

June 2014

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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Drought Resources

With California in its worst drought in the state's 160 years of record-keeping, USDA is working with federal and state partners to provide a collaborative response. For the most complete and up-to-date information on available resources, please visit the USDA Drought Resource webpage at <http://www.usda.gov/drought> and the California Department of Food and Agriculture Drought Resource webpage at <http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/drought>.

Farm Service Agency Offers Several Disaster Assistance Programs

Farm Service Agency (FSA) has a variety of programs available to help farmers and ranchers impacted by disasters, including the state's drought. The sign-up for all the Livestock Disaster Programs started on **April 15, 2014**. Click on the programs below for additional details, or visit the FSA Disaster Assistance Program Complete details on FSA Disaster Assistance can be found at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=diap&topic=landing>.

- [Livestock Forage Disaster Program \(LFP\)](#) provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who have suffered grazing losses due to drought or fire with retroactive authority to cover eligible losses back to Oct. 1, 2011. **Sign-up ends on January 30, 2015.**
- [Livestock Indemnity Payments \(LIP\)](#) provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who have suffered livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather and attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law, including wolves and avian predators with retroactive authority to cover eligible livestock losses back to Oct. 1, 2011. **Sign-up ends on January 30, 2015.**

- [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish \(ELAP\)](#) provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish for losses not covered by LFP and LIP. **For program years 2012 and 2013 sign-up ends on August 1, 2014. For program year 2014, sign-up ends on November 1, 2014.**
- [Tree Assistance Program \(TAP\)](#) provides financial assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by natural disasters with retroactive authority to cover eligible losses back to Oct. 1, 2011. **Sign-up ends on January 30, 2015.**
- [Farm Storage Facility Loan Program \(FSFL\)](#) provides low-interest financing for producers to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities. The program was enhanced to include 23 new categories of eligible equipment for fruit and vegetable producers, and makes it easier for farmers and ranchers around the country to finance the equipment they need to grow and expand. The maximum loan amount is \$500,000.

NRCS Offers California Air Quality Chipping Initiative

The California Air Quality Chipping Initiative, through NRCS's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), will assist agricultural producers in chipping woody debris from removed orchards or vineyards that are no longer being irrigated due to the extreme drought conditions. These crops are located in areas where surface water deliveries are severely curtailed or suspended and no other sources of water are available for continued irrigation. Farmers in Fresno, Kings, Kern, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Tulare counties have until **June 20, 2014** to apply. For additional information, eligible farmers are encouraged to contact their local NRCS Service Center. Service center locations can be found at <http://www.ca.nrcs.usda.gov/>.

NRCS Conservation Drought Assistance to California Farmers & Ranchers

California has seen many droughts come and go, but 2014 is creating especially dire conditions for the State's farmers and ranchers. Information on [NRCS Drought Assistance](#) can be found at: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/ca/newsroom/features/>.

Drought Assistance from Rural Development

Rural Development has several programs that may help rural communities, businesses, ag producers, farm workers and others impacted by California's ongoing drought. Opportunities include \$3 million in Emergency Community Water Assistance Grants (ECWAG) to help rural communities whose water supply is at risk. Additional help is available for homeowners that need help drilling a well or connecting to a community water system, food banks that anticipate increased demand, ag producers wanting to offset ag irrigation costs, and others. For a list of available programs, and local contacts, visit Rural Development's website <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/ca>.

Updates

California State and County Profiles Now Available Online

The 2012 Census of Agriculture *State and County Profiles* for California are now available online at

http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/California/

The profiles contain the latest Census data at the state and county levels on a range of topics, including value of production, demographics, traditional and specialty crops. The county level data is also available for unique queries and downloads from Quick Stats 2.0, a free online database at <http://quickstats.nass.usda.gov/>. If you have any questions regarding the Census data or tools, please contact the NASS Pacific Regional Office at 916-498-5161.

FSA Now Accepting Nominations for Committee Member Election

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) has begun to solicit and accept nominations to run and serve on the Agency's County or Area Committees. Farmers, ranchers and program participants are eligible to serve. Nominations will be accepted through **August 1, 2014**. More information and the nomination form, FSA-669A, can be found at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov> or from your local FSA office.

California Almond Nursery Survey Ongoing in June

USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), in partnership with the California Almond Board, will conduct the initial *California Almond Nursery Sales Report* survey in June. The survey will provide information about the number of almond trees sold and an estimate of new almond plantings for 2013 and 2014. Results will also be used to enhance the ongoing almond acreage survey program. If you have any questions regarding the *California Almond Nursery Sales Report* survey, please contact Lena Schwedler at 916-498-5161 ext. 134.

Two Major Mid-Year NASS Surveys Wrapping Up

Two major mid-year NASS surveys, the June Agricultural Survey (also known as the Crops/Stocks Survey) and the June Area Survey, end in June. NASS thanks California growers for providing the first clear indication of potential production and supply of cotton, rice, grain stocks, livestock inventory, California cash rents and land values, and sales. After compiling and analyzing the survey information, NASS will publish the annual *Acreage* report and the quarterly *Grain Stocks* report on June 30, 2014. Survey data contribute to NASS's monthly and annual *Crop Production* reports, as well as the annual *Small Grains Summary* and USDA's monthly *World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates*. All reports are available on the NASS website: <http://www.nass.usda.gov>. For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Pacific Regional Office at 1-800-851-1127.

Funding Opportunities

Applications Accepted for Education Program

RMA is now accepting applications for the Risk Management Education Partnerships Program. A broad range of risk management training activities are eligible for consideration and the 2014 Farm Bill expanded the list to include farm financial benchmarking efforts. Additional information can be viewed at <http://www.rma.usda.gov/aboutrma/agreements/>. The deadline for submitting applications is **June 30, 2014 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET)**. Applicants should be aware of the following important information:

- Applications must be submitted through <http://rvs.umn.edu/Home.aspx>

- A tutorial on how to apply is available online at <http://rvs.umn.edu/rmaresources> and is also included in the application system. Please read the RFA and tutorial before submitting an application.
- Webinars on the application process are scheduled for **June 5, 2014 at 3 p.m. ET** and **June 12, 2014 at 11 a.m. ET**. A taped version will be available after June 5. Contact the Davis Regional Office for meeting info.
- Applicants must be registered in the System for Acquisition Management (SAM) which has replaced the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). Please visit <http://www.SAM.gov> for information on how to register. Applications will not be accepted through Grants.gov. Hard copy applications will not be accepted either.
- Applicants are encouraged to submit applications early!

Contact RMA's Davis Regional Office 530-792-5870 or rsoca@rma.usda.gov for more information.

Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) Available Soon

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) will continue to support agriculture producers and energy facilities working to use renewable biomass materials to create clean energy through the [Biomass Crop Assistance Program \(BCAP\)](#). BCAP was reauthorized by the 2014 Farm Bill and provides \$25 million annually for the program. Between 10-50 % of the total funding must be used for harvest and transportation of biomass residues. Traditional food and feed crops are ineligible for assistance. The 2014 Farm Bill also enacted several modifications for BCAP, including higher incentives for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, and narrower biomass qualifications for matching payments, among other changes. More details will be posted soon in the Federal Register. For more information, contact FSA at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov> or visit your local FSA office.

Sales Closing Dates Near for Crop Insurance Programs

USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) reminds producers that the sales closing dates for crop insurance programs are almost here. Producers should make sure to sign up, review, or change their crop policy before the date has passed. The last day to buy or change a policy for summer Strawberries in Fresno, Merced and Ventura counties and fall planted Potatoes in Imperial and Riverside Counties is **July 1, 2014**. Producers are encouraged to contact a crop insurance agent as soon as possible or you can find an agent on the RMA website at <http://www.rma.usda.gov/tools/agent.html>.

Applications Accepted for Rural Energy for America Program

USDA Rural Development's Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) provides grants and loan guarantees to help rural businesses and agricultural producers purchase and install renewable energy systems and make energy efficiency improvements. Applications for the first round of funds are due by **July 7, 2014**, with subsequent deadlines to follow. Complete information is available in the May 5, 2014 [Federal Register](#) or online at http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_Reap.html.

Deadline Nears for Grants to Improve Economic Conditions

The deadline for USDA Rural Development's [Rural Business Opportunity Grant \(RBOG\)](#) Program is midnight eastern time **June 13, 2014** for electronic applications and **June 17, 2014** for paper applications. Grants up to \$100,000 are available to help support business incubators,

feasibility studies and business plans, long-term strategic business planning, leadership and entrepreneurial training and other related activities. Native American tribes in rural areas are encouraged to apply. For more information visit the website

http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_RBOG.html or contact Karen Firestein at karen.firestein@ca.usda.gov or 530-792-5829.

Funds Support Local and Regional Food Systems

USDA Rural Development continues to accept applications from farmers, ranchers and rural business owners for loan guarantees to support local and regional food production. The loan guarantees are available through the [Business & Industry Guaranteed Loan Program](#). The 2014 Farm Bill authorized a 5% set aside of funds for local and regional food projects. More information is available in the April 30, 2014 [Federal Register](#). Questions may also be directed to Larry Strong at larry.strong@ca.usda.gov or 530-885-6505 ext.114.

Reports and Publications

NASS Reports

[Prune Forecast](#) (06/02/2014)

[Crop Production](#) (06/11/2014)

[Fruit & Nut Review](#) (06/18/2014)

[Field Crop Review](#) (06/18/2014)

[Floriculture Report](#) (06/19/2014)

[Poultry Report](#) (06/30/2014)

[Livestock Review](#) (06/30/2014)

[Almond Objective Measurement Report](#) (06/30/2014)

[Acreage Report](#) (6/30/2014)

[Grain Stocks](#) (6/30/2014)

Other Activities & Events

USDA Webinar Series for the Fruit and Vegetable Industry

The [Agricultural Marketing Service's Fruit and Vegetable Program](#) invites you to take part in a series of free, interactive webinars on our many programs and services. At each webinar, you'll hear a presentation from a USDA expert on a specific topic, be introduced to our staff, and take part in an interactive question and answer session. These informative webinars are designed for fruit and vegetable growers, packers, shippers, processors, wholesalers, and retailers of all sizes. Registration is required and space is limited. Log on today to register – it's your first step to learning how we can work together to meet your unique business needs. If you miss a webinar, just visit our [Webinar Archive](#) to watch it online. If you have any question about our webinar series or USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, please contact Christopher Purdy at (202) 720-3209 or christopher.purdy@ams.usda.gov.

Upcoming Webinars:

**An Introduction to the
Perishable Agricultural
Commodities Act (PACA)**

June 26, 2014
2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time

To register.
<http://bit.ly/1b1QnJZ>

About Us

Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

- [Find a Program](#)

Farm Service Agency (FSA)

- [When Disaster Strikes](#)
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Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

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National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)

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Risk Management Agency (RMA)

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Rural Development (RD)

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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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