

Hill County FSA Office
206 25th Ave W Ste 2
Havre MT 59501
(406)265-6792 ext. 2

County Committee Members

Clarence "Fritz" Keller, Chair
Richard Pollington, Vice
Mary Ruth St. Pierre
Dave Stevenson

FSA Office Personnel

Clint Greytak
Liane Albus
Linell Pegar
Rosalie Sather
Lisa Toth
Sara Crowley
Barbara Brown

Agricultural Lending
Opportunities

*Questions regarding obtaining
credit to start or enlarge a
farming or ranching operation;
financing agricultural operating
expenses; or livestock,
machinery purchases call
(406)357-2320 ext 2 for:*

Miranda Skoyen
Dick Nicholson
Denise Reynolds
Dates to Remember:

Aug. 2 – Sept. 30 – Managed
Haying Period (New Rules)
Aug. 2 – Sept. 30 – Summer/Fall
Managed Grazing Period
Sept. 30 – All bales and livestock
must be removed from CRP
acreage
Sept. 17 – CRP public meeting
Oct. – CRP payments issued
Oct. – DCP payments issued
Oct. 7 & 8 – Women Stepping
Forward for Agriculture
Symposium



Hill County FSA News

September 2009

Slate Set for County Committee Election

Two nominations were received for the County Committee Election, and have been reviewed and approved by the Hill County FSA Committee. The two names on the ballot will be;

Alfred W "Bill" Bradbury

Clarence "Fritz" Keller

Fritz is a dryland farmer from north of Havre, and farms with his family. He has served one three year term, and he also served a term a few years ago. County Committee members may serve up to nine continuous years before they reach term limit.

Bill and his wife Cathie farm and ranch south of Havre, and also north of Highway 2.

The Local Administrative Area, or LAA, having an election this year is north of the Milk River, coming down to Highway 2, then east of the Beaver Creek Highway.

County Committee members are responsible for oversight of the county office, making decisions concerning producer appeals, and recommending program implementation and changes.

Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters on November 6th, and must be returned by December 7th. The votes will be tallied at a public meeting to be held in the Hill County USDA Service Center on December 14th at 10:30 am.

Eligible voters are those that are agricultural land owners and operators of agricultural land and livestock operations. If you do not receive a ballot by the time indicated above, you may contact the County Office, and a ballot will be provided to you. Prior to being counted, the County Committee will make an eligibility determination of the submitted manual ballots.

Please remember to follow the directions – circle a candidate – and sign the sticker as indicated.

Thank you to both candidates for agreeing to run!

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

Price Support Loan Little Known Facts

- The interest rate this month is 1.5%
- They are nine month loans
- Loans can be settled by;
 - Paying off principal and interest
 - Paying the Posted County Price
 - Forfeiting the grain at maturity

*whichever is cheaper to you

But... because of the lien search requirements, and need for filing the lien, getting lien waivers, etc., it may take two-three days to complete your loan request. Please have patience as we work through this process.

Women Stepping Forward For Agriculture Symposium

The 9th annual Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Symposium will be held Oct. 7 & 8 at the Eagles in Lewistown.

Pre-registration information should be submitted by September 15, 2009. The cost of registration is \$60.00. A block of rooms has been reserved at the Yogo Inn.

For further information or a registration form, logon to the Montana FSA website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt>, contact any USDA Service Center or by calling Heidi Brewer at 406/232-7905 ext. 122.

Loan Deficiency Payments Are Being Made

As of this writing, LDP's are being made on barley and HRS and HAD wheat. Make sure you submit any LDP requests prior to losing beneficial interest in your crop – which may include signing NPE contracts.

The new form is a CCC-633 EZ, and can be accepted by fax or in person; also, for those with Level II authority, you can submit LDP requests via the internet. To learn more, contact the Hill County FSA office.

Farm Loans for Minority Groups

FSA can make direct and guarantee loans to those considered as minorities under USDA definition. These groups include women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Funds can be used to buy and operate family-sized farms and ranches.

Individuals and entities primarily and directly engaged in farming and ranching on family-sized operations may apply. A family-sized farm is considered to be one that a family can operate and manage itself. Applicants must meet all requirements for FSA's regular farm loan program assistance. Contact the FSA office for exact criteria.

Repayment terms for direct operating loans depend on the collateral securing the loan and usually run from 1 to 7 years. Interest rates for direct loans are set periodically according to the Government's cost of borrowing. Repayment terms for direct farm ownership loans are up to 40 years. Interest rates for guaranteed loans are established by the lender. Applications for direct loans are made through the local FSA office. Applications for guaranteed loans are made with the lender.

CRP Managed Haying & Grazing Ends September 30.

Managed Grazing on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres began August 2 and ends September 30, 2009. All livestock must be removed by September 30.

Managed Haying on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres ends September 30, 2009. All bales must be removed by September 30th.

NRCS Offers Conservation Stewardship Program

A continuous signup for the new Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Conservation Stewardship Program began August 10, 2009. The first ranking cutoff date is September 30, 2009.

The Conservation Stewardship Program encourages producers to address resource concerns by installing and adopting additional conservation activities or improving, maintaining, and managing existing activities. Contact your local NRCS office for further details on eligibility requirements for the Conservation Stewardship Program.

Farmland Wetlands Program (FWP) Begins

Signup for the new Farmland Wetlands Program began Aug. 3. The program provides a resource to restore wetlands and reduce downstream flood damage, improve surface and groundwater quality and recharge groundwater supplies. The 2008 Farm Bill provided additional incentives for land enrolled in FWP. All new signups for FWP will be eligible for a \$100 per acre Signing Incentive Payment, a Practice Incentive Payment of 40 percent of the cost of installing the practice in addition to the 50 percent cost-share payment for the cost of installing the practice, and a per acre Payment Rate of 120 percent of the calculated rental rate. Eligible acreage includes farmed and prior converted wetlands that have been impacted by farming activities. The maximum acreage for enrollment of wetlands is 40 acres per tract. Multiple wetlands and associated buffers may be enrolled on a tract as long as the total wetland acreage does not exceed 40 acres.

FWP contracts are from 10 to 15 years in exchange for annual rental payments, one-time incentive payments, and cost-share for installing necessary practices.

Farm Storage Facility Loan Program Undergoes Changes

The 2008 Farm Bill provided changes to the Farm Storage Facility Loan Program (FSFL). FSFL provides low-interest financing for producers of eligible commodities to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities. The maximum principal amount of a loan through FSFL is \$500,000. Participants are required to provide a down payment of 15 percent, with the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) providing a loan for the remaining 85 percent of the net cost of the eligible storage facility and permanent drying and handling equipment.

Loan terms of seven, 10 or 12 years are available depending on the amount of the loan. Interest rates for each term may be different and are based on the rate which CCC borrows from the Treasury Department.

Partial funding can be made after a portion of the construction has been completed. The final fund disbursement will be made when all construction is completed.

The following commodities are eligible for farm storage facility loans:

- Corn, grain sorghum, soybeans, oats, wheat, barley or minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain
- Corn, grain sorghum, wheat, oats or barley harvested as other-than-whole grain
- Pulse crops – lentils, small chickpeas and dry peas
- Hay
- Renewable biomass
- Fruits (including nuts) and vegetables – cold storage facilities.

Contact the office if you are interested in receiving further information about the changes to FSFL.

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Important Dates to Remember

Aug. 2 – Sept. 30 – Managed Haying Period (New Rules)
Aug. 2 – Sept. 30 – Summer/Fall Managed Grazing Period
Sept. 30 – NAP acreage reporting deadline for value loss crops
Sept. 17 – CRP public meeting, Hampton Inn, Great Falls
Oct. – CRP payments issued
Oct. – DCP payments issued
Oct. 7 & 8 – Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Symposium

FSA Implements New Payment Process for CRP and DCP Payments

In October, FSA will be implementing a new payment processing system beginning with the annual Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) payments and final direct payments under the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP). FSA will be doing their best to ensure delays are minimized with the new system however, some of the payment processing that used to occur behind the scenes within the software will now be more evident and may be confusing. In addition, all payments issued by FSA will be routed to the Department of Treasury to comply with the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996. What this means is that any delinquent Federal debt may also be offset from payments due you from FSA/CCC.

Annual CRP payments and final direct DCP payments may be reduced for:

- payment reductions for haying and grazing
- existing FSA/CCC debt
- advance direct payments
- eligibility determinations implemented with the 2008 Farm Bill (direct attribution, member contribution of labor and management, etc.)
- delinquent Federal debt

Payments will be processed automatically without local FSA intervention and deposited directly into accounts signed up for direct deposit. Paper payment checks will still be mailed by Kansas City. A transaction statement will be mailed to payment recipients explaining the payment issued and any offsets applied. The Department of Treasury will notify the payment recipient of any offset taken. Local FSA offices will not receive a copy of the transaction statement or notification of the Treasury offset. Please retain the transaction statement tax purposes and reconciling the FSA-1099s issued in January. Questions regarding Treasury offsets may be directed to the Treasury Offset Program (TOP) Call Center at 1-800-304-3107.