

February 2013



Fresno County FSA Updates

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

Fresno County FSA Office DCP and Acre Sign-Up

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County Committee:
Jean Errotabere,
Chairman
Richard Carstens, V-
Chair
Carl Buxman, Member

Advisors:
May Thao
Will Scott, Jr.

Farm Loan Manager:
LaVonn Treasure

Farm Loan Staff:
Chantal Haun
Tou Thao
Phoua Yang

Program Staff:
Wanda Medina
Chris San Nicolas
Annie Lee
Valarie Garcia
Nangpay Vang
James Smith

FSA will begin sign-ups for DCP and ACRE for the 2013 crop year on **Feb. 19, 2013**. The DCP sign-up period will end on **July 5, 2013**; and the ACRE sign-up period will end on June 3, 2013.

The 2013 DCP and ACRE program provisions are unchanged from 2012, except that all eligible participants in 2013 may choose to enroll in either DCP or ACRE for the 2013 crop year. This means that eligible producers who are enrolled in ACRE in 2012 may elect to enroll in DCP in 2013 or may re-enroll in ACRE in 2013. Likewise producers who were enrolled in DCP may opt for ACRE enrollment. Appointments will be scheduled for producers, please be looking for your appointment letter coming in the mail. If you are unable to make your appointment, please call and ask for Annie Lee to reschedule.

MILC Contracts Extended

Congress extended the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) program until September 30, 2013. Since this extension was passed in December, dairy producers did not have an opportunity to timely file a request for a change in the MILC start month that was in place for 2012. USDA has authorized a relief period for dairy producers to change their MILC start month. During the month of February, 2013, you may change your start month to any month you choose for the 2013 fiscal year (October 2012 – September 2013). If you do not want to change your start month, no action on your part is required. After February 28, 2013, normal regulations for changing your start month will resume as indicated below:

If you wish to change the start month on your contract, a new CCC-580M will need to be submitted to our office on or before the 14th of the month prior to:
-the month originally selected by the dairy operation as their MILC production start month
-the newly selected MILC production start month for the dairy operation.

If you require any assistance in completing the CCC-580M, please ask for Valerie Garcia here at the Fresno office.

SURE

Executive Director:
Russ Friend

The Fresno County Farm Service Agency (FSA) will continue to accept SURE applications for 2011 crop losses through **June 7, 2013**. The SURE Program provides payments to producers when crop revenues are less than the crop guarantee. **For 2011, Fresno County growers must have suffered at least a 50% loss in production on all crops on all farms.** To determine the guarantee and revenue for the SURE Program, all crops on all farms in all counties for a producer are included in the calculation.

To be eligible for the 2011 SURE Program, producers must have crop insurance on all insurable crops. For crops that are not covered by crop insurance, producers must have purchased Non Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage at FSA. In addition, for SURE Payment the producer must have at least one crop with a 10 percent production loss. For more information concerning the 2011 SURE program contact Nangpay Vang at the Fresno County FSA office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov

Hispanic and Womens Claims of Discrimination

USDA has announced that Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who allege discrimination by the USDA in past decades can file claims between **Sept. 24, 2012** and **March 25, 2013**. The process offers a voluntary alternative to litigation for each Hispanic or female farmer and rancher who can prove that USDA denied their applications for loan or loan servicing assistance for discriminatory reasons for certain time periods between 1981 and 2000. As announced in February 2011, the voluntary claims process will make available at least \$1.33 billion for cash awards and tax relief payments, plus up to \$160 million in farm debt relief, to eligible Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers. There are no filing fees to participate in the program. The Department will continue reaching out to potential Hispanic and female claimants, around the country to get the word out to individuals who may be eligible for this program so they have the opportunity to participate. **Call center representatives can be reached at 1-888-508-4429**. Claimants must register for a claims package (by calling the number or visiting the website) and the claims package will be mailed to claimants. All those interested in learning more or receiving information about the claims process and claims packages are encouraged to attend meetings in your communities about the claims process and contact the website or claims telephone number.
Website: www.farmerclaims.gov Phone: 1-888-508-4429

Independent legal services companies will administer the claims process and adjudicate the claims. Although there are no filing fees to participate and a lawyer is not required to participate in the claims process, persons seeking legal advice may contact a lawyer or other legal services provider.

To read Secretary Tom Vilsack's entire news release click on the following link:

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=2012/09/0309.xml&contentidonly=true>

New Microloan Program

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) developed the Microloan (ML) program to better serve the unique financial operating needs of beginning, niche and the smallest of family farm operations. The program will operate similarly to the Operating Loan program but will include reduced requirements for managerial experience and loan security, as well as reduced paperwork. The microloan program can be used for such expenses as annual crop inputs, marketing and distribution expenses, purchase of livestock and equipment, and minor farm improvements such as wells and coolers. Eligible applicants may obtain a microloan for up to \$35,000. The repayment term may vary and will not exceed seven years. Annual operating loans are typically repaid within 12-18 months of when the loan is closed. The interest rate is the same as the regular Operating Loan (currently 1.25%.)

Crop Reporting Deadlines

March 15- Fall and spring seeded wheat, alfalfa, almonds, walnuts, pistachios, and tree fruit.

May 15- Deadline for grapes and table grapes.

NAP Application for Coverage

March 1- Deadline to purchase NAP application for coverage for annual planted vegetables.

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).