



# Maricopa County January 2007 Newsletter

# Farm Service Agency

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Hours: 7:30 am to 4:00 PM

## ***PROGRAM NOTES:***



### **Dates to Remember**

- Jan 15<sup>th</sup> - Office Closed (Holiday)
- Jan 16<sup>th</sup> - COC Determines Committee Positions
- Jan 31<sup>st</sup> - Final Availability Date for Mohair, Unshorn Pelts and Wool Loans/LDP's
- Feb 19<sup>th</sup> - Office Closed (Holiday)
- On going - DCP signup continues...
- On going - Farm Loan Program Applications are accepted (Direct and Guaranteed Loans)

### **ATTENTION ALL PRODUCERS-** **(ACTION):**

For your convenience, we are asking all producers to **SCHEDULE APPOINTMENTS FOR ALL PROGRAM SIGNUPS.** To provide you the optimum service possible in a timely manner, please schedule your appointment 1 week in advance and don't forget to bring in any new leases.

### **Elected to County Committee-(INFO):**

Congratulations! To Gary Gable who was elected to represent farmers from Buckeye, Gila Bend and Tonopah on the Maricopa County Committee.

The election results for Local Administrative Area 1 are:

Gary Gable - COC Member LAA 1

Vernon Schulz - COC Alternate LAA 1

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

Members and alternates take office on Jan. 16th, 2007.

### **DCP Sign-up Ongoing - (ACTION):**

If you are planning to participate in the 2006 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program, you must **make an appointment** to come in and sign your 2006 DCP Contract(CCC-509) **before June 1, 2006 to be**

**considered "timely filed"** (After this date, you may sign up- provided you submit the **\$100.00 late fee**). When you sign the CCC-509, you are agreeing to:

- effectively control noxious weeds and otherwise maintain base acres according to sound agricultural practices;
- not plant perennial fruits and vegetables or harvest annual FAV's (other than lentils, mung beans and dry peas) 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. Contact Jamie for information about signing up.

### **Milk Income Loss Contract Program**

**(MILCX) - (Update):** Don't forget to submit milk production to our office. We have begun making MILC payments for those producers who have provided their production and have not exceeded the 2.4 million pound limitation. Call Christina for more information.

Any changes in operations are required to be reported to this office. It is important that our records reflect the way you operate your enterprises.

### **Non-Insured Crop Assistance Program** **- (INFO):**

The cost for NAP is a service fee of \$100 per crop, per a total of \$300 per producer, per county. Not to exceed \$900.00 total for all counties.

**2007 Crop Year Sales (Application) Closing Dates** are set by the state committee. **Producers are required to apply for the NAP program prior to these dates in order to remain eligible for payments.**

**You must file a notice of loss within 15 days from the date that the loss was apparent.**

**Jan 31, 2007 – Cucumbers, Grapes, Bermuda Grass, Sudan Grass, Basil, Herbs, Jojoba, Pecans, Chile Peppers, Raisins**

**Feb 28, 2007- Pinto Beans, Corn, Cotton, Okra, Olives, Peanut, Sweet Potato, pumpkins, Sorghum, Squash**

Producers are reminded of these dates to ensure continued eligibility for the 2007 crop year. Producers must:

1. Annually provide records of crop acreage, crop yields, and production evidence for NAP crop to be eligible.
2. Inform FSA within 15 days of the date any disaster condition occurred or damage to the crop became apparent. **Producers must file this form even if they intend to harvest the crop.**
3. Not exceed the gross revenue cap of \$2.5 million. HELC/WC compliance is required (AD-1026)

**New Leases – (ACTION):** When signing up for the DCP Program please bring in your current land leases, as well as **any new equipment leases** to update your payment limitation file. **PLEASE NOTE:** All Equipment leases **must include an equipment listing.**

**2006 Wool/Mohair/Unshorn Pelts Price Support Benefits-(ACTION):** The **final availability date** for loan/LDP on Wool, Mohair and unshorn pelts is **January 31, 2007**. Remember, you must **file an application prior to shearing** your wool and mohair **or you will be ineligible for benefits.** After applying for the program and after selling your wool and/or mohair, **you must provide your sales receipt(s) in order to receive benefits.** Please contact Joann for more information.

**Farm Record Changes-(ACTION):**  
If you have bought, sold or are renting different land, make sure you report the changes to the staff at this office as soon as possible so farm records can be updated.  
For farm ownership changes you will need to provide a recorded deed or recorded land contract. All landowners must furnish their tax ID numbers. Remember, 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 a farm program.

**Cash-Rent Tenant Rule (INFO):**  
The cash-rent tenant rule applies to any producer that rents land from another producer for cash or a crop share guaranteed as the amount of the commodity to be paid in rent. The provision also applies to tenants

who rent land for 0 dollars or who farm the land in exchange for compensation other than cash, such as:

- controlling weeds on land not owned
- barter arrangements.

Any cash-rent tenant shall be ineligible to receive payment unless the cash-rent tenant makes either of the following:

- a significant contribution of active personal labor to the farming operation
- a significant contribution of both of the following to the farming operation:
  - active personal management
  - equipment.--\*

**Note:** A cash-rent tenant must also meet all applicable requirements to be considered "actively engaged in farming." If equipment is leased, the lease must have term, payment due date, rates whether it's per hour, acre or annually.

**Report Losses-(ACTION):**

Attention Producers: If you have had any failed crop acres, give serious thought to report them **before** plowing under the evidence. If Congress authorizes a crop disaster program in the future, proof of failed acreage may be required for your participation. It's important to report failed acreage not brought to harvest to the county office staff prior to destruction. Ensuring that failed acres are documented could be the determining factor in whether you are eligible for future crop disaster program payments.

If you are experiencing low crop yields, you should keep good production records, but you don't need to report this acreage right now.

The CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. For losses on crops covered by the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), you must contact the FSA county office staff within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent. Producers with crop insurance should contact their local agent when losses occur and before destroying the crop.

Farmers can revise FSA crop reports free of charge. Any crop report revision, however, must be reported before harvesting the crop or plowing it up to allow time for a field spot check.

For more information on reporting failed acreage or NAP losses, please contact FSA county office staff.

All producers are encouraged to report failed crop acreage that could not be brought to harvest. Contact Mary for more information.

**Fallow Acreage- (INFO):** Fallow acreage not devoted to crops must be kept clean or free of noxious weeds during the crop year. **Failure to do so may result in loss of program benefits for the year,** Non-compliance assessment or both. The acreage required to meet this criteria is your crop acreage bases.

**Crop Certifications Deadline-(Action):**

Deadline dates are as follows:

- May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2007 –small grain crop certifications.
  - July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2007 –cotton, corn and all other crops.
- Please **schedule your appointments early** to avoid the last minute rush and unforeseen delays.

**Bank Account Changes-(ACTION):** When making an account change/closure with your existing bank, **please notify our office.** It is crucial that we maintain the most current accounting records to avoid delays when dispersing payments to you or your operation.

**Payment Limitation Form**

**Submissions-(INFO):** All CCC-501's, CCC-502's and CCC-526 forms submitted by producers are subject to spot checks through the end-of-year review process.

**Payment Eligibility Requirements-**

**(INFO):** No program benefits subject to limitation may be provided until:

- All required forms for the specific situation are provided
- The necessary payment limitation and payment eligibility determinations are made
- Payment limitation and payment eligibility determinations may be initiated by COC or requested by the producer
- A current or updated farm operating plan is on file

Notify the County Office of any changes in the farming operation and /or members that would affect a determination made by the County Office Committee. Contact Santa or Christina for more information.

**Adjusted Gross Income Provisions-**

**(INFO):** The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 included average adjusted gross income as a payment eligibility requirement. Any individual or entity requesting certain 2003 through 2007 program payments will be subject to this provision. Any individual or entity that is determined to have an average adjusted gross income, as defined, that is less than 75 percent from farming, ranching or forestry operations and that exceeds \$2.5 million will be ineligible for any covered benefit during the applicable year. AGI is based on the average of the three tax

years prior to the year benefits are requested. An AGI form is required from **individuals, entities, and members of an entity.**

**Any DCP payments will not be made until the form CCC-526 is completed for each entity and individual.**

**Payment Limitations**

Direct Payments on Commodities	\$40,000/per person
Counter-Cyclical on Commodities (except peanuts on above)	\$65,000/per person
Commodity loans (except wool, mohair, peanuts & honey)	\$75,000/per person
EQIP cost-share	\$450,000/yr*

(Applies to an individual and entity in aggregate for all contracts for FY2002-2007, regardless of the number of contracts)

**Power of Attorney-(ACTION):**

If you're too busy getting work done around the farm to come into your local FSA office to conduct business and complete your paperwork, here's a solution. Retain an agent to act on your behalf for programs and transactions authorized under the 2002 Farm Bill and most other FSA administered programs. This can be done by completing an FSA-211, Power of Attorney and FSA-211A (new form for additional signatures). The form is available at your local USDA Service Center or on-line at <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov>. Forms and obtained and completed outside USDA Service Centers offices must be notarized. To find out more, call Christina.

**Monitoring Efforts by FSA and RMA**

**(INFO):** In an effort to prevent fraud, waste and abuse in the Federal Crop Insurance Program. FSA will be assisting RMA and insurance providers in:

- Monitoring crop conditions throughout the growing season
- Referring all suspected cases of fraud, waste and abuse about the Federal Crop Insurance Program to RMA
- Assisting RMA with auditing claims
- Participants may report suspected cases of fraud, waste, and abuse to their local County, RMA Office or OIG.



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**Attention: FSA Program Participant**  
**This newsletter contains valuable information and important dates regarding our programs; therefore you may lose benefits**



**If You Do Not Read It!!**

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Special accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, please call the office at (623) 535-5055.