

# Farm Service Agency

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FSA: [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)  
USDA: [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)  
Farm Bill:  
[www.usda.gov/farmbill](http://www.usda.gov/farmbill)

**Hours:**

Monday-Friday  
8:00 AM-4:30 PM

**County Committee:**

Paul Johnson  
Richard Manassero  
Terry Munz  
Patricia Van Dam

**Advisor:**

Bennie Moore, Jr.

**County Executive****Director:**

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**Staff:**

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*Los Angeles-Orange-San Bernardino Counties*

# FSA NEWS

*March 2010*

*Newsletter 2*

## *ELAP – Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD)*

Did you suffer a physical loss to your honey bee colonies or bee hives due to Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) during the 2008 and/or 2009 year? If you have, you may be eligible for federal financial assistance under the Emergency Loss Assistance for Farm-Raised Fish/Honey Bees Program (ELAP).



ELAP provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of honey bees that have suffered losses because of an eligible adverse weather or eligible loss condition that occurred from January 1, 2008 to September 30, 2011. Eligible adverse weather or eligible loss conditions for honey bee losses include, but are not limited to, CCD, floods, wildfires, excessive winds, and earthquake. Losses because of controllable conditions, such as mites, are not an eligible cause of loss.

Initially, the ELAP signup deadline ended December 10, 2009, for 2008 losses and February 1, 2010, for 2009 losses. However, because of changes in eligibility provisions, late-filed notices of loss and application for payments (FSA-930 forms) for 2008 and 2009 calendar year losses are now being accepted. The signup deadline for 2008 and 2009 will be no later than 14 calendar days after the date that the technical correction is published in the Federal Register. The deadline date will be publicized as soon as it is announced.

To be eligible for a physical loss of honey bees because of CCD, the eligible producer must provide documentation and/or a certification to support that the loss of honey bees was because of colony collapse disorder. Acceptable documentation will not be finalized until the technical correction to regulations is published in the Federal Register. However, the possible types of documentation are under consideration as acceptable proof of honey bee colony losses because of CCD:

- A colony collapse certification by a registered entomologist
- Cooperative Extension specialist
- County Agricultural Commissioner's office
- Self-certification that the loss of honey bees was because of CCD and documented by the existence of at least 3 identified symptoms of CCD.

Because of the changes to the eligibility provisions, the County FSA Committee can not act on completed ELAP applications (FSA-930 forms) submitted for honey bees until the technical correction is published in the Federal Register.

If you have any questions or would like to signup for ELAP for 2008 and 2009 calendar year losses, contact our FSA Office at (661) 942-9549 ext. 100.

## Honey Loans



Marketing assistance loans for 2009 crop year honey are available until **March 31, 2010**. The national loan rate for honey is \$0.60 per pound. Market prices currently exceed the loan rate, so Loan Deficiency Payments (LDPs) are not available at this time.

To be eligible for a loan, the producer must have: (1) produced honey in the United States during the calendar year for which the loan is requested, and extracted the honey on or before December 31 of the applicable crop year; (2) have continuous beneficial interest in the honey through date of repayment of the loan; (3) and been responsible for the financial risk of keeping the honey. Producers are responsible for maintaining the quality of farm-stored honey during the term of the loan.

Pre-loan inspections are required before funds can be disbursed. Honey used as collateral may not be disposed of without approval of the County FSA Office staff.

## SURE Program Signup Continues

Currently applications for the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) are being taken for the 2008 Crop Year. SURE provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disaster that were incurred starting in the crop year 2008 through September 30, 2011. To be eligible for SURE payments, a producer is required to obtain crop insurance on all crops of economic significance in all counties or, if crop insurance is not available, to participate in the Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) except for grazed acreage.



Eligible farmers and ranchers who meet the definition of Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, or Beginning Farmer or Rancher are exempt from the risk management purchase requirement.

The following are the conditions that trigger SURE payments:

- at least one crop of economic significance must suffer a 10% production loss due to an eligible disaster condition;
- crop of economic significance is a crop that has contributed or would have contributed at least 5% or more of the total expected revenue from all crops on the farm;
- the farm experiencing the loss must be in a county declared a disaster county by the Secretary of Agriculture, or in contiguous counties. Those who

show proof of an individual loss of at least 50% are also eligible to receive SURE payments for production losses or crop quality losses.

Losses are measured with consideration to the whole-farm revenue, which includes crop insurance indemnities and commodity program payments, so that producers are not paid more than once for the same loss.

SURE calculator is available at: [http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA\\_File/sure\\_calculator\\_2008.xls](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/sure_calculator_2008.xls). The calculator is not official, but is intended for educational use. A fact sheet and Q & A are also available online at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

For more information on the SURE program, please contact our FSA Office at (661) 942-9549 ext. 100.

## Acreage Reporting Deadlines

Acreage reporting time is just around the corner. 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 USDA benefits for a variety of programs.



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 for most FSA programs. The acreage reporting deadline for small grains is **April 30, 2010** and the deadline for all other crops is **July 15, 2010**.

## MILC Program Payment Rates

Listed below are the MILC payment rates for Fiscal Year 2010 (October 2009 through January 2010). On the first day of each month, the MILC payment rate (applicable for the prior month) will be posted at:



<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=prsu&topic=mpp-mi>

### MILC Payment Rates for Fiscal Year 2010

October 2009	\$0.60300
November 2009	\$0.37350
December 2009	\$0.0000
January 2010	\$0.0000
February 2010	Be announced on April 1, 2010

For more information about the MILC program, you should contact our FSA Office at (661) 942-9549.

## 2010 DCP Signup Underway



Signup is underway for the 2010 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment (DCP) Program for farms with base acres and will continue until **June 1, 2010**. FSA will not accept any late-filed applications beyond that date.

FSA computes DCP Program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2010, you may request to receive advance direct payments based on 22% of the direct payment for each commodity associated with the farm. FSA will begin issuing advance direct payments later this month. Counter-cyclical payment rates vary depending on market prices and are issued only when the effective price for a commodity is statutorily set below its target price.

Producers who are eligible for the DCP Program will also be eligible to enroll in the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program.

## ACRE Program

The Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program provides a safety net based on state revenue losses and acts in place of the price-based safety net of counter-cyclical payments under DCP. The **June 1, 2010**, signup deadline is mandatory for all participants. FSA will not accept any late-filed applications.

A payment is based on a revenue guarantee calculated using a 5-year average state yield and the most recent 2-year national price for each eligible commodity. For 2010, the 2-year price average will be based on the 2008 and 2009 crop years.

An ACRE payment is issued when both the state and the farm have incurred a revenue loss. The payment is based on 83.3% (85% in 2012) of the farm's planted acres times the difference between the state ACRE guarantee and the state revenue times the ratio of the farm's yield divided by the state expected yield. Participants in ACRE will forgo counter-cyclical payments. Also a farm's direct payment is reduced by 20% and marketing assistance loan rates are reduced by 30%.

The decision to enroll in the ACRE Program is irrevocable. The owner of the farm and all producers on the farm must agree to enroll in ACRE. Once enrolled, the farm shall be enrolled for that initial crop year and will remain in ACRE through the 2012 crop year. To make an appointment to signup for DCP/ACRE, contact our County FSA Office at (661) 942-9549 ext. 100.

## Adjusted Gross Income Verification

Compliance with the average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) limitations is an eligibility requirement to receive payments and benefits under many of the programs administered by FSA. The review and verification of AGI compliance certifications submitted is required to ensure the accuracy of payments and the integrity of these programs.

USDA has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Internal Revenue Service to establish an electronic information exchange process for verifying compliance with the adjusted gross income provisions for farm programs. The agreement ensures that payments are not issued to producers whose AGI exceeds certain limits. The limits set in the 2008 Farm Bill are: \$500,000 non-farm average AGI for commodity and disaster programs; \$750,000 farm average AGI for direct payments; and \$1 million non-farm average AGI for conservation programs.

Written consent will be required from each producer or payment recipient for the IRS review process. No actual tax data will be included in the report that the IRS sends to FSA.

Participants in programs subject to AGI rules must submit form CCC-927 (for an Individual) and/or CCC-928 (for a Legal Entity) to the Internal Revenue Service by June 15, 2010, to avoid interruption of program benefits. These forms may be obtained from this FSA office or online at: <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainervlet>.

To safeguard privacy of all program participants and confidentiality of the information, program participants are required to complete CCC-927 and/or CCC-928, and **mail the completed forms directly to IRS** at the address specified on the forms within 60 calendar days of the signature date and **no later than June 15, 2010**.

Please feel free to contact our FSA Office at (661) 942-9549 ext. 2 if you have any questions.

## Dates to Remember

<b>March 31, 2010</b>	2009 Honey Loan Deadline
<b>April 30, 2010</b>	Acreage Reporting Deadline – Small Grains
<b>May 31, 2010</b>	Memorial Day – Office Closed
<b>June 1, 2010</b>	DCP/ACRE Signup Deadline Date
<b>July 5, 2010</b>	Independence Day – Office Closed
<b>July 15, 2010</b>	Acreage Reporting Deadline – All Crops (except small grains)
<b>Ongoing</b>	SURE Program Signup

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#### **SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS**

Special accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impaired, or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, please call our office at (661) 942-9549.

#### **CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLAINT PROCESS**

Any person, class or group of persons may file a discrimination complaint within 180 days of an alleged discriminatory action. Complaints may be filed in writing or orally with the agency head, any designated agency official or the Secretary of Agriculture, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250. Assistance in filing a complaint can be obtained by calling or visiting any FSA office.

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