



# NEWSLETTER



## **FEBRUARY 2011**

### **ROSEBUD & TREASURE COUNTY OFFICES**

#### **Rosebud-County FSA Office**

270 South Prospect  
Forsyth, MT 59327  
(406) 346-7333

#### **Treasure County FSA Office**

211 Elliott Ave  
Hysham, MT 59038  
(406) 342-5551

#### **Monday – Friday**

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

#### **County Executive Director**

*Virginia Nollmeyer*

#### **Program Technicians:**

*Sharolyn McPhail –Treasure  
Diane Wyrick –Rosebud  
Deb Van Hemelryck- Rosebud  
Christy Bierlein- Rosebud  
Dee Arneson- Rosebud*

#### **Field Assistant**

*Dennis Johnson*

#### **Rosebud County Committee**

*Robert Sorenson  
Johnna Newman  
Leon Sioux*

#### **COC Meetings: Second**

Thursday of each month @  
9:00 a.m.

#### **Treasure County Committee**

*Dallas Steiger  
Waine Milmine  
Lyle Newman  
Elaine Arneson- Minority  
Advisor*

**COC Meetings: Second Monday**  
of each month @ 1:30 p.m.

#### **Farm Loan Managers**

**Jeff Janshen**

Custer County FSA Office  
(406) 232-7905

**Mike Turley**

Yellowstone County FSA Office  
(406) 657-6135

#### **Reasonable Accommodations:**

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in any FSA programs should contact the County Executive Director at the FSA Office or the Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339.

## **CRP General Signup announced for March 14 to April 15, 2011**

General signup for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) will begin on March 14, 2011, and continue through April 15, 2011. During the signup period, Montana farmers and ranchers may offer eligible land for CRP's competitive general signup at their county Farm Service Agency (FSA) office.

Through the 2008 Farm Bill, CRP is authorized for a maximum enrollment of 32 million acres. USDA estimates that contracts on 3.3 million to 6.5 million acres are scheduled to expire annually between now and 2014. Land currently not enrolled in CRP may be offered in this signup provided all eligibility requirements are met. Additionally, current CRP participants with contracts expiring this fall may make new contract offers. Contracts awarded under this signup are scheduled to become effective Oct. 1, 2011. In Montana, 2.9 million acres of the state's 18,721,501 cropland acres are currently actively enrolled in the CRP program. Of the state's active CRP acres; 498,661 acres are scheduled to expire on Sept. 30, 2011; 696,523 acres on Sept. 30, 2012 and 638,841 acres on Sept. 30, 2013.

As administrator of the Conservation Reserve Program, FSA will evaluate and rank eligible CRP offers using an Environmental Benefits Index (EBI) that assists in calculating the environmental benefits to be gained from the contract. The EBI consists of five environmental factors (wildlife, water, soil, air and enduring benefits). Cost factors are also entered into the equation.

In addition to the general sign-up, FSA's CRP Continuous Sign-up Program is ongoing. Continuous acres represent the most environmentally desirable and sensitive land. For more information, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) and view *Conservation Programs*.

**Conservation Loan Program:** The Conservation Loan (CL) Program provides farmers with the funds to implement conservation measures on their land. The available limit for a direct CL is \$300,000, and the limit for a guaranteed CL is \$1,119,000. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will work with applicants to develop a conservation plan containing approved conservation practices. Examples of some conservation practices are: water conservation structures, forest cover, permanent pastures, manure digesters and other installations.

## **2009 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE) Signup Set from Jan. 10 to July 29, 2011**

The 2008 Farm Bill created several new disaster programs. One of the programs, the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE), provides financial assistance for crop production and/or quality losses due to a natural disaster. SURE is a total farm revenue disaster program as opposed to the crop disaster programs of previous years, which were primarily production oriented programs. Therefore, all crops that a producer has an interest in are not only evaluated as to the production loss and quality, but revenue as well.

To be eligible for SURE a producer must have at least a 10 percent production loss on a crop of economic significance; a policy or plan of insurance under the Federal Crop Insurance Act or the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for all economically significant crops; and have a farming interest physically located in a county that was declared a primary disaster county or contiguous county by the Agriculture Secretary under a Secretarial Disaster Designation.

Without a Secretarial Disaster Designation, individual producers may be eligible if the actual production on the SURE farm is less than 50 percent of the normal production on the SURE farm due to a natural disaster.

Producers considered socially disadvantaged, a beginning farmer or rancher, or a limited resource farmer may be eligible for SURE without a policy or plan of insurance or NAP coverage.

**PAYMENTS** - SURE will issue payments to an eligible producer in the amount equal to 60% of the difference between the program guarantee and the total farm revenue. SURE will pay up to 90% of the crop's normal production on the farm. If you meet the guidelines of the program in 2009, i.e. a 10% production loss (associated with adverse weather) on one crop of economic significance and crop insurance (CAT/NAP) purchased on all 2009 crops (other than the exceptions previously explained), contact the county FSA office as soon as possible. Signup for 2009 crops begins January 10, 2011 and ends on July 29, 2011.

## NAP coverage deadlines for 2011 Crop Year

The Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) was designed to provide financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops when low yields or prevented planting occurs as the result of natural disasters. Statutes limit NAP coverage to each commercial crop or agricultural commodity (except livestock), for which the catastrophic (CAT) level of insurance is not available.

**The application and sales closing deadline for 2011 NAP coverage is March 15, 2011**, for all NAP crops other than value loss and honey. The deadline for value-loss crops was Sept. 1, 2010 and Dec. 1, 2010, for honey.

Producers who choose to obtain NAP coverage for 2011 must file a CCC-471 application for coverage and pay the applicable service fee by the sales closing deadline. Eligible producers must pay a service fee of \$250 per crop per administrative county or \$750 per producer per county, not to exceed \$1875 for a producer with farming interests in multiple counties. Service fees may be waived for limited-resource producers.

*For the 2011 crop year it is imperative that producers purchase either NAP or a catastrophic (CAT) level of crop insurance for all insurable and non-insurable crops. This is not only for production coverage, but also for eligibility for the new permanent disaster programs created in the 2008 Farm Bill.*

In order for producers to be eligible for assistance under the Supplemental Revenue Assistance (SURE) Program and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP), and the Tree Assistance Program (TAP), producers must obtain a plan of insurance for each insurable and non-insurable commodity on the farm, **excluding grazing**. To be eligible for assistance under the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), producers must obtain either coverage under the Pasture, Rangeland, and Forage Rainfall Index pilot Program offered through crop insurance, or NAP coverage, or both on their grazing.

## **Foreign Buyers Notification**

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA. All individuals who are not U.S. citizens, and have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form (FSA-153) could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, Realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

## **Farming Operation Changes**

If you have bought or sold land, or if you have added or dropped rented land from your operation, make sure you report the changes to the office as soon as possible. You need to provide a copy of your deed or recorded land contract for purchased property. Failure to maintain accurate records with FSA on all land you have an interest in can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. Making the record changes now will save you time in the spring. Update signature authorization when changes in the operation occur. Producers are reminded to contact the office of a change in operations on a farm so that records can be kept current and accurate.

## Livestock Indemnity Program

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides assistance to eligible livestock owners and contract growers for eligible livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather including losses due to floods, blizzards, disease, wildfires, extreme heat, and extreme cold. For 2011 losses, producers must file a notice of loss the earlier of either 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock was apparent to the participant or October 31, 2011. A notice of loss can be reported to the office by phone, fax, or e-mail. Eligible livestock deaths must have occurred in the calendar year for which benefits are being requested.

Please contact the office for additional eligibility requirements. A list of eligible livestock is available at [www.fsa.usda.gov/mt](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt).

## **1099-G is in the Mail**

Producers who have received payments from FSA are also receiving a CCC-1099-G in the mail. A CCC-1099-G is a report to the Internal Revenue Service regarding FSA payments made to producers during the previous calendar year. The CCC-1099-G is a service to help participating producers report taxable income.

When the CCC-1099-G is received, it should be checked with your records to see that the amounts are correct. It is not intended to replace the program participant's responsibility to report income to the IRS.

**ATTENTION: Refunds are no longer reported on the 1099-G, but will be available online from the FSA Financial Inquiries (FSA-FI) web-based database.**

Program participants with an e-Authentication user ID and password may access their refund information at FSA-FI and select "Inquiry Type 1099/Refund Reports". Refund amounts are displayed on the Producer's Year-to-Date Activity web page.

If you have a question concerning the 1099-G refund information, you may contact your local FSA office for assistance locating the correct payment data.

## **Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation Compliance**

Landowners and operators are reminded that in order to receive payments from USDA, compliance with Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions are required. Farmers with HEL determined soils are reminded of tillage, crop residue, and rotation requirements as specified per their conservation plan. Producers are to notify the USDA Farm Service Agency prior to conducting land clearing or drainage projects to insure compliance. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in the loss of eligibility and all Federal payments.

## **Sorghum Checkoff Referendum scheduled for Feb. 1-28, 2011**

USDA will conduct a referendum on the Sorghum Checkoff Program Feb. 1-28, 2011, at local Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices. Ballots may be obtained in person, by mail or facsimile at county FSA offices, or via the Internet at [www.ams.usda.gov/sorghumpage](http://www.ams.usda.gov/sorghumpage). For the program to continue, the Sorghum Promotion, Research, and Information Order requires that a referendum be conducted no later than 3 years after the start of assessments, which began on July 1, 2008. The order requires a simple majority vote in the referendum for the program to continue.

***Any eligible person engaged in the production and sale of sorghum or the importation of sorghum from July 1, 2008, to December 31, 2010, is eligible to participate.*** Individuals are required to provide documentation such as a sales receipt or remittance form that shows they engaged in the production and sale of sorghum or the importation of sorghum. The Sorghum Checkoff Program is funded at the rate of 0.6 percent of the net market value on grain sorghum and 0.35 percent of the net market value of sorghum forage. The Sorghum Checkoff is a national, coordinated, self-help marketing program designed to strengthen the position of sorghum in the market place, maintain and expand existing domestic and foreign markets and uses for sorghum, and develop new markets and uses for sorghum.

## **Commodity Loans**

Commodity loans, also referred to as Marketing Assistance Loans, are available to producers who share in the risk of producing the crop. To be eligible, you must maintain beneficial interest in the crop through the time of application. Beneficial interest means retaining the ability to make decisions about the commodity, responsibility for all risk of loss or damage to the commodity, and title to the commodity. During the term of the loan, loss of beneficial interest is a violation of loan provisions. Violating provisions of a marketing assistance loan may trigger administrative actions, such as assessing liquidated damages, calling the loan and denial of future farm-stored loans. The most common violations are removing or disposing of a commodity being used as loan collateral without prior authorization and providing an incorrect quantity certification.

## **Agricultural Lending Opportunities**

Do you have questions regarding obtaining credit to start or enlarge farming or ranching operations?

Do you have questions on financing agricultural operating expenses, livestock or machinery?

Farm Loan personnel is available on the second Monday of every month at the Rosebud County FSA office.

If you have any questions, or would like to schedule an appointment, contact: **Jeff Janshen, Farm Loan Manager**

## **2011 DCP Signup**

Enrollment for the 2011 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) has begun and will continue through June 1, 2011. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) urges producers to make use of the eDCP automated website to sign up, or producers can visit the FSA office to complete their 2011 DCP contract.

Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. FSA will issue advance direct payments.

## **The ACRE Option**

The Average Crop Revenue Election Program (ACRE) provides a safety net based on state revenue losses and acts in place of the price-based safety net of counter-cyclical payments under DCP. A farm's payment is based on a revenue guarantee calculated using a 5-year average state yield and the most recent 2-year national price for each eligible commodity.

**The June 1, 2011, deadline is mandatory for all ACRE and DCP participants. FSA will not accept late-filed applications.**

An ACRE payment is issued when both the state and the farm have incurred a revenue loss. In exchange for participating in ACRE, a farm's direct payment is reduced by 20 percent, and marketing assistance loan rates are reduced by 30 percent.

The decision to enroll in the ACRE Program is irrevocable. The owner of the farm and all producers on the farm must agree to enroll in ACRE. Once enrolled, the farm shall be enrolled for that initial crop year and will remain in ACRE through the 2012 crop year.

## **Farm Storage Facility Loan Program**

FSA's Farm Storage and Facility Loan (FSFL) Program 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 Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) providing a loan for the remaining eighty five (85) percent of the net cost of the eligible storage facility and permanent drying and handling equipment. Loan terms of seven, ten, or twelve years are available depending on the amount of the loan.

Interest rates for each term rate may be different and are based on the rate which CCC borrows from the Treasury Department. Payments are available in the form of a partial disbursement and the remaining final disbursement. A partial disbursement of up to 50 percent of the total loan amount will be available, if desired, after a portion of the construction has been completed. The final disbursement will be made when all construction is completed.

**An FSFL generally must be approved before the delivery of any materials is accepted and before any site preparation or construction is begun.** 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; hay; renewable biomass; fruits (including nuts) and vegetables—cold storage facilities. Among other requirements, borrowers are responsible for obtaining annual multi-peril crop insurance or NAP coverage and all-peril insurance on the FSFL structure listing CCC as the loss payee. For more information, contact the county FSA office.

Rosebud County FSA Office  
 PO Box 6  
 Forsyth, MT 59327



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**Rosebud & Treasure County Committee Election Results**

Congratulations to Robert Sorenson and Dallas Steiger!  
**Robert Sorenson** was re-elected to his third consecutive term to represent farmers from LAA 1-2 on the Rosebud county committee.

**Dallas Steiger** was re-elected to his second consecutive term to represent farmers from LAA 1-3 on the Treasure county committee.

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

Selected Interest Rates -February 2011	
Farm Operating - Direct	2.250%
Farm Ownership - Direct	4.750%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.500%
Emergency - Actual Loss	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility - 7-year	2.750%
Farm Storage Facility - 10-year	3.375%
Farm Storage Facility - 12-year	3.625%

**2011 Dates to Remember**

- Jan. 10** SURE Signup for *2009 Crop Year* Began
- Feb. 1** Sorghum Referendum Begins
- Feb. 21** **CLOSED for President's Day**
- Feb. 28** Last day to vote in Sorghum Referendum
- March 11** **Lame Deer Office Day 10-2 @ Tribal Building**
- March 14** CRP General Signup Begins
- March 15** **NAP Sales Closing Date** for All crops except Value-Loss and Honey
- March 31** Final Date to Request 2010 Marketing Assistance Loans/LDPs on Barley, Canola, Crambe, Flaxseed, Honey, Oats, Rapeseed, Wheat, and Sesame Seed  
CRP General **Signup Ends**
- April 15** Maps & Acreage Reports Due to County Office
- April – June** **CLOSED for Memorial Day**
- May 30** Final Date to Request 2010 Marketing Assistance Loans/LDPs on Corn, Dry Peas, Grain Sorghum, Lentils, Mustard Seed, Safflower Seed, Chickpeas, Soybeans, and Sunflower Seed
- May 31** **2011 DCP & ACRE Filing Deadline**
- June 1** **CLOSED for Independence Day**
- July 4** **SURE Signup Deadline** for 09 Crop Year
- July 29** Continuous Conservation Reserve Program
- Continues**

**Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment.**

**If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the county FSA office staff directly or by phone (406)346-7333.**

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.