



NEWSLETTER



PARK COUNTY NEWSLETTER

May 2015

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County Committee

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2015 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.

Crop reports must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. In Wyoming, the spring reporting deadline is: **July 15, 2015** – Spring Seeded Alfalfa, Forage Seeding, and all other spring seeded crops.

County Committee Election

The Park County FSA Committee held their annual election on December 8, 2014 for LAA #2. Ballots were mailed on November 3, 2014 to producers in LAA #2 which includes the Heart Mountain, Cody, Northfork, and Southfork areas.

Lynn George was selected to serve as the representative for LAA #2 for the next 3 years. Thank you Lynn for your dedication to the farmers and ranchers in Park County.

Livestock Disaster Programs

The 2014 Farm Bill made the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), Livestock Forage Program (LFP), and Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP), permanent programs.

Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) – LIP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who have suffered livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality, due to adverse weather or attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law, including wolves and avian predators. LIP payments are equal to 75% of the market value of the applicable livestock on the day before the date of death of the livestock determined by the Secretary.

Livestock Forage Program (LFP) – LFP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who have suffered grazing losses due to drought or fire. LFP payments for drought are equal to 60% of the monthly feed cost for up to five months depending on the drought monitor. LFP payments for fire on federally managed rangeland are equal to 50% of the monthly feed cost for the number of days the producer is prohibited from grazing the managed rangeland, not to exceed 180 calendar days.

Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) – ELAP provides payments to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees, or farm-raised fish to help compensate for losses due to disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires, as determined by the Secretary.

Filing for NAP Losses

The CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and prevented planting and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. Timely filing a Notice of Loss is required for all crops including grasses. For losses on crops covered by the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and crop insurance, you must file a CCC-576, Notice of Loss, in the FSA County Office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent.

If filing for prevented planting, an acreage report and CCC-576 must be filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.

FSA SIGNATURE POLICY

Using the correct signature when doing business with FSA can save time and prevent a delay in program benefits. The following are FSA signature guidelines:

- Spouses may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and CCC programs in which either has an interest, unless written notification denying a spouse this authority has been provided to the county office
- Spouses shall not sign on behalf of each other as an authorized signatory for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations, or other similar entities

For additional clarification on proper signatures contact your local FSA office.

ANNUAL NOTIFICATIONS

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

Producers who have bought or sold land, or added or dropped rented land from their operation must report those changes to the FSA office as soon as possible. A copy of the deed or recorded land contract for purchase property is needed to maintain accurate records with FSA. Failure to do so can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. While making record updates, be sure to update signature authorizations.

BREAKING NEW GROUND

Agricultural producers are reminded to consult with FSA and NRCS before breaking out new ground for production as doing so without prior authorization may put a producer's federal farm program benefits in jeopardy. This is especially true for land that must meet Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions.

Producers with HEL determined soils must apply tillage, crop residue and rotation requirements as specified in their conservation plan.

Producers should notify FSA prior to conducting land clearing or drainage projects to ensure compliance. If you intend to clear any trees to create new cropland, these areas will need to be reviewed to ensure any work will not risk your eligibility for benefits.

Landowners and operators can complete form AD-1026 Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELCS) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification to determine whether a referral to Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is necessary.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE

Any person 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.

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.

POWER OF ATTORNEY

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

BANK ACCOUNT CHANGES

Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into a bank account. In order for timely payments to be made, producers need to notify the FSA county office when an account has been changed or if another financial institution purchases the bank where payments are sent. Payments can be delayed if the FSA office is not aware of updates to bank accounts and routing numbers.

APPEAL PROCESS

After an FSA official makes a decision on a request for USDA services or application, the producer will be sent a letter informing him/her of the decision and options that can be pursued.

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.

FARM LOAN PROGRAMS

As a farmer or rancher, whether you are just starting out or have many years of experience, there are times when you need to borrow money to start, expand, sustain, or make changes to your business. You may be able to obtain a loan or loan guarantee through FSA's Farm Loan Programs if you are a farmer or rancher who is unable to obtain credit elsewhere. FSA loans are temporary in nature. Rural Youth Loans, Beginning Farmers Loans and loans for socially disadvantaged applicants are also available through FSA.

Under the Direct Loan Program the loan types available are: Farm Ownership loans will help you purchase or enlarge a farm or ranch – loan limit is \$300,000; **Operating Loans**, will help you purchase livestock & equipment and annual operating expenses – loan limit is \$300,000; **Microloans** are designed to help small, family operations secure loans for \$50,000 or less. Loans can be used to pay for initial start-up expenses, tools, irrigation, delivery vehicles, annual expenses, to purchase land, livestock equipment, feed, seed and supplies or to construct buildings to make farm improvements. Microloans will be targeted toward small farmers, veterans and disadvantaged producers.

Under the Guarantee Loan program the loan types are Guarantee Farm Ownership and Guarantee Farm Operating. The Guarantee loans are made and serviced by commercial lenders. FSA guarantees the lender's against loss, up to 95%. Loan limit is \$1,392,000.00.

To make an appointment, or if you have questions about the Farm Loan Program, contact Kathy at 754-9411, Extension 2.

Park County FSA Office
1017 Highway 14A
Powell, WY 82435



PRESORTED STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Farm Service Agency
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DATES TO REMEMBER:

Mid-Summer 2015 – Enrollment for 2014 and 2015 ARC/PLC contracts
July 15th – Spring Seeded Crop Report Deadline
Ongoing – NAP loss; 15 days from when loss is apparent