



**Merced-Mariposa
County FSA**

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Hours

Monday—Friday
8:00 am—4:30 pm

County Office Staff

Laura J Westerfield
CED

Lavon Treasure
Farm Loan Manager

Amy Cody
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Phyllis Boyle
Gizela Gover
Sandra Schoonhoven
Lydia Swilley
Samantha Cook

County Committee

Roseanne Serrano
Simon Vander Woude
Lucy Nunes
Art Richards
Jose Vazquez

Website

www.fsa.usda.gov/ca

DCP/ACRE Signup by June 1

Enrollment for the 2011 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) and ACRE will continue through June 1, 2011. FSA staff has mailed appointment post cards to most farm operators. If you have not received an appointment card but have historically participated in the DCP program please call our office today and make an appointment. Limited staffing WILL NOT allow us to call you to make your appointment so you must act soon in order to make the June 1, 2011 deadline.

DCP Program payments are calculated 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 2011, eligible producers may request partial direct payments as an advance on the total amount.

The optional 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. A farm's 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.

An ACRE payment is issued when both the state and the farm have incurred a revenue loss.

The total number of planted acres for which a producer may receive ACRE payments may not exceed the total base on the farm. In exchange for participating in ACRE, and in addition to not receiving counter-cyclical payments, a farm's direct payment is reduced by 20%, and marketing 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.

MAY 2, 2011—Fall Seeded Crop Reporting Deadline

We cannot stress enough the importance of reporting all of your crops and rangeland. Program rules

have pretty much made the timely reporting of all land use a requirement for all FSA programs. April 30 falls on a Saturday this year therefore you have until Monday, May 2, 2011 to report your fall seeded acreage.

Leases Verbal or Otherwise

Do you operate a farm under a verbal lease? You will be required to provide a written statement of the terms and conditions of any oral agreement or lease, as well as the land owner's signature on the DCP contract. In addition, should the land owner be an entity, we are required to have a CCC-901 (Members information) with signature authority on file. The decision to have a verbal or written lease is between the land owner and farm operator.

Please remember that there are three things that must be included in a written lease; the parties legally involved in the agreement, a detailed description of the property being leased and the terms of the agreement.

Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) SIGN-UP Jan. 10-July 29, 2011

Signup for the 2009 Supplemental Revenue Assistance (SURE) Program began Jan. 10, 2011.

SURE provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters. For SURE, all crops must be covered by crop insurance, NAP or the operator must be eligible for a RMPR waiver.

A farm enrolled in SURE is eligible when either:

- a portion of the farm is located in a county covered by a qualifying natural disaster declaration (USDA Secretarial Declarations only) or a contiguous county; or,
- the actual production is less than 50% of the normal production.

We are aware that almonds were affected by unusual 2009 weather conditions as were several other crops. If your overall farm

revenue was reduced because of crop loss please contact the Merced FSA Office to see if SURE could be part of your recovery.

Honey Loans

Honey loans are a type of marketing assistance loan. They are currently available until March 31, 2011. The national loan rate for honey is \$.69 per pound. Market prices currently exceed the loan rate, so LDPs are not available at this time.

To be eligible, the producer must produce honey in the United States during the calendar year for which the loan is requested, and extract the honey on or before Dec. 31 of the applicable crop year. Producers must also maintain continuous beneficial interest in the honey through date of repayment of the loan, and be responsible for the financial risk of the operation. Producers are responsible for maintaining the quality of farm-stored honey.

The containers must be marked with the producer's name, type of honey, number of container and net weight. Pre-loan inspections are required before the loans can be disbursed.

Actively Engaged

USDA has amended the requirements of being 'actively engaged' in farming. These rules apply to eligibility for payments under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) or Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE).

Normally the stockholder or a member of a legal entity **must** make contributions of active personal labor and/or active personal management for the farming operation. The contributions are to be performed on regular basis, must be identifiable, and separate from the contributions of others.

The exception to this rule for a stockholder or member of a legal entity only occurs when both of the following apply:

At least half of the interest in the legal entity is held by stockholders or members who are providing active personal labor or active personal management; and

The total direct payments received by the legal entity and each of the members can't exceed \$40,000.

Adjusted Gross Income

USDA and the Internal Revenue Service have an electronic information exchange process for verifying compliance with the adjusted gross income (AGI) provisions for farm programs. Written consent will be required from

Livestock Programs Available

FSA administers several programs that may be available to assist livestock producers dealing with problems caused by winter weather. To apply for assistance, producers need to document the number and kind of livestock that have died as a direct result of these winter storms. In situations where additional transport costs are being incurred to feed livestock, producers should document these additional costs.

Among the key programs are the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP). For livestock death losses to be eligible under LIP, producers must file a notice of loss with their local FSA office within 30 calendar days from when the loss is apparent to the producer.

Contact your nearest FSA office for additional information.

FSA Payment Record

The last week of January, producers who received payments from FSA should have also received a CCC-1099-G from the Kansas City office. A CCC-1099-G is a report to the Internal Revenue Service about FSA payments made to producers during the previous calendar year. The CCC-1099-G is a service to help participating producers report taxable income. It is not intended to replace the program participant's responsibility to report income to the IRS.

If you received a CCC-1099-G, we recommend you check the amounts shown with those in your records to see that the amounts are correct. Refunds will no longer be reported on the 1099-G, but will be available online from the FSA Financial Inquiries (FSA-FI) web-based database. Program participants with authentication user ID's and passwords can access their refund information at FSA-FI and select "Inquiry Type 1099/Refund Reports". Refund amounts are displayed on the Producer's Year-to-Date Activity web page.

If you have a question concerning the 1099-G refund information, you may contact your nearest FSA office for assistance in locating the correct payment data. If you choose to visit the office, bring your CCC-1099-G.

NOTICE TO HISPANIC AND/OR WOMEN FARMERS OR RANCHERS COMPENSATION FOR CLAIMS OF DISCRIMINATION

If you believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) improperly denied farm loan benefits to you between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic, or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation.

To register your name to receive a claims packet, call the Farmer and Rancher Call Center at 1-888-508-4429 or visit: www.farmerclaims.gov

The claims package will have detailed information about the eligibility and claims process.



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each producer or payment recipient for the tax review process. No actual tax data will be included in the report that IRS sends to USDA.

This to ensure that payments are not issued to producers whose AGI exceeds certain limits. The limits set in the 2008 Farm Bill are \$500,000 nonfarm average AGI for commodity and disaster programs; \$750,000 farm average AGI for direct payments; and \$1 million nonfarm average AGI for conservation programs.

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

Hay Net – Your No-Cost Online Buying and Selling Market

Hay Net is a free, online hay locator service on the FSA website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet>. Producers who want to buy or sell hay can post their ads at no charge to make connections. Hay Net is a popular site for farmers and ranchers who have an emergency need, such as the one caused by the current extreme winter conditions. Individual ads can be posted by producers after completing a simple online registration form.

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Roseanne Serrano and Arthur W Richards!

- Roseanne was re-elected to represent farmers from Eastern Merced, from Highway 99 East to the county lines and is servicing her third consecutive term.

- Arthur was re-elected to represent farmers and ranchers from Mariposa County and is serving his second consecutive term.

The election results for the Local Administrative Area #3 and #4 are as follows:

LAA #3

Roseanne Serrano — COC Member

Anna T. Kuniyoshi — 1st alternate to COC

LAA #4

Arthur W Richards — COC Member

Linda Meyer — 1st alternate to COC

FSA appreciates all of the voters who took the time to complete the election ballot and those producers willing to be nominated.

Farm Loan Programs

The Farm Service Agency is committed to providing family farmers with loans to meet their farm credit needs. If you are having trouble getting the credit you need for your farm or ranch, direct and guaranteed loans are currently available.

Ask your lender about an FSA loan guarantee if you've had a setback and your lender is reluctant to extend or renew your loan.

Farm Ownership loans or Farm Operating loans may be obtained as direct loans for a maximum of up to \$300,000. Guaranteed loans can reach a maximum indebtedness of \$1,119,000. Producers are encouraged to apply early so that a loan can be processed and funded in a timely manner.

FSA employees will help you complete the necessary application and other forms, and help you understand what information is required, where to find it or who to contact to get it. To find out more about FSA loan programs, contact the county office loan staff.

Bank Account Changes

Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into your bank account. In order for timely payments to be made, producers need to notify the FSA county office if your 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.

Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) Enrollment

Applications for GRP in FY 2011 must be submitted by March 18, 2011. Rental contracts can be for periods of 10, 15, or 20 years. Permanent easements are also available for producers interested in a long term conservation arrangement. For more information about GRP rental rates or easement payments, contact your nearest county FSA office.



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all of 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, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (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 to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, 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). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Selected Interest Rates for March 2011	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating - Direct	2.500%
Farm Ownership - Direct	4.875%
Conservation Loan	4.875%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.500%
Emergency	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility	3.5-3.875%

Dates to Remember	
March 14	CRP General Sign-up 41 Begins
March 18	GRP Enrollment Ends
March 31	Honey Loans Close
April 15	CRP General Signup 41 Ends
May 2	Fall Planted Crop reporting deadline
June 1	2011 ACRE Signup Ends
June 1	2011 DCP Enrollment Ends
July 15	Final 2011 Crop Reporting Deadline