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Signup Begins for Livestock Disaster Assistance Programs

September 18, 2009 – The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) has announced that signup for the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) began Sept. 14, 2009.

LFP provides financial assistance to eligible livestock producers who have suffered grazing losses due to qualifying drought or fire. For drought the losses must have occurred on land that is native or improved pastureland with permanent vegetative cover or a crop planted specifically for grazing for covered livestock due to a qualifying drought during the normal grazing period for the specific type of grazing land in the county. In order for a county to be eligible for LFP, they must meet a qualifying drought rating as determined by the U.S. Drought Monitor. County offices will be notified by the National FSA Office when they have qualified for a drought according to the U.S. Drought Monitor. For fire, LFP provides payments to eligible livestock producers that have suffered grazing losses on rangeland managed by a federal agency if the eligible livestock producer is prohibited by the federal agency from grazing the normal permitted livestock on the managed rangeland due to a qualifying fire.

A list of eligible livestock is available on the Montana FSA website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt> or at the local FSA county office.

ELAP provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees, and farm-raised fish that have losses due to disease, adverse weather or other conditions, including losses due to blizzards and wildfires. ELAP assistance is for losses not covered under other Supplemental Agricultural Disaster Assistance programs established by the 2008 Farm Bill, specifically LFP, the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), and the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE). ELAP is being implemented to fill in the gap and provide assistance under other conditions determined to be appropriate.

For both programs, producers must have suffered losses that occurred on or after January 1, 2008, and before October 1, 2011. Producers are also required to meet a Risk Management Purchase Requirement in order to be eligible for these programs. Producers must have timely applied for and obtained either crop insurance; or Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance (NAP) coverage.

For 2008 calendar year losses, applications may be taken beginning Sept. 14, 2009, and must be filed by Dec. 10, 2009. For 2009 and subsequent years signup, applications must be filed no later than 30 calendar days after the end of the calendar year in which the losses occurred. The losses must occur in the calendar year the application is being filed.

For further information or to apply for ELAP or LFP, logon to the Montana FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov/mt or contact any FSA office across Montana.