

California Wheat

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CWC Wheat Bulletin

Date: March 12, 2009 Issue# 29

The Weekly Wheat Bulletin is designed to share quick and informal information about the state's wheat crop and disease conditions. Comments are advisory in nature and designed to give growers a "heads up" to be alert for similar conditions. Comments forwarded by Thursday morning of each week will be posted in the Bulletin for distribution Thursday evening. Archived copies of the Wheat Bulletin may be accessed on the California Wheat Commission website: www.californiawheat.org

For those of you that are new to our mailing list, the length of this bulletin will change from week to week. The amount of material is dependent on the contributions of our readers.

Comments

3.10.09 – “Wheat prices are still relatively high compared to past years. Dry conditions in Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas are providing an opportunity for growers that missed the market run up earlier. We are recommending growers wait and watch those areas for rain before booking anything. If rain comes the market will go down though. I have been talking to breeders about higher protein varieties, and there are some really exciting things growing in fields this year that I hope everyone can get out and see. If California is going to compete on the local and world market we have to raise our proteins or buyers will pass on our wheat which we saw last year. Varieties that are not making protein, but have very high yields, need to be managed differently from varieties that have high protein accumulation and lower yields. It is crucial that

growers follow the UCD guidelines for fertilizing wheat.” *Jason Nearn, Wheat Merchandiser, Penny-Newman Grain*

3.11.09 “The wheat crop in the central and southern San Joaquin Valley is something of a mixed bag at this point. On the forage side, there is some very early planted wheat as well as other small grains that are headed out and may be chopped at any time to allow growers to plant early corn. The rest of the forage crop is around the boot stage, and looking relatively strong. Grain fields range from early head emersion to tillering and jointing stages. We have experienced some frost over the past week, so we will be monitoring early fields for signs of frost damage. Grain fields that have received ample irrigation and sufficient fertilization are lush, green and thriving. Fields in alkaline areas and fields that have not received adequate, deep irrigations are struggling and yellow. We are seeing fields that are nitrogen deficient at this point as fertilizer applications continue and ramp up at this point. Communication with wheat buyers has indicated that it is imperative to deliver high quality, high protein wheat to the market at harvest this year. Because of the abundance of grain on the market, and the amount of low-protein carryover from 2008, buyers will be very picky as to the protein levels accepted for flour production. Please, be vigilant in your fertilizer application rates and timings; protein will be very important come harvest.” *Geoff Schulz Penny-Newman Grain Company, Fresno CA*

3.12.09 – “All of our fields look good up and down the state, with the exception of the San Luis Obispo barley trial, which is very drought stressed.

The weather (heavy rain) in the Sacramento Valley has created optimal conditions for disease pressure, but so far, we have seen no signs of infection in any of our trials.

With the rise in temperatures, I expect we'll start to see early signs of disease within the next couple weeks." *Phil Mayo, UC Davis, Small Grains Program*

Other

The following is a press release from the state FSA office:

Recovery Act Funding Loans in Rural California

(Davis, CA), March 9, 2009 – David Schaad, Acting California State Executive Director for USDA's Farm Service Agency announced today that FSA in California will fund 36 additional Farm Operating Loans from American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 funds. These loans total \$3.1 million in additional capital to help the California rural farm economy.

Nationwide, Farm Service Agency staff will immediately use \$145 million of the \$173 million provided in the Recovery Act for its Direct Operating Farm Loan Program, which will give 2,042 farmers direct loans from the agency. It is notable that almost 50% of these loans are to beginning farmers and 10% are to socially disadvantaged producers.

"These loans will go to work purchasing farm equipment, feed, seed, fuel and other operating expenses. Rural communities and California growers can use this help to keep our farms and ranches operating," said Schaad.

All remaining funding will be allocated through approved loans until all available funds have been expended. Applications are considered on a first come, first served basis with special emphasis placed on beginning and socially disadvantaged applicants. The maximum loan amount is \$300,000.

In keeping with the president's goal for the Recovery Act, this loan funding is intended for proper investment into the agricultural sector, to benefit both family farmers and rural economies. The Recovery Act was designed to preserve or create millions of jobs throughout the country and these loans help ensure that recipients remain financially viable and local agribusinesses benefit from direct purchases.

Here is a hypothetical example of purchases made with a \$100,000 direct operating loan:

- Used Farm Tractor: \$45,000
- Livestock: \$18,000
- Seed: \$15,000
- Fertilizer: \$10,000
- Fuel: \$12,000

The effect of this loan reaches the local implement dealership, sale barn, the grain seed distributor, the fertilizer distributor and a local fuel dealership.

For specific information on direct operating loans and other FSA farm loan programs, please visit your FSA county office or our website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

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