

Teton County FSA  
1102 North Main Ave  
P.O. Box 836  
Choteau, Mt 59422-0836  
406-466-5351 Extension 2

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Deanna Burgmaier, Vice Chair  
Dale Hanson, Regular Member

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Eric Gunderson, FLO  
Julie Ameline, PT  
Gail Durocher, PT  
Ann Hall, PT  
Dana Sullivan, PT  
Pam Kramer, TO

#### **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: Eric or Julie at 466-5351Ext. 2*

#### **Dates to Remember:**

**Sept. 1** – NAP application closing date for value loss crops (2010 crop year)

**Sept. 13** – Final date to file a notice of loss for LIP

**Sept. 30** – NAP acreage reporting deadline for value loss crops

**Sept. 30** – Signup deadline for CSP

**Oct. 7 & 8** – Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Symposium



Teton County FSA  
September 2009

#### **Message from the State Executive Director - Bruce Nelson**

I began as the State Executive Director for the Farm Service Agency on July 13<sup>th</sup>. After eight years of involvement in other venues, I am excited to assume my duties as the State Executive Director for the Farm Service Agency in Montana.

My most recent position was serving as the Chief of Staff to Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer. I have stepped down from my executive roles at Triangle N Farms since becoming FSA State Executive Director.

In every state the agricultural community is unique and has varied needs and concerns and my role, will be to work with USDA to ensure the needs of Montana agricultural producers are met.

Our primary mission at FSA is to assist Montana farmers and ranchers secure the greatest possible benefit from programs administered by FSA such as farm loans, commodity price support, disaster relief, conservation, or other available resources.

The hard working men and women of Montana's 49 FSA county offices are at the forefront of our efforts and remain the primary contact for program participation. We encourage you to speak with the staff at your local FSA office on how we can be of service.

#### **Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) Has Begun**

Signup for LIP began July 13<sup>th</sup>. If you had livestock losses from storms occurring during calendar year 2008 or 2009, you may be eligible to receive benefits from the LIP program.

#### **To Apply:**

- A notice of loss must be filed according to the following table.
- Proof of death of livestock must be provided and may include but is not limited to any or a combination of veterinary records, tax assessor records, private insurance documents.
- Documentation must provide sufficient data that identifies the kind/type weight range of the livestock and the number of livestock.
- A third party certification may be accepted only when the participant certifies in writing that no other form of proof of death is available and includes the number of physical location of livestock in inventory at the time the death occurred. Documentation must also be provided to support the number of livestock in the inventory at the time the deaths occurred. The third party providing the verification must be a reliable source and shall not be a relative associated with the operation or a hired man. **(cont. page 2)**

### Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) Sign-up Underway at NRCS

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is accepting applications for the new 2009 Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) through **September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009**. The potential acreage allocation for Montana is 663,838 acres, the second largest in the nation.

Participation requires a five-year contract with a \$200,000 payment limitation over that time frame. Eligible land includes Cropland, Pastureland, Rangeland, and Nonindustrial Private Forestland. Estimated payments rates range from \$12-\$22 acre for Cropland, \$7- \$14 acre for Pastureland, \$5-\$10 acre for Rangeland, and \$6-\$12 acre for Nonindustrial Private Forest Land.

Applications will be ranked using a system that will give points for conservation practices already being implemented and, more importantly, what extra conservation measures producers are willing to do to address additional resource concerns. After the applications are ranked, NRCS field staff will conduct on-site field verifications of preapproved participants based on the conservation information submitted. Once the potential participant has been field-verified and approved for funding, a conservation stewardship plan must be developed by the NRCS field staff.

For an application stop into the NRCS office or call **466-5722 Ext. 3** and a packet will be sent to you.

### LIP (cont.)

The following table provides the final dates to file a notice of loss and/or application for payment for either 2008 or 2009 livestock losses:

Date of Livestock Death	Final Date to File a Notice of Loss	Final Date to Submit an Application for Payment
Calendar Year 2008	Sept. 13, 2009	Sept. 13, 2009
Jan. 1, 2009 to July 12, 2009	Sept. 13, 2009	Jan. 30, 2010
July 13, 2009 to Dec. 31, 2009	30 days after death is apparent	Jan. 30, 2010

LIP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers that have incurred livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality on or after Jan. 1, 2008 and before Oct. 1, 2011 due to adverse weather, such as blizzards, disease, extreme cold, extreme heat, floods, and wildfires. The Montana State FSA Committee established the normal mortality rates for each livestock kind/type and weight range.

### CRP Managed Haying & Grazing Ends September 30.

Managed Grazing on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres begins 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 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **Changes to Payment Eligibility, Payment Limitation and AGI for CRP Participants**

The 2008 Farm Bill made specific changes to payment eligibility, payment limitation, and average AGI requirements for participants in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP):

- Annual payments are limited to \$50,000, both directly and indirectly, to a person or legal entity by direct attribution;
- Permitted entity rules no longer apply;
- The average AGI limitation is now a \$1 million average gross nonfarm income limitation.
- The payment eligibility requirements of “actively engaged in farming” and the cash rent tenant rule are no longer applicable for participation in CRP for contracts approved **after** September 30, 2008.

### **Policy Changed on Dry Peas Intended Use**

Producers of dry peas intended for forage for hay (FG), grazing (GZ), and GM (green manure) are now allowed to include acreage of those intended uses in determining pulse crop base history.

Producers with pulse crop history with the additional eligible intended uses are encouraged to make their election of pulse base acreage as soon as possible.

The farm must be enrolled in DCP or elected/enrolled in ACRE by September 30<sup>th</sup> to be eligible for either program.

### **CRP Required Management Activity**

CRP participants with contracts effective beginning in calendar year 2003 and later are required to perform management activities as part of their approved conservation plans. Management activities must be completed before the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the contract. In March affected CRP participants were informed that their contract(s) had to have a management activity completed this year.

### **CRP (cont.)**

The Teton County FSA committee has adopted the policy that CRP annual rental payments will not be made until the required management activity is completed. This policy affects those contracts that were required to have management activities completed by the end of September 2009.

### **Treasury Implementation Project Begins**

Beginning August 3, 2009, any FSA/ or Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) payments made by direct deposit will be transmitted to the Department of Treasury through Kansas City.

The Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 (DCIA) requires that all Federal payments be offset for delinquent Federal debt. All payments will be matched against debt referred to Treasury, including payments made by a Treasury check. Payments to assignees will be subject to the Treasury Offset Program (TOP) offset if the assignee has a delinquent Federal debt in TOP. If the TOP database finds a match for taxpayer identification number and name, the payment will be offset for the delinquent debt. The Treasury Department will notify the payment recipient of any offsets taken for debts due other agencies.

Currently, the description on the payee's bank statement reads, “USDA\_FSAKCMOCDSP”. After August 3, 2009, the description on the bank statement will read, “FSA TREAS 310” for all payments that are disbursed by Treasury.

If there are questions about a TOP offset, the payee may call the TOP Call Center at 1-800-304-3107 to obtain the contact information for the offsetting agency. The TOP Call Center only has access to provide the name of the offsetting agency and their contact information. The payee will need to call the offsetting agency to determine the origination of the debt.

**US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

Teton County FSA Office

**P.O. Box 836**

**1102 North Main Ave**

**Choteau, MT 59422-0836**

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***Important Dates to Remember***

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**Oct. 7 & 8** – Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Symposium

**Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Symposium**

The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Symposium will be held at the Eagles in Lewistown, October 7 & 8.

An exciting agenda has been developed for this year's symposium. A few of the highlights include a panel discussing Carbon Credit Options for Agriculture, Horse Processing Issues, Update on Montana's Brucellosis Status, Thoughts from Trent Loos, Agriculture Policy as we see it and Water Rights/Irrigation. Representatives from six of the USDA agencies will be present to provide a short presentation on new programs and issues production agriculture operators should be aware of.

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.

The Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Symposium is sponsored by the State Food and Agriculture Outreach Council and the MT Agri-women; Montana Cattlewomen; MT Farm Bureau Federation Women; and WIFE.