

May 2010

**Webster County
USDA Service Center**



Webster County FSA

1202 Banning Street
Marshfield, MO 65706
PH 417-468-2088
Fax 417-468-7334
www.fsa.usda.gov

Hours

Monday – Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

County Committee

Carolyn Leonard – Chm
Darrell Ragsdale – V Chm
Gary Carpenter – Mem

County Committee

meets the first
Thursday of each month
at 10:00 a.m. in
the county office.

Staff

Cheryl Grass – PT
June Burton - PT
Abigail Calton - FLT
Jim Kyle – DD
Ron Keith – AFLPS
Mark Aycock – FLS
Kurt Shelangoski - FLO
Wyman Miller - CED



**Information about Agricultural Programs
and Assistance Available**

On May 20th, 2010 an evening meeting will be held in Strafford to provide basic information on agricultural programs and assistance available from USDA and the local Soil and Water Conservation District.

This meeting is designed to provide information about programs and assistance from USDA and the Soil and Water Conservation District for local landowners.

The informational meeting will cover programs available for conservation, ownership and operating loans, energy savings and various other topics. There will be representatives from the Greene County Soil and Water Conservation District, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency and Rural Development agencies. Each agency representative will give a brief overview and be available to answer your questions.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture provides many support programs that family and individual landowners can use to conserve their working land. The programs provide expert technical advice and often include financial assistance for landowners who use specific management practices. Some programs also offer rental payments to offset income losses due to changes in land use.

Rural Development Provides loan guarantees and grants to agricultural producers and rural small businesses to purchase and install renewable energy systems and make energy-efficiency improvements. Renewable energy systems include those that generate energy from wind, the sun, biomass, and geothermal sources.

FSA makes direct and guaranteed farm ownership (FO) and operating loans (OL) to family-size farmers and ranchers who cannot obtain commercial credit from a bank, Farm Credit System institution, or other lender. FSA loans can be used to purchase land, livestock, equipment, feed, seed, and supplies. Our loans can also be used to construct buildings or make farm improvements.

To find out more about the programs mentioned above, and others, plan to attend the informational meeting on May 20th at the Super 8 meeting room in Strafford at 6:30. Not only will you learn about

what assistance is available, you will find out what the next step is to make an application.

2010 FSA County Committee Elections

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to all farmers and ranchers, whether beginning or long-established, with large or small operations. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees (COC) are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. COC members are a critical component of FSA operations. The intent is to have the COC reflect the makeup of the producers and to represent all constituents. This means wherever possible, minorities, women or lower income producers need to be on the committee to speak for these underrepresented groups. County committees provide local input on:

County committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws. COC members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions.

Election Period

June 15, 2010 – The nomination period begins. Request nomination forms from the local USDA Service Center or obtain online at:
http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/fsa0669a_committeeelectform.pdf

Aug. 2, 2010 - Last day to file nomination forms (FSA-669A) at the local USDA Service Center

Nov. 5, 2010 - Ballots mailed to eligible voters

Dec. 6, 2010 - Last day to return voted ballots to the USDA Service Center

Jan. 1, 2010 - Newly elected county committee members take office

Who Can Hold Office

To hold office as a county committee member, a person must meet the basic eligibility criteria.

- Participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA

- Be eligible to vote in a county committee election
- Reside in the LAA in which the person is a candidate

Not have been:

- Removed or disqualified from the office of county committee member, alternate or employee
- Removed for cause from any public office or have been convicted of fraud, larceny, embezzlement or any other felony
- Dishonorably discharged from any branch of the armed services.

For more information about county committee elections, contact the county office staff.

Nominations

To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign nomination form FSA-669A. The form includes a statement that the nominee agrees to serve if elected. This form is available at USDA Service Centers and online at:

http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/fsa0669a_commi_teelectform.pdf Nomination forms for the 2010 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on Aug. 2, 2010. Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in an FSA program may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee. Individuals may nominate themselves or others as a candidate. Additionally, organizations representing minority and women farmers or ranchers may nominate candidates. Nomination forms are filed for the county committee of the office that administers a producer's farm records.



This year the election will be conducted in Local Administrative Area (LAA) 3, currently served by Carolyn Leonard. This area is comprised of Benton, Dallas, Diggins, Finley, Green Hills and Hazelwood townships.

Who Can Vote

Agricultural producers of legal voting age may be eligible to vote if they participate or cooperate in any FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm may also be eligible to vote. More information about voting eligibility requirements can be found online at www.fsa.usda.gov. Producers may contact their local USDA Service Center for more information.

DCP Signup

Enrollment for the 2010 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) will continue through June 1, 2010. USDA urges producers to make use of the eDCP automated website to sign up, or producers can visit any USDA Service Center

to complete their 2010 DCP contract. USDA computes DCP Program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2010, eligible producers may request advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment.

For more information on this or other programs, simply contact the nearest FSA office.

ACRE Program

The Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) is a program authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill. Through ACRE, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers producers an alternative to Direct and Counter-cyclical (DCP) payments. The ACRE alternative provides eligible producers a state-level revenue guarantee, based on the 5-year state Olympic average yield and the 2-year national average price. ACRE payments are made when both state- and farm-level triggers are met. By participating in ACRE, producers elect to forgo counter-cyclical payments. Producers also elect to receive a 20 percent reduction in direct payments and a 30 percent reduction in loan rates. A decision to elect ACRE binds the producer to the program through the 2012 crop year, the last crop year covered by the 2008 Farm Bill. For more details, contact your local FSA office.

Missouri CRP Management Provisions

CRP contracts with grass cover practices that were enrolled prior to the 26th Sign Up (5/5/03) were allowed to mow up to one half of each field each year between July 16 and August 15. The mowing provisions should be included in the Conservation Plan of Operation (CPO) along with other management guidance. Mowing outside of this period is prohibited without the consent of the local FSA County Committee. Producers should consult their local FSA County office if they have questions about these provisions.

For CRP contract participants whose contracts began with the 26th Sign Up or after, they are subject to the Mid Contract Management (MCM) provisions. These provisions should be included in the CPO and include options for burning, disking or spraying. Mowing is only allowed in conjunction with disking and spraying. Any mowing for generic weed control is strictly prohibited. Producers should contact their local FSA office if they have questions about their MCM requirements.

Below are the Mid Contract Management (MCM) dates.

Cool Season Grass-Burning	March 15-April 30
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Cool Season Grass-Spraying	March 15 - April 30 OR October 1 - December 1
Warm Season Grass-Burning	July 16 - March 15
Warm Season Grass-Spraying	July 16 - September 15
Disc- Cool Season or Warm Season	July 16 - March 15

Producers should review their CPO and/or consult with NRCS or the MDC Private Land Specialist to determine the best methods to achieve the desired results. The goals of MCM practices are to achieve stand diversity along with 25-40% bare ground. May 1 through July 15 is considered the primary nesting season, and management activities are prohibited during this timeframe.

FSA Announces New Payment Limits for Disaster Assistance

The 2008 Farm Bill provides disaster assistance programs for crop and livestock losses experienced by producers in 2008 and subsequent years. These disaster programs include: Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish ELAP, Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), and Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE). Disaster payments issued under these programs are collectively limited to \$100,000 annually. The Farm Service Agency wants to alert producers about this disaster payment limitation. Additional limitation information about FSA program payment limitations is available at local FSA offices or online at www.fsa.usda.gov.

Adjusted Gross Income

USDA has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Internal Revenue Service to establish an electronic information exchange process for verifying compliance with the adjusted gross income (AGI) provisions for farm programs. Written consent will be required from each producer or payment recipient for the tax review process. No actual tax data will be included in the report that IRS sends to FSA. The agreement ensures that payments are not issued to producers whose AGI exceeds certain limits. The limits set in the 2008 Farm Bill are \$500,000 nonfarm average AGI for commodity and disaster programs; \$750,000 farm average AGI for direct payments; and \$1 million nonfarm average AGI for conservation programs.

Participants in CCC programs subject to average AGI rules must submit form CCC-927 (Individual) and/or CCC-928 (Legal Entity) to the Internal Revenue Service by June 15 to avoid interruption of program benefits. These forms may be obtained from local FSA and NRCS offices.

Farm Reconstitutions

At FSA, farms are “constituted” to group all tracts having the same owner and the same operator under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation take place, a farm reconstitution is necessary. If an owner or operator cannot agree about program participation, like in the case of the new ACRE program, then producers should inquire about a reconstitution of the farm at the local FSA office. The reconstitution—or recon—is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by August 2, 2010, for farms enrolled in specific programs.

Crop Reporting

The annual, timely and accurate reporting of acres for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent loss of benefits for a variety of Farm Service Agency programs. All cropland on the farm must be reported to receive benefits from the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, marketing assistance loans and Loan Deficiency Payments. For SURE, all crops in all counties must be reported. For ACRE, all cropland on the farm must be reported. All grazing land must be reported for LFP, and all crops on all farms must be reported for ELAP, including aquaculture and honeybees.

Conservation Reserve Program acreage must be reported to receive annual rental payments. And, crop acreage for Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) must also be reported.

Crop reports, form FSA-578, Report of Acreage, must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. Producers need to file their acreage reports accordingly: fall- and spring-seeded small grains by June 30, all other crops by July 31, and NAP by the applicable dates or 15 days before harvest.

Failed Acreage:

Reports of failed acreage must be filed before disposition of the crop, and producers must be able to establish to the satisfaction of the county committee that the crop failed and was prevented from being replanted through the normal planting period because of natural disaster conditions.

Sodbuster Regulations

The term “sodbusting” is used to identify the plowing up of erosion-prone grasslands for use as cropland. Sodbuster violations are unauthorized tillage practices on highly erodible lands that converted native vegetation such as rangeland or woodland, to crop production after Dec. 23, 1985. Farmers and ranchers



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should be aware that if they use highly erodible land for crop production without proper conservation measures, they risk losing eligibility to participate in Farm Service Agency programs. Before producers clear, plow or otherwise prepare areas not presently under crop production for planting, they are required to file an AD-1026, indicating the area to be brought into production. If Natural Resources Conservation Service indicates on a CPA-026 that the area will be highly erodible land, the producer will be required to develop and implement a conservation plan on the affected acreage, before bringing land into production. In addition, producers and the producer's affiliates have to file an AD-1026 in the administrative or control county office before any farm program payments can be made. The AD-1026 is the producer's signed certification that HELC, as well as wetland conservation, provisions will not be violated.

Farm Loan Programs

The Farm Service Agency is committed to providing family farmers with loans to meet their farm credit needs. If you are having trouble getting the credit you need for your farm, or regularly borrow from FSA, direct and guaranteed loans are currently available. Ask your lender about an FSA loan guarantee if you've had a setback and your lender is reluctant to extend or renew your loan. Farm ownership loans or farm operating loans may be obtained as direct loans for a maximum of up to \$300,000. Guaranteed loans can reach a maximum indebtedness of \$1,112,000. Producers are encouraged to apply early so that a loan can be processed and funded in a timely manner. FSA employees will help you complete the necessary application and other forms, and help you understand what information is required, where to find it or who to contact to get it. To find out more about FSA loan programs, contact the county office staff.

Selected Interest Rates for May 2010	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	2.875%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	5.00%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer, Rancher or Socially Disadvantaged	1.50%
Emergency Loans	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility Loans 7-yr.	3.25%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 10-yr.	3.875%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 12-yr.	4.125%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.50%

Dates to Remember	
May 31	Memorial Day observed – FSA Offices closed
June 1	DCP & ACRE Signup Deadline
June 30	Crop Reporting Deadline for Small Grains
Continues	Continuous Conservation Re- serve Program

Visit our website at: www.fsa.usda.gov/mo

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