

Powell-Deer Lodge-Granite County May 2009 Newsletter

**Powell-Deer Lodge-Granite
County FSA**
1002 Hollenback Rd, Suite B
Deer Lodge, MT 59722
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County Committee Members

Steve Graveley – LAA 1-1
Barb Conn – LAA 1-2
Marlin Gilman – LAA 1-3
Carl Johnson – LAA 1-4
Phil Ralston – LAA 1-5

FSA Office Personnel

Gary Thompson – ext. 233
Sandra Witt – ext. 232

Dates to Remember:

May 15 – Beginning Date of primary
nesting season

May 25 – Office Closed Memorial Day

June 15 – 17 Montana Range Days,
Miles city

June 15 – COC Nominations Open

July 3 – Office Closed, 4th of July

July 15 – Acreage Report Deadline

August 3 – COC Nominations End

Assistance Provided for Livestock Losses

If you suffered livestock death losses in 2008 and/or 2009 due to eligible adverse weather events, you may be eligible to receive payments from the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP). Although forms and procedures to apply for the program are not available at this time, please contact the county office to learn more about the eligibility requirements to apply for LIP

Adjusted Gross Income (AGI)

For 2009 through 2012 crop years, to be eligible to receive a marketing loan gain (MLG) or Loan Deficiency Payment (LDP), an entity or individual's average adjusted gross **nonfarm** income cannot exceed \$500,000. A person or legal entity with average adjusted gross **nonfarm** income that exceeds \$500,000 is **not** eligible for MLG's and LDP payments. However, the person or entity is eligible for a marketing assistance loan if requested before the final loan availability date, but the Marketing Assistance Loan (MAL) **must** be repaid at principal plus interest or a commodity certificate may be exchanged for the loan collateral. Commodity certificates are available until the end of the 2009 crop year.



Conservation Compliance

Federal regulations discourage the production of crops on highly erodible cropland unless the land is protected from erosion by an approved conservation system. Status reviews are conducted to ensure producers follow a conservation plan on highly erodible land.

In addition to the highly erodible land, a person may not plant an agricultural commodity on wetlands converted after Dec. 23, 1985, or convert a wetland to make agricultural production possible after Nov. 28, 1990.

Failure to comply with these provisions will cause a person to be ineligible for USDA benefits. County Committees may review noncompliance situations for good faith and provide relief in approved cases.

Change in Farming Operation or Address

Producers are reminded to notify this office to report change in address, land ownership or entity changes regarding percentages and/or adding or removing a member. This is vital to assist this office in keeping current records which reduce time spent when applying for different programs.

Change in Direct Deposit Account

The Debt Collection Act of 1996 mandates that payments from FSA be directly deposited into a producer's checking or savings bank account. It is important that **any** change in the producer's account such as type of account, bank mergers, routing number or account numbers be provided to the county office promptly to avoid possible payment delay.

2009 Acreage Reports

The deadline to file 2009 acreage reports is July 15, 2009. The farm maps will be mailed or made available at the FSA county office for producers. There are new requirements for reporting all cropland and rangeland for various program eligibility. Please follow the instructions closely for completing the maps.

Changes to FSA Payment Processing

FSA will be deploying a new payment processing system the first part of December.

Through the new system, all payments made through direct deposit will be processed through the Federal Reserve Bank and will be received in the participants account within 2-3 days of processing.

Interest Rates for Farm Loan Program

Effective as of March 1, 2009	
Program	Interest Rates
Farm Operating-Direct	2.00%
Farm Ownership-Direct	3.50%
Farm Ownership-Direct, Joint Financing	5.00%
Farm Ownership-Down Payment	1.50%
Emergency Loan- Amount of Actual Loss	3.75%

Recovery Act Funding Loans in MT

FSA in Montana obligated \$2.2 million in loans to assist producers within the state. The funding is through the stimulus bill titled the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

53% of the loan funds were advanced to socially disadvantaged and beginning farmers and ranchers.

Socially Disadvantaged Applicants	\$369,100.00
Beginning Farmers and Ranchers applicants	\$630,000.00

The funds may be used to purchase livestock equipment feed seed fertilizer and

Pulse Crops

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 provided for eligible pulse crop acreage to be added as base acres and yields for commodities eligible for the 2009 through 2012 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) and for the Average Crop Revenue Election Program (ACRE). Pulse crops are defined as dry peas, lentils, Desi garbanzo beans (small chickpeas), and Kabuli garbanzo beans (large chickpeas). Pulse crops will be eligible for counter-cyclical payments under DCP, but not eligible for direct payments.

Producers with farms identified as having pulse crops planted during the 1998 through 2001 crop years will soon be receiving a letter notifying them of available options to add pulse crop bases to their farm. Included with the letter will be a Summary Acreage History and Yield Report that shows pulse crop acreage reported to FSA during those years and 75% of the county average yield. Late-filed acreage reports, with supporting evidence, may be filed for history purposes if acreage reports were not filed with FSA in 1998 through 2001. Producers with planting history will have three options; 1) do not add pulse base – retain current base acres, 2) add eligible pulse base **without** an offset of existing base, or 3) add eligible pulse crop base **with** an offset of existing base. Yields will be set at 75% of the county average unless producers elect to update the yield by using the farm's actual yields for the crop years 1998-2001. Production evidence will be required to support the request to update yields. Contact this office for further information.

Farm Service Agency (FSA) Loans

FSA makes loans for land, livestock and other agricultural purposes throughout Montana.

The agency's loans offer low interest rates and terms designed to help beginning farmers and ranchers start out in agriculture with payments they can afford.

FSA can assist smaller operations get started by providing financing to purchase a tractor, grain truck or 50 cows as an example. Every operator has to get started some place and FSA has a variety of loans and loan programs to assist in that endeavor.

FSA can finance applicants who are currently in college if their goal is to return to the farm or ranch following graduation. For a student to be eligible while still in college they must be substantially responsible for the management of the security, this would include carrying out labor needs during critical periods of the year.



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Postage Block

Seedlings Still Available for Conservation Planting this Spring!

John Justin, Manager, Montana Conservation Seedling Nursery

Seedlings for conservation plantings are still available from the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation's nursery in Missoula. The nursery still has an excellent selection of many popular species including caragana, golden currant, lilac, woods rose, blue spruce, ponderosa pine, Western larch, aspen, cottonwoods, and willows. Although the nursery delivery truck has already visited most counties, seedling orders can still be shipped directly to a landowners' doorstep via Fed Ex.

The nursery will continue to accept seedlings orders for shipment this spring until at least May 23. The minimum order is 250 seedlings for new plantings. Replacement or fill-in seedlings are available in lots of 50 for deciduous seedlings and 25 for evergreen and containerized stock.

To find out more or place an order, contact the nursery directly at 406-542-4244. Additional information including a complete list of species and prices is also available on the nursery website:

www.dnrc.mt.gov/forestry/nursery.