



# California Association of Wheat Growers

~~~~~

## Newsletter

November 5, 2010

~~~~~

### Upcoming Events

~~~~~

**-December 14 CAWG and CWC Board of Directors Meetings**

### In This Issue

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Farm Service Agency Administrator Urges Farmers and Ranchers to Vote in County Committee Elections](#)

[Democrats Neat Sweep in California](#)

[Industry Renews Call to Halt EPA Greenhouse Gas Rule-making](#)

[Ethanol Tax Incentive Battle Heats Up](#)

[University of Illinois Expert Sees Need for Increased Corn Acreage in 2011](#)

[STB to Hear Montana Wheat Case November 30](#)

[Steiner Visits Key Kansas Groups, Talks Crop Insurance](#)

### **Farm Service Agency Administrator Urges Farmers and Ranchers to Vote in County Committee Elections That Begin on Friday, Nov. 5**

~~~~~

Release No. 0586.10

Contact:  
Isabel Benemelis  
(202) 720-7809

WASHINGTON, Nov. 4, 2010 - Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator Jonathan Coppess announced today that the 2010 FSA county committee elections will begin tomorrow, Nov. 5, with USDA mailing ballots to eligible voters. The deadline to return the ballots to local FSA offices is Dec. 6, 2010.

"All eligible farmers and ranchers can make a difference by voting in this year's county committee elections," said Coppers. "County committee members will provide input and make important decisions on the local administration of new disaster and conservation programs under the 2008 Farm Bill. I particularly encourage minority and women producers to get involved so that county committees fairly represent the producers of a county or multi-county jurisdiction."

County committee members are an important component of the operations of FSA and provide a link between the agricultural community and the Department of Agriculture (USDA). Farmers and ranchers elected to county committees help deliver FSA programs at the local level, applying their knowledge and judgment to make decisions on commodity price support loans and payments; conservation programs; incentive indemnity and disaster payments for some commodities; emergency programs and payment eligibility. FSA committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws.

To be an eligible voter, farmers and ranchers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm also may be eligible to vote. Agricultural producers in each county submitted candidate nominations during the nomination period, which ended on Aug. 2.

Eligible voters who do not receive ballots in the coming week can obtain ballots from their local USDA Service Center. Dec. 6, 2010, is the last day for voters to submit ballots in person to local USDA Service Centers. Ballots returned by mail must also be postmarked no later than Dec. 6. Newly elected committee members and their alternates will take office Jan. 1, 2011. Close to 7,900 FSA county committee members serve in the 2,244 FSA offices nationwide. Each committee consists of three to 11 members who serve three-year terms. Approximately one-third of county committee seats are up for election each year. More information on county committees, such as the new 2010 fact sheet and brochures, can be found on the FSA website at [www.fsa.usda.gov/elections](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections) or at a local USDA Service Center.

*USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice), or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).*

## Democrats Near Sweep in California

~~~~~  
Once again, California has gone in an opposite direction than the rest of the country during an election. The morning after the final ballots were cast only a few races have not been called by election officials. As of 9 am November 3rd, the democrats are leading in every statewide office including the Attorney General, where Kamala Harris is leading by a percentage point.

Here is a short synopsis of the statewide results and a few of the close contested district seats.

- **Jerry Brown** is the new **Governor elect** 36 years after being elected the first time. He has the unique characteristic having been elected the youngest and oldest California Governor. He has a 12% lead over Meg Whitman.

- **Gavin Newsome** has had a great week - being elected **Lt. Governor** just a few days after the Giants won the World Series. He beat the current Lt. Governor Abel Maldonado by 11 points. In a race too close to call, **Kamala Harris** is leading for the **Attorney General's race**. With 97.1

percent reporting, she leads by about 30,000 votes over Los Angeles District Attorney Steve Cooley.

Democrats won the rest of the statewide races handily. **Bill Lockyer** was reelected **Treasurer**, **John Chiang** was reelected **Controller**, Debra Bowen was reelected **Secretary of State**, and **Dave Jones** was elected **Insurance Commissioner**.

There are also a couple close races still undecided in the Congressional delegation. In the **11th District**, **Congressman McNerney** is leading David Harmer by 121 votes. In the **20th Congressional District**, with 100 percent reporting, **Andy Vidak** is leading incumbent Jim Costa by just over 1,000 votes.

State races also bucked the national trend. In the **California State Senate**, Republican **Anthony Cannella** defeated Anna Caballero by 5 points. The Senate remains 2-15. Senator Oropeza who passed away in mid October name remained on the ballot. She was elected and that race will be subject to a special election but the seat is a safe democrat seat.

In the **California State Assembly**, the democrats picked up a seat. In district 5, the Democrat **Dr. Richard Pan** defeated Republican Andy Pugno. This was the seat held by termed-out Assembly Member Roger Niello. **Ted Gaines** won the special election for SD 1 to fill the vacancy created by the death of Senator Dave Cox beating Roger Niello. **David Valadao** a Republican Dairy Farmer soundly defeated Fran Florez by more than 10,000 votes. In the two most vulnerable democrat seats in the Assembly, incumbent democrats **Alyson Huber** and **Joan Buchanan** both survived reelection. In the end, their races were nowhere as close as earlier predicted.

The Assembly is now 52-28.

Voters were skeptical about the **propositions**, sending mixed signals to Sacramento. There were two propositions addressing redistricting and the voters passed **Proposition 20**, expanding the independent redistricting commission to include congressional seats. **Proposition 27**, which sought to disband the commission failed. Most pundits agree that the independent redistricting commission will draw more balanced districts. Combined with the open primary passed earlier this year this may result in a more balanced Legislature.

On budget and fiscal matters voters passed **Proposition 25** allowing for a majority vote budget, but they also passed **Proposition 26**, requiring a two thirds vote to raise most fees. They also passed **Proposition 22**, which prohibits the state from borrowing or taking certain local funds.

Additionally, **Proposition 21**, which would have created a vehicle license fee for parks failed. So voters created accountability with a majority budget, but made raising revenue or borrowing more difficult. **Proposition 23** which would have suspended AB 32 was soundly defeated. **Proposition 24** which sought to undo some corporate tax incentives was defeated.

On a National note-**U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer** (D) has 52.1% of the votes with Carly Fiorina (R) at 42.5% with 97.1% of the precincts tallied.

## Industry Renews Call to Halt EPA Greenhouse Gas Rule-making

~~~~~  
With President Obama reasserting this week his intention that EPA begin enforcing its greenhouse

gas (GHG) rulemaking on January 2, 2011, nearly two dozen industry and business groups called on the Senate to block EPA funding to enforce the rules. The coalition wants EPA to halt action aimed at power plants and large stationary GHG sources, saying the rules "will impose substantial costs and burdens on U.S. jobs and state resources while intruding on Congress's important role in developing energy policy." Targeting 10 GOP and swing-vote Democrats, the 21 organizations have previously called for at least a one-year moratorium on the agency rulemaking.

### **Ethanol Tax Incentive Battle Heats Up**

Sensing time may be running out to preserve the 45-cent-per-gallon ethanol blenders' tax credit, the ethanol industry this week is still convinced it can get the tax credit extended and build support for corn-based biofuels. However, several meat and poultry industry interests this week renewed their call on Congress to let not only the ethanol blenders' tax credits expire, but to do away with the ethanol import tariff as well. They argue the ever-increasing demand on corn supplies as a feedstock - its estimate ethanol will take 4.7 billion bushels of the 2009-2010 corn crop - have exacerbated cost-of-production run-ups in their industry, the price of which is now being paid by consumers at grocery checkouts. Ethanol supporters acknowledge it is a tough sell on a \$6-billion program when everyone's talking about controlling government spending, but believe they have enough political support to preserve at least the blenders' credit. In a letter to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D, CA), six meat/poultry groups said they want to see the 45-cent credit expire, but are willing to talk about a smaller credit and shorter than five-year extension the ethanol industry supports. The strongest argument the alternative fuels industry makes right now - and this includes the biodiesel and renewable diesel industries - is that without some form of federal support, the industry will increase its plant shut downs, idling thousands of workers in the process.

### **University of Illinois Expert Sees Need for Increased Corn Acreage in 2011**

A report out of the University of Illinois has corn-based biofuel critics saying, "We told you so," as Dr. Darrel Good estimates the 2011 corn crop must hit almost 13.7 billion bushels based on the most likely supply/demand scenarios. Good says the crop needs to be at the trend value of 160 bushels per acre and harvested acreage needs to hit 85.55 million acres to get to the corn total. Allowing for silage and abandonment, 92.55 million acres will be needed, about 4.3 million more than planted this year, he said. For soybeans, Good sees 2010-2011 ending stocks of 265 million bushels, and 2011-2012 consumption of 3.325 billion bushels. A 2011 yield near the trend of 43.2 bushel per acre would require harvested acreage of about 76.4 million and planted acreage of 77.4 million, about 325,000 fewer than planted in 2010.

### **STB to Hear Montana Wheat Case November 30**

A wheat shipment case brought by the State of Montana against the BNSF Railway Company will begin November 30 when the Surface Transportation Board (STB) plans to hear oral arguments. The late November action is on a BNSF move to dismiss the

Montana complaint that a rail tariff change made in 2009 is unreasonable because it placed an alleged 48-car limit on wheat shipments from a Montana elevator that could handle 52-car or larger trains, the National Industrial Transportation League (NIT League) reported this week. The oral presentations can be watched live by going to the STB website at [www.stb.dot.gov](http://www.stb.dot.gov), going to "Information Center," and clicking on "webcast" and "live video" on the home page.

## **Steiner Visits Key Kansas Groups, Talks Crop Insurance**

~~~~~  
NAWG Director of Government Affairs for Farm Policy Eric Steiner traveled to the heart of wheat country this week to attend a crop insurance workshop and meet with leaders of Kansas agricultural organizations.

The workshop, held in Salina, covered topics including the Standard Reinsurance Agreement (SRA), the SURE and ACRE programs, recent policy developments within the USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA), the grain markets and basis concerns, and new crop insurance policy choices.

It was put on by Kansas State University (KSU) Research and Extension as part of an annual series of workshops also held in Colorado, Oklahoma and Nebraska.

While in the state, he toured the International Grains Program (IGP) offices, visiting with Mark Fowler, associate director, and the USDA/Agricultural Research Service (ARS) facility, meeting with Dr. Thomas Shanower, the center director.

Steiner also met with Forrest Chumley, the head of the research organization Heartland Plant Innovations, and Dr. Vincent Amanor-Boadu, agricultural economics associate professor at KSU, and he discussed the prospects for agricultural policy in the next Congress with Dr. Barry Flinchbaugh, long-time policy observer and KSU agricultural economics professor.

While Steiner has an extensive background in agricultural policy and politics, having worked for the Senate Agriculture Committee during the writing of the 2008 Farm Bill and as an appointee for the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service, he is striving to develop a deeper knowledge base of wheat-specific issues.

NAWG is grateful for the hospitality and insight provided by the Kansas Wheat staff during his visit and the chance to interact with and learn from the KSU faculty, IGP staff and ARS staff.