



## USDA SERVICE CENTER NEWS

KINGS COUNTY FARM SERVICE AGENCY

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### COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

Farm Service Agency county offices are seeking interested farmers to serve as candidates for the local County Committee elections to be held this fall. The Committee is a direct link between USDA farm programs and local agricultural producers. The County Committee system helps shape nation-wide procedures into programs that work at the local level by making decisions that directly impact farmers. Persons nominated should actively participate in the operation of a farm or ranch. Eligible persons include operators, owners and other tenants farming/ranching in the area up for election. The deadline to nominate a candidate for the Kings County Farm Service Agency Local Administrative Area 13 (Lemoore) representative is August 1, 2007. The area includes that portion of the county that lies south of Excelsior Avenue, west of 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue when north of Nevada Ave, and west of 22<sup>nd</sup> avenue when south of Nevada Avenue. Nomination forms can be obtained by calling 582-1071 ext. 2 or at the agency's office at 680 Campus Drive, Suite C in Hanford. Each form must be signed by the eligible voter and by the person s/he nominates. The forms must then be returned to the Farm Service Agency by the filing deadline. Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters no later than November 2, 2007 and must be returned to the county office or postmarked by December 3, 2007. The top vote recipient will represent Local Administrative Area 13 for the next three years, beginning January 1, 2008. For additional questions about elections or voter eligibility, please contact the county office or visit our website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/publications/elections>.



### NATIONAL CROP AND LIVESTOCK DISASTER PROGRAMS

As part of new legislation recently passed by Congress, a package of crop and livestock programs will become available. Specific details, such as payment rates, are not known at this time. It is anticipated that sign-up for the following programs will occur sometime in the fall.

**Crop Disaster Program** - The legislation provides crop production loss assistance in a manner similar to previous disaster programs for quantity losses occurring from natural disasters and related conditions that occurred in 2005 or 2006 or 2007, with the losses for 2007 crops covered only if the crop subject to the loss was planted prior to February 28, 2007. For prevented planted, the 2007 crop would only be eligible if it could have been planted by February 28, 2007.

A producer would choose one of the 3 years in which they could receive benefits. The quantity loss threshold for eligibility is 35% and the payment rate is set at 42% of the established crop insurance price. **Only producers with crop insurance coverage or that signed up for the Non-insured Assistance Program would be eligible for assistance.** The 95% crop value cap and deduction for crop insurance indemnities would be in place.

Quality loss assistance is based on the actual, local market discounts suffered by producers based on their crop sales receipts, or as established by the State Farm Service Agency Committee.

Payments are to be made on 65% of the crop quantity subject to quality discounts at a payment rate equal to 42% of the market loss sustained and provided that the producer **had crop insurance or NAP coverage.**

#### **Livestock Programs**

As with the Crop Disaster Program, a producer would choose for each livestock program one of three years for which he or she would receive benefits.

The Livestock Compensation Program provides benefits for producers in designated disaster counties for their added costs of procuring livestock feed in 2005, 2006 or 2007 (up to February 28, 2007). Eligible livestock under that announcement are: adult or non-adult dairy cattle, beef cattle, buffalo, beefalo, equine, poultry, elk, reindeer, sheep, goats, swine, deer, catfish and other livestock the Secretary may designate.

A Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) would be available to cover livestock deaths caused by a natural disaster or related condition that occurred in 2005, 2006 or 2007 (up to February 28, 2007), including losses due to hurricanes, floods, wildfires, blizzards and anthrax. The payment rate is to be not less than 26% of market value of the livestock on the day before the date of death, as determined by the Secretary.

*The Secretary of Agriculture has authority to ensure a producer does not receive duplicative payments for the same losses in conjunction with other federal disaster assistance programs. The \$2.5 million Adjusted Gross Income Limitation applies, as does the \$80,000 payment limit for the Crop Disaster Program and the various payment limits for the livestock programs.*



## ACREAGE REPORTING DEADLINE COMING JULY 16<sup>th</sup> IS THE FINAL DATE TO REPORT SPRING SEEDED CROPS



Acreage reporting time is here! Please remember that filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs. In addition to the crop identified by the producer, planting dates are also being requested on a field by field basis. In some cases, variety (i.e. durum, white, red wheat) may be necessary as well.

Failed acreage must be reported within 15 days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date. Acreage reports are required if you want to be eligible for Farm Service Agency programs. Acreage reports were to be certified by **April 30** for all fall-seeded crops such as small grains and **July 16** for all other crops. **Please note** that the late reporting fee for 2007 has changed from previous years. The fee is now \$15 per farm + (\$16 x hours) + (\$0.485 x mileage) and will be assessed on any farm not fully reported by the established deadlines, with the acreage subject to mandatory spot-check. The hours are those hours which are used when making a field visit (or would have been used for a physical visit, if aerial images are used for spot-check and measurement) to verify your late-certified acreage, and the mileage is the round trip mileage to your field(s) from the office. The fee is the same for any requested measurement services performed by the office staff. In most cases, this will represent a substantial increase in the fee over past years, so it is very important to certify your acreage timely.

## DIRECT AND COUNTER CYCLICAL PROGRAM

**Please call for an appointment now**

Signup for the 2007 Direct and Counter Cyclical Program (DCP) will continue through August 3, 2007. Previously, this deadline was June 1, 2007. This deadline has been extended to August 3, 2007 as a result of computer problems and other delays experienced by the agency. Farms not enrolled or missing signatures by August 3, 2007 will be considered late filed and will be assessed a late-filed signup fee of \$100 per farm. Producers are reminded that signups are now taken annually for this program. Even if you signed up in 2006, you must sign a new contract for 2007. To be eligible for payments under DCP, owners, tenants, landlords, operators and sharecroppers must: 1) Share in the risk of producing a crop on base acres on a farm enrolled in DCP; 2) annually report the use of the farm's cropland acreage; 3) comply with conservation and wetland protection requirements on all of their land; 4) comply with planting flexibility requirements; 5) use the base acres for agricultural or related activities; 6) protect all base acres from erosion, as well as providing weed control and 7) meet all other eligibility requirements. Please call for an appointment.



## EMERGENCY LOANS AVAILABLE

On May 9, 2007, Kings County received a disaster designation both as a primary county and as a contiguous county for the combined effects of drought, higher than normal temperatures and prolonged freezing conditions occurring from October 15, 2006 and continuing. Kings County farmers who suffered significant damage may be eligible for low interest emergency loans from the Farm Service Agency if they are unable to get financing from any other source. These loans carry an interest rate of 3.75 percent. In situations of production loss, eligible farmers can also use emergency loan funds to recover a portion of losses on growing crops that were destroyed. For physical losses, eligible farmers can use emergency loan funds to repair or rebuild essential farm buildings, clean debris or prepare land for replanting, and to replace livestock, supplies and harvested crops on hand or in storage that were lost. Loan applications will be accepted through January 9, 2008. In addition, applications will be accepted through December 20, 2007 for losses resulting from freezing temperatures that occurred January 11-17, 2007.

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 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 the 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, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.