

USDA e-News

California Edition

Welcome to USDA e-News, California Edition. A multi-agency newsletter providing California's producers and other interested parties with current information from the following USDA agencies:



In this issue: [Updates](#) | [Funding Opportunities](#) | [Reports & Publications](#) | [Other Activities & Events](#) | [About Us](#) | [Contact Us](#)

Updates

California Food and Justice Coalition Farm Bill Workshops

California Food and Justice Coalition (CFJC) partners with individuals and organizations to provide educational workshops and planning meetings statewide regarding the Farm Bill. In order to discuss the biggest challenges with our current food system and what residents see as real solutions, CFJC is providing education workshops and planning meetings statewide regarding the Farm Bill. *Upcoming workshops:* Sacramento, **June 27th**: <http://bit.ly/a58w5x> - Berkeley, **July 9th**: <http://bit.ly/HH11WJ> . For more information, please see: <http://cafoodjustice.org/farm-bill-2012/>

Acres and Grain Stocks to be Collected and Published in June

In June, NASS will be collecting information on what farmers have planted this year and what commodities are in storage. The annual [Acres report](#) and the quarterly [Grain Stocks report](#) will be published on **June 29th**.

Members Appointed to the Council for Native American Farming and Ranching

WASHINGTON, May 24, 2012--Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced the appointment of members to the Council for Native American Farming and Ranching, a committee created to advise him on ways to eliminate barriers to participation for Native American farmers and ranchers. The Council is being appointed as part of the *Keepseagle* settlement. "The Council for Native American Farming and Ranching will help Native governments, businesses, farmers and ranchers and tribal governments partner with USDA to create jobs, drive economic growth and strengthen tribal communities," Vilsack said. For more

information, please visit:

http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentidonly=true&contentid=otr_news_events.html

“Buy It Where You Burn It”, Urges Firewood Task Force

A simple solution to not spreading unwanted insects and diseases, such as from goldspotted oak borers, Sudden Oak Death, or emerald ash borers, is to buy firewood from a local source in close proximity to your camping destination, according to the California Firewood Task Force, a group of state, federal, and local agencies and organizations. The Task Force also recommends that campers leave any unused firewood onsite for the next camper to enjoy. For more information about the “Buy It Where You Burn It” campaign, visit <http://www.firewood.ca.gov> or call Katie Palmieri at (510) 847-5482.

Smartphone App Provides New Way to Access Soil Survey Information

A new smartphone application, or “app,” is available as a FREE download for users to access information about soil types and their unique characteristics and management needs. The app, called [SoilWeb](#), combines online soil survey information with the GPS capabilities of smartphones. This means that farmers and ranchers, wherever they happen to be standing, can use their smartphone to gain immediate information about the types of soils and their unique characteristics and management needs. The [SoilWeb](#) app is a portable version of UC Davis’ more complex web-based tool that uses data from the [Natural Resources Conservation Service](#). For those wanting even more detailed technical soil information, [NRCS’ Web Soil Survey \(WSS\)](#) is an interactive online tool that can develop custom soils maps and create a variety of technical soil reports.

USDA Claims Process

Hispanic and Women’s Claims Process

To obtain a claims package call 1-888-508-4429. You can also visit www.farmerclaims.gov to submit your information online. For more info see our [blog post](#) in English and Spanish.

Pigford – The Black Farmers Discrimination Litigation

Please visit: www.blackfarmercase.com or call 1-866-950-5547

Keepseagle - The Native American Farmers Class Action Settlement

Please visit: www.IndianFarmClass.com or call 1-888-233-5506

Funding Opportunities

Help Wanted: Grant Reviewers for Farmers Market Promotion Program

Must have a desire to help farmers reach new markets and to help businesses bring healthier options to local communities. Experience & qualifications should include some knowledge of local and direct marketing methods. Must be willing to devote 50-60 hours during the month of

July to help score project proposals. There is no travel required—you can participate from anywhere in the country!

The Farmers Market Promotion Program is a competitive grant process designed to help expand opportunities for farmers and bring healthy foods into more communities. The grants are administered by USDA's [Agricultural Marketing Service](#) (AMS), and aim to help farmers throughout the country. About \$10 million is available this year to support direct-marketing projects like farmers markets, community supported agriculture, roadside stands and agritourism. For additional information or to download an application, visit www.ams.usda.gov/FMPP. You can also e-mail Ricardo.Krajewski@ams.usda.gov or call (202) 720-0933.

Community Connect Broadband Program Funding

Rural Development announced \$10 million is available in the Community Connect Broadband Program to provide grants for broadband service to residents of remote, rural communities. Grant awards will range from \$100,000 - \$1.5 million and applications must be received by **June 18, 2012**. Eligible applicants include Indian Tribes or Tribal Organizations, state or local governments, incorporated organizations, cooperatives and private or limited liability companies. More information is available in the May 3, 2012 [Federal Register](#).

MicroLoans for New Farmers Proposed

USDA is seeking comments through **July 23, 2012** on a proposed enhancement to the Farm Service Agency's Operating Loan Program. Featuring a streamlined application and simplified approval procedure for loans under \$35,000, this program would improve lending services to qualified new and small farm and ranch operations. To learn more about the program proposal visit: [FSA MicroLoan Proposal](#) Public comments are accepted by two methods: 1) ONLINE via the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions. 2) US MAIL: to Director, Loan Making Division (LMD), FSA, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Stop 0522, Washington, DC 20250-0522.

Disaster Declarations Enable Emergency Loans

Approval of USDA Disaster Declaration requests enables producers in that county to apply for FSA Emergency Loans. These loans of up to \$500,000 apply to recovery from losses only for the crop (or crops) noted in the declaration and only for the disaster noted. Counties contiguous to the disaster counties are also eligible. CA counties with approved Disaster Declarations at this time are: Alameda, Marin, Tehama (drought / rangeland) and Glenn (freeze / citrus). For the latest **local** information, contact your nearest FSA office. For general Emergency Loan information visit: [FSA Emergency Loans](#).

Reports and Publications

NASS Reports

[Prune Forecast](#) (06/01)

[Crop Production](#) (06/12)

[Fruit and Nut Review](#) (06/15)

[Field Crop Review](#) (06/19)

[Livestock Review](#) (06/28)

[Almond Objective Measurement Report](#) (06/29)

Other Activities & Events

County Committee Nominations Now Open

FSA County Committee nominations are now open until **August 1, 2012**. Farmers and ranchers who serve on County Committees help with key decisions on programs in their counties and work to ensure FSA agricultural programs operate within laws and regulations and serve the needs of local producers. For information about nominating or becoming a nominee, contact your local FSA office or visit: [County Committee Elections](#).

Minority Farm Register – Listings Invited

The USDA Minority Farm Register promotes equal access to USDA farm programs and services for minority land owners, farmers, ranchers, tenants and others. All minority persons are encouraged to participate in this voluntary program and receive information through USDA outreach efforts. The USDA Office of Outreach may share personal information with other USDA-approved partners such as community-based organizations, educational institutions and other government agencies. To participate, individuals can download and complete the personal information form and mail it to USDA by visiting: [Minority Farm Register](#). The form is also available at local FSA offices.

Free Passes for Active Military Personnel

Beginning on Armed Forces Day on May 19, active duty service men and women – Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, and activated National Guard and Reserves – can obtain the new military version of the America the Beautiful National Parks and Federal Recreation Lands Annual Pass for free. The pass will be accepted at National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Army Corps sites that charge entrance or standard amenity fees.

Pacific Southwest Region of Forest Service to receive over \$450,000 in funds to hire Youth Conservation Corps workers

A total of 10 national forests in California and one experimental forest in Hawaii will receive a total of \$459,212 to hire 139 Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) enrollees for 11 important ecological restoration projects this year. The goal of this effort is to provide youth opportunities to develop an understanding and appreciation for the nation's natural environment and heritage. The paid positions will include a variety of experiences touching on heritage, rangeland

management, watershed restoration, recreation, botany, vegetation management and fuels reduction, etc. The following are the forests in California with projects: Modoc, Klamath, Lassen, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, Shasta-Trinity, Mendocino, Stanislaus, Sierra, Six Rivers, Sequoia and Angeles.

About Us

Farm Service Agency ([FSA](#))

- [When Disaster Strikes](#)
- [Managing Credit Needs](#)
- [Commodity Support](#)
- [Direct/Counter-Cyclical and Revenue Programs](#)
- [Energy](#)
- [Conservation](#)

Natural Resources Conservation Service ([NRCS](#))

- [Conservation](#)

National Agricultural Statistics Service ([NASS](#))

- [Census of Agriculture](#)
- [Agriculture Surveys](#)

Risk Management Agency ([RMA](#))

- [Crop Insurance Programs](#)
- [Funding Opportunities](#)
- [Risk Management Education & Outreach](#)

Rural Development ([RD](#))

- [Catalog of Programs Loans, Grants & Technical Assistance](#)

Contact US

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

Farm Service Agency ([FSA](#))

Paul Lehman, Public Affairs Officer
USDA Farm Service Agency - Western Region
Phone 530-792-5537 FAX 530-792-5555
paul.lehman@ca.usda.gov

Natural Resources Conservation Service ([NRCS](#))

Lisa Hokholt, State Outreach Coordinator
925-371-0154 Ext 118
Lisa.Hokholt@ca.usda.gov

Reina Rogers, American Indian Liaison
530-283-7513

Reina.Rogers@ca.usda.gov

National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)

Sarah Hoffman, Deputy Director
916-498-5161 Ext 110

Sarah.Hoffman@nass.usda.gov

Risk Management Agency (RMA)

Dick Mansfield, Risk Management Education & Outreach Coordinator
530-792-5878

Richard.Mansfield@rma.usda.gov

Rural Development (RD)

Karen Firestein
530-792-5829

Karen.Firestein@ca.usda.gov

Janice Waddell
Native American Coordinator
530-792-5810

Janice.Waddell@ca.usda.gov

USDA is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer