A paper workbook was mailed in November and an optional electronic workbook is available for e-filing. The electronic workbook can be found at <http://www.nass.usda.gov/ca>. Completed workbooks must be submitted by **January 10, 2014**. The e-file option continues to grow in popularity among wineries and includes check tools to simplify reporting. A Preliminary Report will be published February 10, 2014 and a Final Report will be available March 10, 2014. Information contained in the Report is supplied by processors to fulfill the reporting requirements of Section 55601.5 of the California Food and Agricultural Code. The Grape Crush Report includes all grape tonnage crushed during the 2013 season. Assessment fees, designated for the work of the Pierce's Disease/Glassy Wing Sharp Shooter Program, are collected in conjunction with the annual Grape Crush survey. To find out more, email nass-gcrush@nass.usda.gov or contact Lena Schwedler or Jenifer Van Court at the California National Agricultural Statistics Service office at 1-800-851-1127.

New Online Legal Guide Helps Farmers Sell Directly to Consumers

The Drake University Agricultural Law Center has developed an online version of "The Legal Guide for Direct Farm Marketing" available at <http://directmarketersforum.org>. This website provides farmers the information they need to deliver produce, dairy, meat, and value added foods directly to consumers. The website updates the original print publication that has helped thousands of farmers navigate the challenges of selling locally grown foods to consumers through farmers markets, CSAs and farm stands, as well as to institutional buyers such as restaurants and food retailers. The update and website were made possible with funding from the USDA Risk Management Agency.

NASS Continues to Visit Farms for CEAP Survey Through February

Under a cooperative agreement with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is conducting the 2013 National Resources Inventory Conservation Effects Assessment Project (NRI-CEAP) survey of farming and conservation practices. The 2013 NRI-CEAP takes place in the California Bay Delta watershed area with a primary focus on the Sacramento River Watershed, the San Joaquin River Watershed, and the Tulare Lake Basin Watershed. NASS representatives are visiting approximately 1,732 farms in California and 32 farms in Oregon through February 2014 to collect information about on-farm conservation practices. To find out more, visit the CEAP website (http://www.nass.usda.gov/Surveys/Conservation_Effects_Assessment_Project) or contact your nearest NASS office at 1-800-851-1127.

Funding Opportunities

Application Closing Date Nears for Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program

2014 Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) application closing dates for several crops are fast approaching. Please make sure to file an application for coverage and pay the service fee for your crop policy before these dates have passed. **December 15, 2013** is the last day to buy coverage for asparagus, artichokes, herbs and fruit/nut tree crop (almonds, grapes, etc.). 2015 NAP application closing dates for avocados and citrus is **January 1, 2014**. For more information, please contact your local Farm Service Agency Office. A list is available at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ca>.

Sales Closing Date Nears for Crop Insurance Programs

Sales closing dates for several crop insurance programs are almost here. Please make sure to sign up, review, or change your crop policy before these dates have passed. **December 15, 2013** is the last day to buy or change your policy for potatoes (spring planted) in Riverside County. **December 31, 2013** is the last day to buy or change your policy for almonds, pistachios, and safflower. For more information contact your agent or you can find an agent on the RMA website at <http://www.rma.usda.gov/tools/agent.html>.

Acreage Reporting Deadline for Farm Service Agency

The 2014 Acreage Reporting deadline for several crops is fast approaching. Please make sure to file an Acreage Report prior to the deadline to avoid paying late file fees. **December 15, 2013** is the deadline for perennial forage, potatoes planted August 2, 2013 – September 15, 2013 in Kern County, and fall planted wheat in Lassen, Modoc and Siskiyou Counties. **January 2, 2014** is the deadline for honey. For more information, please contact your local Farm Service Agency Office. A list is available at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ca>.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program Applications due December 20

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announced **December 20, 2013** is the deadline for Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program ([WHIP](#)) applications to be evaluated for available 2014 funding. WHIP is a voluntary program for conservation-minded landowners who want to develop and improve wildlife habitat on lands with the potential to grow crops, livestock or timber. For additional information, eligible producers are encouraged to contact their local NRCS Service Center. Service center locations and more information on the programs can be found at <http://www.ca.nrcs.usda.gov>.

Agricultural Water Enhancement Program Applications due December 20

Agricultural Water Enhancement Program ([AWEP](#)) is a voluntary conservation initiative that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to implement water enhancement activities on agricultural land to conserve surface and ground water and improve water quality. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is accepting applications for projects with the following partners in these counties:

Partner Involved:	Approved Counties:
Columbia Canal Company	Madera County
Colusa-Glenn Sub-watershed	Colusa, Glenn, Yolo Counties
Fall River Resource Conservation District	Shasta, Lassen Counties
Honey Lake Resource Conservation District	Lassen County
Palo Verde Resource Conservation District	Riverside County
Farm Bureau San Diego	San Diego County
Western Shasta Resource Conservation District	Shasta, Tehama Counties
Yolo County Resource Conservation District	Yolo County

For additional information, eligible producers are encouraged to contact their local NRCS Service Center. Service center locations and more information on the programs can be found at <http://www.ca.nrcs.usda.gov>.

Rural Development Announces Funds for Value-Added Producer Grants

Rural Development announced they are now accepting applications for the Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program. Applications must be received by **February 24, 2014**. Maximum awards are \$75,000 for planning grants and \$200,000 for working capital grants. Interested applicants should visit Rural Development's website http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_VAPG.html for additional information including application templates and a link to the notice in the Federal Register. Questions can also be directed to Karen Firestein at karen.firestein@ca.usda.gov or 530-792-5829.

Reports and Publications

NASS Reports

- [Crop Production](#) (12/10/2013)
- [Fruit & Nut Review](#) (12/17/2013)
- [Field Crop Review](#) (12/18/2013)
- [Livestock Review](#) (12/30/2013)
- [Poultry Report](#) (12/30/2013)

Other Activities & Events

Agricultural Marketing Service Offers Webinars for Fruit and Vegetable Industry

The Agricultural Marketing Service's (AMS) Fruit and Vegetable Program is offering a series of free, interactive webinars on their programs and services. These informative webinars are designed for fruit and vegetable growers, packers, shippers, processors, wholesalers and retailers of all sizes. Registration is required and space is limited. Past webinars are also archived and available to watch online. Upcoming webinars:

- **December 5, 2013** 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) "Interpreting USDA Fruit & Vegetable Inspections: Does the Shipment Make Good Delivery?" Register at: <http://bit.ly/19M0or5>

- **January 23, 2014** 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) "In Korean – An Introduction to the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act (PACA)." Register at: <http://bit.ly/17J7AjS>

Free Soil Health Workshops

Soil health experts from across the country will be presenting new ways of managing soil in two free workshops in Davis and Five Points. Information presented will help promote long-term sustainability, better crop quality and reduced use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. For more information contact Jeff Mitchell, UC Cooperative Extension, at jpmitchell@ucdavis.edu or 559-303-9689.

- **December 10, 2013** 11:00 a.m. UC Davis, Plant & Environmental Sciences Building 3001, Davis
- **December 11, 2013** 11:00 a.m. UC West Side Research & Extension Center, 17353 W. Oakland Ave, Five Points

About Us

Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

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Farm Service Agency (FSA)

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Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

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Risk Management Agency (RMA)

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Rural Development (RD)

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Contact Us

If you would like to receive a copy of future newsletters or if you have relevant information for California producers that you want to include in a future issue of this newsletter, please email one of the contacts listed below. Please be advised that not all activities may be published.

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