

State's farmers, ranchers get \$8.3M

RENO (AP) — Nevada farmers received more than \$8.39 million in federal payments and loans in 2006, announced State Executive Director Roger Van Valkenburg of the Farm Service Agency.

The figures released by the U.S. Department of Agriculture show how the federal payments are spread among various program categories throughout the state.

"The funds received by the state's agricultural producers do more than just help the farmers. From the

feed store to the farm equipment dealer, that money helps Nevada's rural economy survive and prosper, Van Valkenburg said.

Of the \$8.39 million, Elko County farmers received \$129,887.

The \$8.39 million includes \$4.9 million for 48 farm loans to producers who operate family-size farms and ranches; \$1.68 million in farm support payments, \$1.58 million in disaster recovery payments and \$64,456 in conserva-

Farm loans and support were up from the \$3.85 million and \$1.21 million seen in 2005. However, disaster payments were down from the \$6.68 million that year.

Van Valkenburg said disaster payments for the fires and floods of 2006 will show up more in the agency's 2007 and 2008 payments to farmers. The agency's fiscal year runs through Sept. 30.

The Environmental Working Group, an independent organization separate from the USDA, keeps a Web site that tracks subsidies to farmers.