

Bourbon County Farm Courier



United States
Department of
Agriculture



Farm
Service
Agency

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COC meetings: second Thursday

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August 2010

Office Hours 8-4:30

CRP General Sign Up Announced

For the first time since 2006, a **general sign** up for the **Conservation Reserve Program** (CRP) has been announced. The enrollment period will begin on **August 2, 2010, and run through Friday, August 27, 2010**. The general sign up permits the offer of eligible whole fields into the program for from 10 to 15 years instead of only the part-field areas available through the continuous sign up practices (quail buffers, filter strips, waterways, etc).



In order to make an offer, producers will need to contact their applicable FSA office to designate the intended fields, and to get a scenario created to show eligible fields and maximum rental rates for the specific soil types. Then an offer can be made on qualifying fields if desired. Rental rates should be similar to past enrollments less the maintenance amount which is no longer added.

Offers will be competing on a nationwide basis using a computed Environmental Benefits Index (EBI) that will rate wildlife habitat, water quality, soil erosion, wind erosion, and cost. The higher the EBI score, the more likely an offer will "make the cut" and be included in the accepted offers. USDA has indicated that approximately 4.0 million acres will be available for the sign up out of the legislated national cap of 32.0 million acres.

There are three general qualifications necessary to meet the criteria to make an offer: 1) the field under consideration must have been **owned or operated** by the offering producer **for at least one year** prior to the end of the sign up period; 2) the field must have been cropped or considered cropped (i.e. existing CRP) to an **annually seeded crop in four out of the six years 2002 through 2007**; and 3) the field must have an **erodibility index of 8 or greater**.

Producers are encouraged to call for an appointment to allow for scheduling that will keep waiting times to a minimum and permit some preliminary research of cropping history, etc.

CRP Info Session

Information will be presented concerning the CRP general sign up at **7:00 PM, Thursday, August 12, 2010** in the meeting room of the Ellis Fine Arts Center at Fort Scott Community College.

Committee Election Upcoming

Nominations have been completed for a position on the three member Bourbon County FSA Committee. The area hosting the election this year is Local Administrative Area 2 which includes the **townships of Franklin, Marion, and Walnut**. Candidates for this year include Elwin Ermel, Wyatt Harris, and Buford Stewart.



All currently active farm/ranch owners or operators are eligible to vote in this election. Ballots will be mailed out in early November, and must be returned to the applicable county office by December 6, 2009.

Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)

Livestock losses due to lightning or a spell of this summer's excessive heat could be eligible for coverage under this program.



LIP provides compensation for livestock deaths, in excess of normal mortality, that result from an approved adverse weather event. **File Notice of Loss within 30 days** of when loss is apparent. File Application for Payment by Jan 30 of following year.

Adequate records must be available to support LIP claims so that inventory numbers can be documented as well as the actual death losses. Some kind of contemporary record like a financial statement or farm record book can be used for inventory numbers. A certification of death from a veterinarian, dated picture, dead wagon receipt, etc. can be used for the death record. Contact our office for details, and remember, losses must be turned in within 30 days of the adverse weather occurrence.

Foreign Investors

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. Foreign persons who 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 could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, real estate agents, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

SURE

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters that incurred in the crop years 2008 through September 30, 2011. To be eligible for SURE payments, a producer is required to obtain crop insurance on all crops in all counties or, if crop insurance is not available, to participate in the Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) except for grazed acreage. However, crop insurance or NAP coverage is no longer required for crops that are not of economic significance or those where the administrative fee required to buy NAP coverage exceeds 10% of the value of the coverage.

Eligible farmers and ranchers who meet the definition of Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, or Beginning Farmer or Rancher are exempt from the risk management purchase requirement.

The following are the conditions that trigger SURE payments:

- At least one crop of economic significance must suffer a 10% production loss due to an eligible disaster condition

- Crop of economic significance is a crop that has contributed or would have contributed at least 5% or more of the total expected revenue from all crops on the farm
- Producers in counties declared disaster counties by the Secretary of Agriculture, or in contiguous counties, or those who show proof of an individual loss of at least 50% are eligible to receive SURE payments for crop producer or crop quality losses. Losses are measured with consideration to the whole-farm revenue, which includes crop insurance indemnities and commodity program payments, so that producers are not paid more than once for the same loss.

Farm Loan Opportunities

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.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center, 620-724-6227, Ext 229. You may also visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

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