

Cowboy Country Connection



NEWSLETTER



7th quarter 2012

Carbon/Albany County

101 Cypress Ave.
PO Box 607
Saratoga, WY 82331

307-326-5657

Fax: 307-326-8572

<http://www.usda.gov/wy>

Hours:

Monday-Friday

8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

County Committee

Montie Munroe, Chairperson
Kelly Kennedy, Vice-Chairperson
Melinda Sims, Member
Tom Page, Member
Pat Sheehan, Member

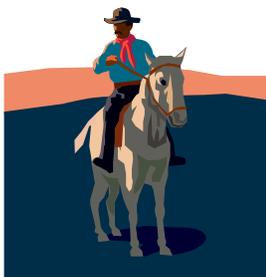
Farm Service Agency

Sheryl Hunter, CED
Dixie Mount, FLO- Platte County,
307-322-4050

Natural Resources

Conservation Service

Mark Shirley, DC Saratoga
326-5657
Jerome Dougherty, Baggs
383-7860
Jeremie Artery, Med. Bow
379-2221
Ruben Vasquez, DC Laramie
745-3698



Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE)

The sign-up for recovery payment for 2010 losses under the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) runs until **June 1, 2012**.

SURE provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters and is available to eligible producers on:

- Farms in counties with Secretarial disaster declarations, including contiguous counties, that have incurred crop production or quality losses, or both, and includes all crops grown by a producer nationwide, except grazed crops.
- Any farm in which, for the crop year, the actual production on the farm because of disaster-related conditions is 50 percent or less than normal production of the farm.

Get GovDelivery – Instant News, Updates

Farm Service Agency offices are adopting a instant delivery, electronic option. Producers can now enroll in the new GovDelivery system which will provide notices, newsletters and reminders via email, rather than costly paper copies delivered through the mail.

FSA, like many other organizations, is working smarter and more efficiently. Conversion to electronic notifications via email helps conserve resources and save taxpayer dollars.

County Committee ballots will continue to be mailed to all eligible producers. Subscribe right now to receive your free e-mail updates instantly by going to www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe.

Power of Attorney

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., FSA has a power of attorney form available that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. If you are interested, please contact our office or any Farm Service Agency office near you for more information.

Special Accommodations

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.

Controlled Substance

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium poppies and other drug producing plants.

Important Dates

Jan. 16- Martin Luther King Holiday- **Office Closed**

Jan. 18- Albany County Office Day

Jan. 31- Last day to provide Livestock loss information and/or additional feed needs from 2011

Feb. 15- Albany County Office Day

Feb. 20- President's Day Holiday- **Office Closed**

March 21- Albany County Office Day

Currently- 2010 SURE program signup

15 Days- after realizing a loss to file a Notice of Loss on NAP covered crops.

30 Days- after realizing a loss of livestock due to weather, contact the office.

Anytime- contact the office to report adverse weather conditions & livestock losses.

Anytime- Accepting EQIP and Continuous CRP applications

COC meetings are scheduled for the 4th Thursday of the month on a quarterly basis. Due to budget issues and program requirements, the meetings may change. If you wish to meet with the County Committee, please contact this office to be put on the agenda.

County Committee Elections

Pat Sheehan was elected to fill the three year term on the County Committee. He will be representing land owners and program participants in the Little Snake River area. (LAA 3). Thank you, Pat for dedicating your time to help ensure proper administration of farm programs from this office.



2012 DCP Signup

Enrollment for the 2011 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) will begin Jan. 23 and will continue until June 1, 2012. 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 2012 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 2012, partial direct payments will not be allowed.



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.

1099-G is in the Mail

Producers annually receive their CCC-1099-G forms detailing payments producers have received from the Commodity Credit Corporation. The annual report of program payments on the CCC-1099-G form is a service intended to help our customers report taxable income. It is not intended to replace the producers' responsibilities to report income to IRS.

FSA staff cannot interpret IRS regulations or advise producers about which payments to report on their income tax returns. However, county office staff can review payments for accuracy.



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.

Appeal Process

After an FSA official makes a decision on your request for USDA services or application, you will be sent a letter informing you of the decision and options you can pursue if you disagree.

Generally, program participants have three choices — an informal review with the original agency decision-maker, an opportunity for mediation and finally an appeal to the next level of authority within the agency.

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.



Attention all Buyers of Agricultural Products

It is required that buyers of agricultural products check or register with the Secretary of State's Office to determine if there are liens against the Seller of the product. If a lien is found you are required to check the lien holders name on the check as well as that of the Seller.

Ag Products include but are not limited to: livestock (including horses), crops used for feed (hay, silage, oats, etc.), machinery, equipment and all other crops.

Failure to place the lien holder's name on the check may result in civil legal action being taken against the Buyer of the product. Protect yourself as a Buyer! You may contact the Secretary of State's Office at 1-307-777-7311.

Hispanic and Women Farmers

A process to resolve the claims of Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who believe they were discriminated against when seeking USDA farm loans is being established.

If you believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) improperly denied farm loan benefits to you during certain time periods between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic, or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation.

For additional information on this claims process and other settlement issues contact:

Hispanic and Women Farmer Claims Process :www.farmerclaims.gov or 1-888-508-4429

Pigford - Black Farmers Discrimination Litigation
www.blackfarmercase.com
or 1-866-950-5547

Keepseagle - Native American Farmers Class Action Settlement
www.IndianFarmClass.com or 1-888-233-5506

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

The noninsured crop disaster assistance program (NAP) is a federally funded program that helps producers reduce their risk when growing food and fiber crops, specialty crops and crops for livestock feed. These benefits are only available for crops for which the catastrophic level of crop insurance is not available.

Application for coverage must be filed by the applicable crop's application closing date.

Production records for all crops must be reported to FSA no later than the acreage reporting date for the crop for the following year. FSA requires that any production reported in a loss year be verifiable according to Agency specifications. NAP Losses must be reported within 15 days of loss.

Online Services

Producers with Internet access can fill out a variety of FSA forms online. Producers can also register for secure electronic access that will allow them to electronically sign and transmit some forms directly to the county office staff. If you are new to the website, first you will want to obtain a Level 2 USDA Service Center Customer ID and password at: <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/> and then click on "**Create an Account Page**" link.

If you already have a Customer ID and password, then click on the following eForms website at: <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainservlet> and then click on the "**Sign In**" button. A disclaimer window will open and after you read the "Warning message" click on the "Continue" button.

Then the USDA Web services page will open to the eAuthentication login page. Enter your login User ID and password and then click on the "Login" button. To sign and transmit forms electronically, you must sign-up and get a User ID and password.

Actively Engaged

USDA has amended the rules that govern the requirements to be 'actively engaged' in farming. These rules apply to eligibility for payments under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) or Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) program administered by FSA.

Normally the stockholder or a member of a legal entity **must** make contributions of active personal labor and/or active personal management for the farming operation. The contributions are to be performed on regular basis, must be identifiable, and separate from the contributions of others.

The exception to this rule for a stockholder or member of a legal entity only occurs when both of the following apply:

- At least half of the interest in the legal entity is held by stockholders or members who are providing active personal labor or active personal management; and
- The total direct payments received by the legal entity and each of the members cannot exceed \$40,000.

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 ranch, 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 \$1,119,000. Producers are encouraged to apply early so that a loan can be processed and funded in a timely manner.

The one-time loan origination fee charged on FSA guaranteed loans has increased from 1 percent to 1.5 percent of the guaranteed portion of the loan, for loans obligated after October 1, 2011.

To find out more information, contact the county office staff.

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Saratoga, WY 82331



The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in its programs 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 programs. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of 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 USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington DC 20250-9410, or call 800-795-3272 (voice) or 202-720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal employment opportunity employer.

E-mail addresses

Due to current budget issues and the need to provide more efficient and timely program requirements, the FSA Office is in need of your e-mail address!

FSA is now offering free online communications through our GovDelivery electronic news service. News will now be sent via e-mail right to your home or farm office or to your Smartphone- allowing you to receive immediate notification of farm program news that is pertinent to your agricultural operation.

Through FSA's Gov Delivery electronic news service, producers can establish subscriber preferences by choosing to receive federal farm program information by topic, by state and/or by county. Producers can select as many subscriber options as they want, which allows those that have interests in multiple counties to receive updates from each county they have an interest.

GovDelivery will enable FSA to keep producers better informed and allow us to conserve resources and reduce taxpayer expenses associated with the preparation, printing and distribution of hardcopy newsletters.

To begin using GovDelivery, subscribe online at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe> or contact your local office for assistance.

Please note: Forms such as acreage reports, contracts, eligibility, monthly newsletters, etc. will soon only be sent out via e-mail or the producer will be required to appear in person to the county office. These documents will not be mailed out as in years past.

FSA Signature Policy

Husbands and wives may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation programs in which either has an interest. This option is automatically available unless a written request for exclusion is made to the county office staff by either spouse.

There are exceptions to the rule, where spouses may not sign on behalf of each other for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations or other similar entities.

Individual signatures are also required on certain Farm Loan Program and Farm Storage Facility Loan documents.

For more clarification on spousal signature authority, feel free to contact your local FSA office.