



April 2007

Farm Service Agency

Modoc County News

Modoc County FSA

802 W 12th Street
Alturas, CA 96101
(530) 233-4391 (phone)
(530) 233-8869 (fax)

Hours

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

County Committee

C. Dwight Beeson - Chair
Darrell DePaul - Vice Chair
Kathy Ackley - Member

Staff

Farm Programs:

Marlene Hamilton - PT
Chris Lauppe - CED

Farm Loans:

Katherine Lewis - FLO
Roberta Wheeler - FLM

DATES TO REMEMBER

July 15, 2007 Production evidence for APH Yields for the NAP program.

July 15, 2007: Final date to file crop acreage reports without a late-file fee.

Final Date to apply for: DCP:

June 1, to avoid a \$100 late fee.

September 30, final date.

Loan Deficiency Pymts:

Wool and unshorn lambs for slaughter (pelts)

Jan. 31, 2008 (for '07)

Wheat, Barley & Oat hay & grain:

March 31, 2008 (for '07)

The office will be closed **May 28, Memorial Day**

2007 DCP Sign Up

Are you planning to participate in the 2007 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program? Sign up began Oct 1, 2006, and must be completed before June 1, 2007. (You can sign your contract after June 1 and before Sept. 30, 2007, but you will be assessed a late-signing fee of \$100.)

When you sign the CCC-509, you are agreeing to:

- comply with highly erodible land conservation and wetland conservation provisions on all your land;
- devote acreage equal to the base acreage to an agricultural or conserving use;
- effectively control noxious weeds and otherwise maintain base acres according to sound agricultural practices;
- not plant perennial fruits and vegetables or harvest annual FAVs or wild rice on base acres (Exceptions: Double-cropping covered commodities or peanuts with wild rice, fruits, or vegetables shall be permitted in any region in which there is a history of this type of double-cropping.);
- file acreage report with respect to all cropland on the farm; and
- notify the county office staff when there is a transfer of or change of interest of a producer.

It is up to the applicant to have completed contracts delivered to the county office prior to June 1 to avoid the late file fee.

Contracts revised after June 1 will be subject to the late file fee.

Contact Marlene Hamilton for assistance.

Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Kathy Ackley . Kathy was reelected to represent farmers from the Tulelake Basin on the county committee. David Krizo was elected by write-in to serve as an alternate on the County Committee. FSA appreciates all of the voters taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works because of your participation. Kathy rejoins Dwight Beeson and Darrell DePaul on the committee.

Thank you, Richard Blizzeard

The Modoc County FSA office and committee would like to thank Richard Blizzeard for serving the maximum of 9 consecutive years as the committee's advisor.

Special Accommodations

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the county FSA office staff.

Bank Account Changes

Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into your bank account (unless an exemption is requested and approved). In order for timely payments to be made, producers need to notify the FSA county office staff if an account has been changed or if another financial institution purchases your bank. Payments can be delayed if the FSA office is not aware of updates to your account and routing numbers.

Service to Modoc County Farmers

Marlene Hamilton has worked for the Modoc Co. FSA Office for 25 years. Chris Lauppe has been here 18 years and a total of 30 years with FSA.

Power of Attorney

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., we have a power of attorney form available that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. If you are interested, please contact our office or any Farm Service Agency office near you for more information.

Spousal Signatures

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.

Farmer's Choice of Administrative County

Until recently the County Administrative office for program participants has been the county office in which the principal farm operator resided. Now a change in a farm's administrative county may be permitted without completing a farm combination in the receiving county, if the producer documents that the changed administrative County Office is significantly more convenient. Changing an administrative County Office because of convenience is a **one time selection (for the current operator)** and **will not** be used to evade program rules.

Those who use the convenience method will still be able to vote for county committee candidates running for county committee in their original county's Local Administrative Area, however they will not be permitted to be a candidate for that county's committee. A farm transfer can be initiated by the farm's operator or owner or the receiving or transferring county committee. All owners and operator must sign a FSA-179, TRANSFER OF FARM RECORDS BETWEEN COUNTIES.

Appeal Process

After an FSA official makes a decision on your request for USDA services or application, you will be sent a letter informing you of the decision and options you can pursue if you disagree. Generally, program participants have three choices — an informal review with the original agency decision-maker, an opportunity for mediation, and appeal to the USDA National Appeal Division.

Payment Limitation/Eligibility

USDA payments and benefits are subject to producer eligibility and limitation provisions as defined by law. Documents and forms to determine eligibility and limitation once completed are reviewed on an annual basis. It is the producer's responsibility to report changes in the farming operation which may affect payment eligibility and payment limitation. The following payments apply to the Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program for each contract year. For all covered commodities, except peanuts: \$40,000 for direct payments and \$65,000 for counter-cyclical payments. The Environmental Quality Incentive Program has a \$450,000 payment limitation. The Conservation Reserve Program annual limit is \$50,000 per person. The combined payment limitation for marketing loan gains and LDP's for barley, corn, dry peas, grain sorghum, lentils, minor oilseeds, oats, rice, small chickpeas, soybeans, and wheat, is \$75,000. There is a separate combined \$75,000 payment limitation for marketing loan gains and LDP's for honey, mohair, peanuts, unshorn pelts, and wool.

Foreign Buyers Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA. Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA within 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

Farm Reconstitutions

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 DCP 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.

Youth Loans

FSA makes operating loans to individual rural youths, ages 10 through 20, to establish and operate income producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be initiated, developed and carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organization or with a vocational teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and operated with the assistance 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 \$5,000. Contact Katherine Lewis, our Farm Loan Officer in the Yreka FSA Office, at 842-6123.

Applications for FSA Loans

Farmers and ranchers that intend to apply to the Farm Service Agency for loan assistance for the upcoming crop year are encouraged to file their applications as early as possible. Filing early will help ensure that your application is processed and a decision made as soon as possible so that planting decisions can be made. Failure to apply early can result in a delay in processing loans due to the volume of applications that must be processed in date order. Contact Katherine Lewis, our Farm Loan Officer for more details and assistance in applying.

Loans for Socially Disadvantaged

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) can make and guarantee loans to eligible socially disadvantaged applicants to buy and operate family size farms and ranches. Funds specifically for these loans are reserved each year. A socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of the group without regard to their individual qualities. For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, and Asians and Pacific Islanders. Contact Katherine Lewis, Farm Loan Officer.

Controlled Substance

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium poppies and other drug producing plants.

CONSERVATION COMPLIANCE

All participants in USDA programs are required to have a conservation system in place on all the highly erodible land that they farm. Several areas where problems can arise with complying with a conservation system are; renting new cropland, purchasing new land, breaking out additional cropland, and changing or removing existing conservation practices. It is very important that you contact the FSA office BEFORE doing any of the above. Also, it is very important that you contact our office before modifying - tiling, draining, dredging, filling or leveling - any wetland or drainage ditch. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in loss of Federal payments and eligibility.

Measurement Service Fee Change

The measurement service rate schedule for FSA was increased and redefined effective March 1, 2007 by the FSA national office. Measurement services using digital imagery when an on-site visit is not required will be \$15.00 for a Basic Farm Fee, plus \$8.00 per 30 minutes of office time (minimum of 30 minutes).

The measurement service rate when an on-site visit is required has not been announced by the California FSA State Committee; however it will be an increase from the previous charge. The rate will apply to, but is not limited to, the following services: Measuring crops after planting; Staking and referencing acreages to be planted; Measuring acreage that has been adjusted; Verifying crops and disaster acreage; Appraisals; Remeasuring any acreage that had been measured previously; Measuring or sampling farm-stored commodities; and Late-filed crop acreage report fees.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotope, 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, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Modoc County Farm Service Agency
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