

February 2016

# USDA e-News

## California Edition



United States Department of Agriculture

*Welcome to USDA e-News, California Edition, a multi-agency newsletter providing California's producers and other interested parties with current information.*

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## Featured Item

### California Small Farm Conference Registration

Registration is still available for the 29th [California Small Farm Conference](#) at DoubleTree by Hilton in Sacramento on **March 5 – 8, 2016**. The goal of the Conference is to promote the success and viability of small and family owned farming operations and farmers markets through short courses, field tours and workshops. This year's conference features highly-acclaimed food writer Mark Bittman as the keynote speaker, as well as several new networking opportunities.

## Updates

### Deadline Approaching for Conservation Reserve Program

The next general enrollment period for the [Conservation Reserve Program \(CRP\)](#) ends on **February 26, 2016**. The program opened December 1, 2015 which also marked the 30th anniversary of CRP, a federally funded program that assists agricultural producers with the cost of restoring, enhancing and protecting certain grasses, shrubs and trees to improve water quality, prevent soil erosion and reduce loss of wildlife habitat.

### February Crop Insurance Deadlines

Risk Management Agency (RMA) reminds producers of crop insurance deadlines approaching. The last day to purchase or change your policy is **February 28, 2016** for the following crops:

Corn, Cotton, Cultivated Wild Rice, Dry Beans, Figs, Grain Sorghum, Rice, and Whole Farm Revenue Protection. Crop insurance provides protection against crop production losses due to natural perils such as drought, hail, and excessive moisture. Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance agents. In order to receive premium subsidies, the insured must certify that they meet [Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation](#) requirements (AD-1026) with Farm Service Agency. For more information contact your agent or you can find an agent online at the RMA [Agent Locator](#).

## Whole Farm Revenue Protection Program February Deadline

A reminder that Whole Farm Revenue Protection, a new revenue insurance program that provides coverage for the entire farm under one insurance policy, has been expanded to all counties in California for the 2016 crop year with a sales closing date of **February 28, 2016**. Program changes make it available to more growers. For more information go to <http://www.rma.usda.gov/policies/wfrp.html>

## Deadline Nears for Rice Growers

Margin Protection, a new pilot insurance program for the 2016 crop year, is available to rice growers in Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Tehama, Yolo and Yuba counties with a sales closing date of **February 28, 2016**. Margin Protection provides producers with a full package of risk coverage that include protection against a decline in harvest price, yield loss and cost increases or any combination thereof. The program is area-based, using county-level estimates of costs to establish the amount of coverage and indemnity payments. It can be purchased by itself, or in conjunction with other rice insurance policies. Growers are advised to ask their agent for further details.

## USDA Enrollment Period Begins for Safety Net Coverage in 2016

Producers who chose safety-net coverage from Agriculture Risk Coverage or Price Loss Coverage programs can visit Farm Service Agency county offices to sign contracts to [enroll in coverage](#) for 2016. The enrollment period will continue until **August 1, 2016**.

## Reminder: Notice of Damage

As winter rains continue throughout California, Risk Management Agency and Farm Service Agency (FSA) remind insured producers that a written notice of damage or loss of production is to be filed **within 72 hours of initial discovery** of damage or loss of production. This also applies to producers enrolled in the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program. These notifications provide the opportunity for the insurance provider to inspect the crop and determine the extent of damage or potential production before the crop is harvested or otherwise disposed of. In the event of damage or loss, producers should contact either their insurance agent or [local FSA office](#) as appropriate.

## Updates from the Southwest Climate Hub

The latest bulletin from the Southwest Climate Hub is available [online](#).

# Funding Opportunities

## Funds to Address Tree Mortality on Private Forestlands

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has launched an initiative to assist private forestland owners address tree mortality and other drought-related damage to improve forest health. Approved conservation practices include treating or removing woody residue from dead or dying trees, forest stand improvement, and tree plantings. Landowners of non-industrial private conifer forestlands in **Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, Mariposa, Madera, Fresno Tulare and Kern counties** are eligible to apply for assistance. Funding is being made available through the NRCS [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#). Eligible landowners are encouraged to contact their local county NRCS service center for more information and to apply:

- Fresno County - (559) 276-7494
- Kern County - (661) 336-0967
- Madera County - (559) 674-4628
- Mariposa County - (209) 966-3431
- Tulare County - (559) 734-8732
- Amador, Calaveras and Tuolumne Counties - (209) 223-6535

## Wildlife Habitat Restoration Funds

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is making available about \$50 million nationwide this year in financial assistance to partner with agricultural producers who want to restore and protect habitat for seven focus species, including two California species: greater sage-grouse and the southwestern willow flycatcher. NRCS is also investing about \$535,000 in California on habitat restoration for the southwestern willow flycatcher, a small Neotropical migratory bird that lives in riparian areas and wetlands in the arid Southwest. NRCS financial assistance covers part of the cost to implement conservation practices. Interested landowners are encouraged to contact their [local USDA service center](#).

## Incentives for Nut Farmers to Adopt Low-Emission Harvesters

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is offering a new incentive option for almond and walnut farmers (and potentially others) to use cleaner harvesting technology. Eligible farmers may receive an incentive of \$10.52/acre for up to three years for eligible harvesters. The new low-emissions harvesting opportunity is funded through the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Additional information on the specific models of harvesters and how to apply for the program are available at your [local NRCS field office](#).

# Reports and Publications

## NASS Reports

[Vegetables, Annual](#) (2/4/2016)

[Crop Production](#) (2/9/2016)

[Preliminary Grape Crush Report](#) (2/23/2016)

[Olive Inventory](#) (2/23/2016)  
[Fruit & Nut Review](#) (2/24/2016)  
[Livestock Review](#) (2/24/2016)  
[Field Crop Review](#) (2/25/2016)  
[Poultry Report](#) (2/25/2016)

## **Other Activities and Events**

### **Workshop on Distance Learning, Telemedicine Program**

Rural Development will host a workshop on **February 25, 2016** in Davis for anyone interested in applying for the [Distance Learning Telemedicine program](#). Applications are due by March 14, 2016 and are open to federally recognized tribes, state and local governments, nonprofits, for-profit businesses and consortia of eligible entities. To RSVP to the workshop contact Rocky Chenelle, at [rocky.chenelle@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:rocky.chenelle@wdc.usda.gov) or (530) 379-5032.

### **2015 Certified Organic Survey in the Mail**

NASS is now conducting the 2015 Certified Organic Survey to provide more data for the industry. The survey questionnaire was mailed the first week of February to organic farmers and ranchers in California. This information will be used to help determine programs, research, and support to better meet the needs of organic agriculture producers in California and the U.S. California alone accounted for 41 percent of all organic sales in 2014. For more information, visit [www.nass.usda.gov/ca](http://www.nass.usda.gov/ca) or call Curt Stock in the Pacific Regional Office at 916-498-8935.

### **Floriculture Survey Continues throughout February**

Floriculture operators are encouraged to return their completed Floriculture Survey questionnaire as soon as possible via mail, or use the convenient [Online Survey Response site](#). The data will help identify state and national trends in product development, changing production practices, and product diversity in floriculture industry. The Floriculture Survey results will be published in the spring of this year. For more information, visit [www.nass.usda.gov/ca](http://www.nass.usda.gov/ca) or call Michael Landis in the Pacific Regional Office at 916-498-8940.

### **ARMS Data Collection in February**

NASS is contacting California farmers and ranchers to conduct the next phase of the Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS). Enumerators will gather information through early spring. To obtain the most accurate data, NASS will reach out to nearly 40,000 producers nationwide, including 2,375 in California. The survey asks producers to provide data on their operating expenditures, production costs and household characteristics. For more information, visit [www.nass.usda.gov/ca](http://www.nass.usda.gov/ca) or call Arthur Rosales in the Pacific Regional Office at 916-498-8936.

### **Nationwide Conservation Survey Continues Second Phase**

NASS is contacting more than 600 California farmers and ranchers through early March 2016 as part of the second phase of the Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP). CEAP

measures the environmental benefits associated with implementation and installation of conservation practices on cultivated and non-cultivated agricultural lands, according to USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the lead agency for the project. NASS conducts the survey for CEAP under a cooperative agreement with NRCS. For more information, visit [www.nass.usda.gov/ca](http://www.nass.usda.gov/ca) or call Michael Landis in the Pacific Regional Office at 916-498-8940.

## **About Us**

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### **Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**

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## **Contact Us**

If you would like to receive a copy of future newsletters or if you have relevant information for California producers that you want to include in a future issue of this newsletter, please email one of the contacts listed below. Please be advised that not all activities may be published.

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