



TOWER OUTLOOK

JUNE 2011

Crook County FSA Office

307 283-2870 phone
307 283-2170 fax
www.fsa.usda.gov/WY
Hours
Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Office Staff
Mike Idler, CED
Susan Johnson, PT
Danice Conzelman, PT

County Committee:
Mervin Peterson
Larry Fowlkes
Ross Garman
Roxie Dacar

Committee Meetings:
11:00 a.m. as follows:
July 20th
September 21st
December 12th
If you wish to attend a committee meeting you should check with our office first, as a meeting date is subject to change for unforeseen reasons. Meetings are open to the public for items that are available to the public.

EMERGENCY CONSERVATION PROGRAM (ECP)

A disaster assistance signup period has been established to assist producers who have suffered losses due to May flood conditions. The signup period starts June 20th and ends July 19th. During this time producers may file applications for assistance in recovering monetary costs for damages caused by the flood. Assistance is in the form of cost shares for corrective actions that have already been completed and/or for those yet to be done. Eligible items include: Removing Debris from Farmland; Grading, Shaping, Re-leveling, or similar measures on Cropland; Restoring Permanent Fences; Restoring Conservation Structures and Other Installations (such as dams, ponds, diversion or spreader ditches, pipelines, etc.). Please make an appointment with the office to complete an application.

Important: in order for FSA to provide cost share payments all practices must be done according to specifications per the technical agency. (For example, if repair work is to be done on a dam then NRCS will design the corrective measures and the producer must repair the dam per NRCS specifications).

COC ELECTION NOMINATIONS

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committee starts with the nomination of eligible candidates.

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/sa0669a_committeeselectform.pdf

Nomination forms must be postmarked or received in the local USDA-FSA Office by close of business on Aug. 1, 2011.

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.

Local Administrative Area (LAA) 2 is up for election this year. LAA 2 Boundary description is as follows: (that area north of the following: I-90 (from the South Dakota border) to Sundance, at Sundance along Highway 14 to Cabin Creek Road, along Cabin Creek Road to Oshoto, at Oshoto north to Oshoto Road then westerly along Oshoto Road to D Road, south along D Road to Dead Man Road and westerly along Dead Man Road to Campbell County line; and that area south of the following: Highway 24 (from South Dakota border) to Hulett, at Hulett along highway 112 to New Haven Road, along new Haven Road to Mule Creek Road, following Mule Creek Road to Grazing Association Road and along Grazing Association Road to the Campbell County line.

CROP REPORTING

The annual requirement of reporting to the FSA office can be referred to as crop reporting, acreage reporting, or crop certification. Filing an accurate and timely report 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.

The certification form FSA-578, Report of Acreage, must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. The producer certification deadline is July 1, 2011.

CRP & NAP Certification

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.

Prevented Planting:

Prevented planting is to be reported no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date. Failure to report prevented planting acreage could result in loss of benefits for the SURE program or possibly other disaster assistance programs.

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.

2010 Crop Production

“Production reports” for 2010 crops should be reported by **July 1, 2011**.

PAYMENT LIMITATIONS

Anyone that plans to participate in 2011 programs is required to submit a completed CCC-902, CCC-926, and CCC-901, if applicable, for payment eligibility and payment limitation purposes. The form used previously was called a CCC-502.

Contributions

All partners, stockholders, or members with an ownership interest in the legal entity must make a contribution, whether compensated or **not** compensated, for active--*

- personal labor,
- active personal management,
- or a combination of active personal labor and active personal management to the farming operation;

*Note: there are exceptions for spouses.

Additional information on payment limitations is available at FSA county offices or on line at:

www.fsa.usda.gov

GIS

As part of a program to digitally map the nation's farms and fields, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has established the Common Land Unit (CLU) as a standardized GIS (Geographic Information Systems) data layer that has allowed mapping to be integrated easily on a nationwide basis. The Farm Service Agency manages this CLU data layer through a distributed database environment for all field service centers throughout the country.

Using GIS provides for more consistent and more accurate land measurements, such as field acreage and acreage boundaries of conservation practices, such as riparian buffers. With high quality digital imagery, new land use changes (farm transfers and land subdivisions) can be

easily updated. Maps can be created in either paper or digital format for FSA customers or the public.

More information about the Common Land Unit and NAIP imagery can be found by visiting on-line, APFO (Aerial Photography Field Office) at www.apfo.usda.gov.

FARM RECONSTITUTIONS

For FSA program purposes, tracts having the same owner and the same operator are grouped under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation take place, a farm reconstitution is necessary.

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 Aug. 1 for farms enrolled in specific programs.

The following are the different methods used when doing a farm recon:

Estate Method — the division of bases, allotments and quotas for a parent farm among heirs in settling an estate;

Designation of Landowner Method — may be used when (1) part of a farm is sold or ownership is transferred; (2) an entire farm is sold to two or more persons; (3) farm ownership is transferred to two or more persons; (4) part of a tract is sold or ownership is transferred; (5) a tract is sold to two or more persons; or (6) tract ownership is transferred to two or more persons. In order to use this method the land sold must have been owned for at least three years, or a waiver granted, and the buyer and seller must sign a Memorandum of Understanding;

DCP Cropland Method — the division of bases in the same proportion that the DCP cropland for each resulting tract relates to the DCP cropland on the parent tract;

Default Method — the division of bases for a parent farm with each tract maintaining the bases attributed to the tract level when the reconstitution is initiated in the system.

LIVESTOCK INDEMNITY PROGRAM (LIP)

LIP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who have incurred livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality up through October 1, 2011.

Losses of livestock due to adverse weather must be reported on form CCC-914 to the administrative FSA county office **the earlier of:** 1/ 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is apparent or 2/ By October 30, 2011. Then, a “filed” Notice of Loss must be finalized by completing an “Application for Payment” (part 2 of form CCC-914) no later than January 30, 2012.

Applications for livestock losses require the following: Verifiable documentation of beginning and ending inventory; Records showing normal death loss – including type of animal and numbers lost for each date of death; Records showing the date of death for adverse weather event(s) – including type of animal and numbers lost to each weather event; And, in limited situations, statements from third party persons (those that do not have an interest in the

operation) may be used – call for details; and records showing the number of livestock in inventory on the date of the adverse weather event.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE

Program participants convicted under federal or state law of any planting, cultivating, growing, producing, harvesting or storing a controlled substance are ineligible for program payments and benefits.

If convicted of one of these offenses, the program participant shall be ineligible during that crop year and the four succeeding crop years for direct and counter-cyclical payments, price support loans, loan deficiency payments, market loan gains, storage payments, farm facility loans, Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program payments or disaster payments.

Program participants convicted of any federal or state offense consisting of the distribution (trafficking) of a controlled substance shall, at the discretion of the court, be ineligible for any or all program payments and benefits:

- for up to 5 years after the first conviction
- for up to 10 years after the second conviction
- permanently for a third or subsequent conviction.

Program participants convicted of federal or state offense for the possession of a controlled substance shall be ineligible, at the discretion of the court, for any or all program benefits, as follows:

- up to 1 year upon the first conviction
- up to 5 years after a second or subsequent conviction.

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.

COMPLIANCE

Compliance and spot checks will once again be utilized during the 2011 crop year. Instead of locally selecting farms, contracts, deficiency loans, etc. for spot check and review, a nationwide selection of producers is used to

achieve a statistical sampling of participating producers. Spot check selections are to be conducted based on a producer's participation in the Conservation Reserve Program, Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, Loan Deficiency Program, etc.

State and county offices shall view and print their producer spot check lists as posted on the designated web site. If an entity is selected from the national database that is no longer farming or participating in the 2011 crop year, a notation shall be made on the spot check list.

For more information about the new spot check selection procedure, feel free to contact your local office for additional clarification.

DISASTER ASSISTANCE

The Farm Service Agency would like to remind crop and livestock producers throughout states that have recently experienced severe damage from flooding, wildfires and tornadoes that FSA programs are available to assist with recovery.

FSA administers several important programs that help producers recover from disaster damage and livestock deaths. Among the key programs available to address impacts from disasters are the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP), the Noninsured Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) Program.

Fact sheets for all of these programs can be found at www.fsa.usda.gov; click on Newsroom, then Fact Sheets.

We encourage all who have suffered a disaster due to the recent severe weather conditions to read the fact sheets and visit the local FSA county office so they get a quick start in the recovery process.

SODBUSTING

Farmers and ranchers 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 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.

IMPORTANT: ASSISTANCE SIGNUP FOR FLOOD DAMAGES IS UNDERWAY!

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.

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.

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 for an appointment with a farm loan officer.

Fact sheets for FSA programs can be found at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>; click on **Newsroom**, then **Fact Sheets**.

Important Dates:

July 1...2011 Crop Report Deadline	July 1...2010 Crop Production Reporting Deadline
July 19...ECP Flood Damage Application Deadline	July 29...2009 SURE Program Signup Deadline
August 1...Request Farm Reconstitution	Ongoing...Record Livestock "Normal Death Losses"
NOW...File 2011 LDP Page 1 "Request to Participate" - Before Losing Beneficial Interest	
Within 30 Days from when loss is apparent...File Notice of Loss on Livestock Deaths from Adverse Weather events	

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all of its programs 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, political beliefs, genetic information, 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, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.