



USDA Service Center
3800 Cornucopia Way, Suite E
Modesto, CA 95358
Phone (209) 491-9320
Fax (209) 491-9331

Hours
Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

County Committee (COC)
David Santos, Chairman
Kurt Erickson, Vice Chair
Dave Wheeler, Member
Stuart Crook, Member
Dale Matney, 1st Alternate
Mary Blake, 1st Alternate
Tina Nunes, Advisor
Miguel Garcia, Advisor

Next COC Meeting:
June 3rd, 2010

Farm Program Staff:
Jonna Spaletta, CED
Carmen Cardenas, PT
Maria Juárez, PT
Latisha Kahn, PT
Ashley Nichols, PT
Joni Worley, PT

Farm Loan Staff:
Suzie Wilson, State Specialist
Joe Enos, Acting FLM
Alma Jaquez, PT
Lupe Mims, PT

For further details and to discuss your own operation's eligibility for any program, contact your nearest FSA office.

For a list of local offices, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/ca



Stanislaus - Tuolumne County News

June 2010 Issue

Spring Certification Deadline July 15, 2010

The acreage reporting deadline is fast approaching. Filing an accurate acreage report for all crop and land use, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of USDA programs. **July 15, 2010** is the final day for producers to certify spring planted crops (corn for example) as well as any permanent plantings (trees/vines) or native grass for the 2010 crop year. If your crop certifications are not signed and date stamped in the office by July 15, 2010 you will be charged a late filed fee.

Fees charged are as follows:

\$30/farm plus \$16 for the 1st hour, with \$8/hr thereafter (minimum of 1 hr).

****Late Fee Exception**** - If your crop is planted after July 15, 2010 then you have 15 calendar days from the date of planting to timely report your crop (according to handbook 2-CP). If you would like to certify your crops that were planted after July 15, 2010 and it is more than 15 days after the date you planted you will be charged a late fee.

As a reminder, participation in any of the following programs require annual acreage reports to be on file: DCP/ACRE, SURE, NAP, LFP & ELAP. If you participate in any of these programs or would like to have your crops certified for insurance purposes, please call and schedule an appointment with any one of our staff to insure you have your acreage certifications completed in a timely manner.

SURE Enrollment 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 disasters 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 purchase Non-Insured Crop Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for the crops grown.

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. A crop of economic significance is a crop that has contributed or would have contributed at least 5% or more to the total expected revenue from all crops produced on the farm
- the farm experiencing the loss must be in a county declared a disaster by the Secretary of Agriculture, or in a contiguous county. (Those who show proof of an individual loss of at least 50% are also eligible to receive SURE payments for production 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.

A SURE calculator is available at: 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 background are also available online. Please contact Maria or Latisha at the Stanislaus/Tuolumne County Office for more information.

2010 FSA County Committee Elections

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to ALL farmers and ranchers, whether beginning or long established, with large or small operations. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

County Committee (COC) members are a critical component of FSA operations. The intent is to have the COC reflect the makeup of the producers and to represent all constituents. This means wherever possible, minorities, women or lower income producers need to be on the committee to speak for these underrepresented groups.

County committees provide local input on:

- Commodity price support loans and payments
- Conservation programs
- Incentive, indemnity and disaster payments for some commodities
- Emergency programs
- Payment eligibility



FSA county committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws. County Committee Members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions.

LAA # 1 in Stanislaus County is up for election this year. LAA # 1 covers north of the Tuolumne River & east of Highway 99, including Valley Home, Knights Ferry, Riverbank, Oakdale and Waterford. If you have farming interests in this area and are interested in running for a position on the County Committee, please contact our office!

Election Period

June 15, 2010 – The nomination period begins. Request nomination forms from the local USDA Service Center or obtain online at: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/fsa0669a_commiteelectform.pdf

Aug. 2, 2010 - Last day to file nomination forms (FSA-669A) at the local USDA Service Center.

Nov. 5, 2010 - Ballots mailed to eligible voters.

Dec. 6, 2010 - Last day to return voted ballots to the USDA Service Center.

Jan. 1, 2011 - Newly elected county committee member(s) take office.

Who Can Hold Office

To hold office as a county committee member, a person must meet the basic eligibility criteria as follows:

- Participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA
- Be eligible to vote in a county committee election
- Reside in the LAA in which the person is a candidate

Causes for ineligibility include being:

- Removed or disqualified from the office of county committee member, alternate or employee
- Removed from any public office or have been convicted of fraud, larceny, embezzlement or another felony
- Dishonorably discharged from any branch of the armed services

Nominations

To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign nomination form FSA-669A. The form includes a statement that the nominee agrees to serve if elected. This form is available at USDA Service Centers and online at:

http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/fsa0669a_commiteelectform.pdf. Nomination forms for the 2010 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on Aug. 2, 2010. Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in an FSA program may be nominated for the county committee. Individuals may nominate themselves or others as a candidate. Additionally, organizations representing minority and women farmers or ranchers may nominate candidates. Nomination forms are filed in the office that administers the producer's farm records.

Who Can Vote

Agricultural producers of legal voting age may be eligible to vote if they participate or cooperate in any FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm may also be eligible to vote. More information about voting eligibility requirements can be found in the FSA fact sheet titled "FSA County Committee Election - Eligibility to Vote and Hold Office as a County Committee Member.". Please contact the County FSA office if you have any questions.

Payment Limitations & Direct Attribution

A new way of limiting producers on the amount of benefits they can receive was introduced in 2009. This new change was called direct attribution and affects both individuals as well as legal entities. A legal entity is defined as an entity created under Federal or State law that owns land or an agricultural commodity, product or livestock. Through direct attribution, payment limitation is based on the total payments received by the entity and also the individual, both directly and indirectly as an officer, partner or shareholder in an entity. Qualifying spouses are eligible to be considered separate persons for payment limitation purposes, rather than being automatically combined under one limitation.

Example:

ABC, Inc. has 2 members each holding 50% ownership interest. ABC, Inc. received a \$40,000 payment in 2010 for the Direct & Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP). Each member of the corporation will be attributed \$20,000 worth of program benefits for DCP in 2010. This will allow each individual member to receive up to \$20,000 more of DCP payments in 2010 individually or through another entity.

The following are the annual payment limitations set for USDA Programs for the years 2009-2012:

Program	Limitation
DCP / ACRE - Direct Payments	\$40,000
DCP Counter-Cyclical / ACRE Payments	\$65,000
ELAP, LFP, LIP & SURE (combined)	\$100,000
NAP & TAP (each)	\$100,000
CRP, GRP, WRP (each)	\$50,000
TAAF	\$10,000

If you have any questions in regard to payment limitation and/or direct attribution, please contact Latisha.

2010 ELAP

Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees & Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP) provides compensation to eligible producers of livestock, honey bees, and farm-raised fish for losses due to disease, adverse weather or other loss conditions including wildfires caused by natural occurrence. ELAP is for losses that are not covered by LIP, LFP, or SURE.

Physical losses of honey bees due to adverse weather or natural occurrence (such as colony collapse) are eligible under ELAP. Producers will be required to provide documentation of beginning and ending inventory of honey bee colonies when claiming a physical loss of honey bees.

Two essential documents are required to sign up for 2010 ELAP. Producers are required to submit a notice of loss and an application for payment. **Please be advised, notice of losses must be submitted within 30 days of the loss being apparent.** Also, the final date to submit an application for payment for 2010 is January 30, 2011. If you are interested in participating or have questions, please contact Ashley.

TAP

The Tree Assistance Program (TAP) provides financial assistance to qualifying producers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes, and vines that were lost by natural disasters occurring on or after January 1, 2008 and before October 1, 2011.

Eligible causes of loss (natural disasters) are plant disease, insect infestation, drought, fire, freeze, flood, earthquake, lightning, or other occurrences as determined by the Secretary. *Excessive wind has been recognized as an eligible cause of loss in Stanislaus County for the 2008 year.*

To qualify for TAP, producers must:

- produce commodities for commercial purposes
- suffer qualifying tree, bush, and vine losses in excess of 18% mortality from an eligible natural disaster
- have owned the eligible trees, bushes, and vines when the natural disaster occurred; or have a production history for commercial purposes on planted or existing trees, bushes or vines.
- replace eligible trees, bushes, vines within 12 months from the date the application is approved

If you would like to apply for losses that occurred in 2008, 2009 or between Jan. 1, 2010 and May 7, 2010, applications and supporting documentation are due by July 6, 2010. To apply for losses that occur between May 8, 2010 & September 30, 2011, applications and supporting documentation are due within 90 calendar days of the disaster event, or date the loss is apparent. If you are interested in participating or have questions, please contact Ashley.

Cash Rent Tenant Rule

If a producer wants to participate in the Direct & Counter-Cyclical program on cash rented land, then they must meet certain eligibility requirements to be considered a cash-rent tenant. A cash-rent tenant is defined as a producer that rents land from another producer for cash or a guaranteed crop share (which is the amount of the commodity to be paid in rent). These provisions also apply to tenants who rent land for \$0 or farm the land in exchange for compensation other than cash, such as controlling weeds or barter arrangements.

To qualify as a cash-rent tenant, producers must make either of the following contributions to their farming operation:

- a significant contribution of active personal labor (personally providing physical activities such as irrigating, harvesting, planting, etc.)
- a significant contribution of **both** active personal management (personally providing general supervision, direction of activities, decision making, etc.) and owned equipment

Producers who do not meet this provision will not be able to receive benefits on cash-rented land. However, if a producer has owned land as well, they will still be able to receive benefits on any of their owned property.

Stanislaus / Tuolumne
 County FSA Office
 3800 Cornucopia Way, Ste E.
 Modesto, CA 95358



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Farm Reconstitutions

At FSA, farms are “constituted” to group all tracts having the same owner and/or the same operator under one farm serial number (FSN). When changes in ownership or operator take place or when an owner and operator cannot agree about program participation (for example - ACRE participation), a farm reconstitution is necessary. The reconstitution (or recon) is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. Remember to be effective for the current year (2010), recons must be requested by the owner or operator by June 1, 2010 for farms participating in DCP and August 1, 2010 for all other farms.

Dates to Remember

July 6th	Final Day to apply for 2008, 2009 & Jan. 1 - May 7, 2010 losses being reported for the Tress Assistance Program (TAP)
July 15th	Final day to report spring/summer crops & native grass (corn, permanent plantings, etc)
August 1st	Last day to request a farm reconstitution on all farms not participating in DCP/ACRE
August 2nd	Last day to file nomination form (FSA-669A) at the local USDA Service Center
Continuous	MILC Program SURE Signup Farm Loans - Direct & Operating Submit Form CCC-927/928 to IRS

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