

Yellowstone County FSA
1629 Ave. D, Bldg. A
Billings, MT 59102



Yellowstone County FSA
May 2009

County Committee Members

Bart Erickson, Chairman
Ken Uffelman, Vice-Chairman
Forrest Ewen, Regular Member
Channis Whiteman, Minority Adv.
Juanita Stovall, Minority Adv.

FSA Office Personnel

Nina Gonzalez, PT
Jackie Gaglia, PT
Lisa Pederson, PT
Karen Sims, Farm Loan PT
Mike Turley, Farm Loan Mgr.
William Ballard, Farm Loan Mgr.
Kevin Johnson, CED

Dates to Remember:

May 18 – Final day to “buy-in” on 2008 crops.

July 3 – Holiday, office closed

August 14 - Final day to return signed 2009 DCP and/or ACRE contracts and add pulse crop base acres.

June 15 – COC nominating petitions accepted (area North of Yellowstone River Valley)

July 15 – Final day to report 2009 crop acreages.

August 2 through September 1- CRP management activities (ground disturbing option)

May 25 – Holiday, office closed

Notice of Loss – filed within 15 calendar days of the natural disaster occurrence or the date the damage to the crop or loss of production was apparent.



Special accommodations will be made for the physically handicapped, vision or hearing impaired upon request. If accommodation is required, please contact Kevin Johnson, CED at (406) 657-6135.

SECOND 2008 BUY-IN FOR INSURABLE AND NONINSURABLE CROPS

Sales closing dates for Federal Crop's CAT policies and FSA's Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) have passed for the 2008 crop year, for all insurable and noninsurable crops. A waiver was authorized in the 2008 ACT to allow producers to pay by close of business on May 18, 2009, a buy-in fee (\$100/crop) to be eligible for Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE) i.e. crop disaster, Tree Assistance Program (TAP), and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP). Since the trigger for SURE in Yellowstone County is met for 2008, i.e. Yellowstone County is contiguous to a counties with 2008 Secretarial Disaster designations, producers with at least one crop of economic significance with a 10% production loss in 2008 would be eligible for SURE, assuming all crops were either insured or the buy-in fee was purchased by May 18, 2009. Please note you would be required to insure, at or above the 70/100 coverage level, the “buy-in” crops in 2010. Contact Jackie Gaglia at (406) 657-6135 ext. 106.

2009 DIRECT AND COUNTER CYCLICAL PROGRAM (DCP) AND AVERAGE CROP REVENUE ELECTION (ACRE)

The 2009 DCP/ACRE signup has started and continues now until August 14, 2009. (Contracts were mailed to operators the second and third weeks of February.) These voluntary programs provide for guaranteed or direct payments that are based on 83.3 percent of the farms base acreage (wheat/barley/corn/oats) times the crop payment yield, times the producer share, times the payment rate. In addition, counter-cyclical payments (non-guaranteed, DCP only), based on 85% of the base, are paid when market prices decline. Producers are eligible for DCP/ACRE payments if they are at risk in producing a crop and comply with program provisions. (An owner who cash leases land to another is ineligible to share in direct / counter cyclical or ACRE payments.) Please note that pulse crop (dry peas, lentils, small and large chick peas) bases can also be established through August 14, 2009, for counter-cyclical payment purposes only, provided there were plantings during 1998 through 2001 crop years.

FSA Issued more than \$361 million in Fiscal Year 2008

From October 1, 2007 to September 30, 2008, the Farm Service Agency issued more than \$361 million in program payments and loans to Montana farmers and ranchers. The break down of the payments by program is as follows:

Program	Amount Issued
Conservation Reserve Program	\$119,136,136
Emergency Conservation Program	\$ 423,676
Grassland Reserve Program	\$ 220,691
Direct and Counter-cyclical Program	\$ 98,992,889
Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program	\$ 474,417
Crop Disaster Assistance Program	\$ 39,685,374
Livestock Compensation Program	\$ 9,184,911
Livestock Indemnity Program	\$ 363,890
Loan Deficiency Payments	\$ 353,708
Farm Storage Facility Loans	\$ 673,300
Marketing Assistance Loans	\$ 20,573,613
Milk Income Loss Contract Program	\$ 10,099
Farm Loans including Beginning Farmer & Rancher Loans and	\$ 50,893,000

YELLOWSTONE COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTION

Beginning June 15, 2009, nominations are being accepted for candidates for the County Committee (COC) position. This year the election in Yellowstone County will be the area north of the Yellowstone River Valley. Bart Erickson currently serves this area.

The nominee must sign the nomination form in order to be nominated as a COC member. Nomination forms will be mailed in the near future to the applicable voters.

Nomination forms must be submitted to this office by August 3, 2009. Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters beginning November 6, 2009. The final day for voters to submit their ballots is December 7, 2009.

FRUIT & VEGETABLE PLANTING RESTRICTIONS

Producers are prohibited from planting crops considered to be fruits and vegetables (FAV) on their enrolled base acres under DCP/ACRE unless the farm has planted FAV history or the producer has an established history of planting a specific FAV. (Each exception {i.e. farm and or producer history} does have specific criteria that must be met.) Sweet corn and pinto beans are some of the crops considered FAV. Please contact the office prior to planting FAV. Violations in the past resulted in DCP contract termination or a reduction in DCP payments.



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 supplies.

In keeping with the president's goal for the Recovery Act, this loan funding is intended for proper investment into the agricultural sector, to benefit both family farmers and rural economies.

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.

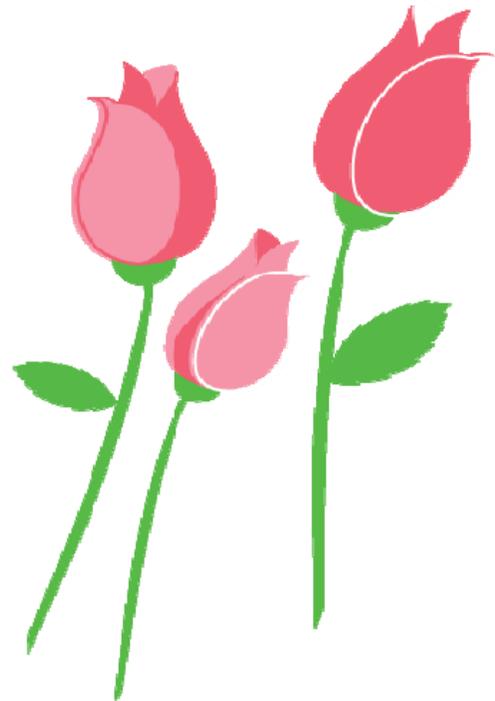
FSA can finance applicants who are currently in college if their goal is to return to the farm or ranch following graduation. For a student to be eligible while still in college they must be substantially responsible for the management of the security, this would include carrying out labor needs during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

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%

Changes to Your Farming Operation

FSA is encouraging producers to notify us of any changes to your farming operation including land ownership or lease changes, entity changes including members and shares, and who is authorized to sign documents for the operation or individuals. In some cases, farm and/or tract reconstitutions will be required to update farm records. The final date for producers to request a reconstitution is August 1, 2009.



2009 CROP REPORTS

Maps have been mailed to operators for crop reporting purposes. Crop reports are required for many of the programs. Please mail or drop off the completed maps to this office as soon as possible and prior to June 1, 2009. We will load the crop information, generate a crop report form, and mail the report(s) to you for your signature. Note you must sign/date and return the crop report form by July 15, 2009, to not incur late filing fees. Late filing fees at the minimum are \$46 per farm.

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 December 23, 1985, or convert a wetland to make agricultural production possible after November 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.

Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)

LIP is available to eligible livestock producers on farms that have incurred livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality because of adverse weather, as determined by the Secretary. Remember to report your 2009 losses within 30 days of the event. Losses must be substantiated via verifiable documentation and/or third party certifications, excluding hired help and family members. Contact our office for further information if livestock losses have been suffered due to spring storms, etc.

