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# CROOK COUNTY FARM SERVICE AGENCY NEWS

MARCH 2008

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Crook County FSA Office  
PO Box 1070  
117S. 21<sup>st</sup> St.  
Sundance, WY 82729

County Committee Members:  
Mervin Peterson – Chairperson  
Larry Fowlkes – Vice-Chairperson  
Danny White – Member  
Roxie Dacar – Minority Advisor

Office Staff:  
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Danice Conzelman - PT  
Susan Rasmussen - PT

Office Hours: 8:00 – 4:30

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## ***ATTENTION PRODUCERS! Signup Still Underway for Disaster Assistance Programs***

Livestock producers can apply to receive benefits under the Livestock Compensation Program (LCP) for pasture losses incurred in 2005 and 2006. In addition, they may also receive compensation through the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) for livestock death losses suffered from the April 2006 blizzard

The Crop Disaster Program (CDP) provides benefits to farmers who suffered quantity losses from crops and crops prevented from being planted in 2005, 2006, and 2007. Crops covered by either a NAP policy with our office or by crop insurance are eligible. Also, a loss of at least 35% must have been suffered.

Call our office for further explanation of these programs or refer to prior newsletters. An application closing date has not been established yet, but once it has and that date passes we will not accept late-filed applications. Call and make an appointment today.

## ***BEWARE OF CROP INSURANCE REBATING SCHEMES!***

With the spring closing date for many Federal crop insurance policies right around the corner, crop insurance agents have stepped up their marketing efforts. The Risk Management Agency (RMA) has received reports from producers and agents that some aggressive marketers have been approaching producers with rebating offers. These schemes promise lower premiums, refunds, dividends, or items of value tied to crop insurance purchases. Most of these activities are illegal. RMA reminds all Federal crop insurance program participants that it is now coordinating with state regulators to take appropriate regulatory action against all those who are found to promote or participate in such schemes. **Producers who are found to participate in illegal rebating activities will not only lose their crop insurance coverage but will also lose eligibility in all USDA programs.** Producers and agents can report suspicions of illegal rebating to the OIG Hotline: 1-800-424-9121.

## ***NON-INSURED ASSISTANCE PROGRAM***

Coverage on 2008 NAP spring crops are available until **April 1, 2008** on the following crops: All spring planted hay crops including, wheat, barley, oats, millet, sorghum, etc... 2007 crop production must be reported by **July 1, 2008** in order to be used for 2008 Actual Production History (APH) payment yield purposes. Failure to timely report production can have an adverse impact on the overall crop yield history.

## ***ANNUAL NOTIFICATIONS***

► **Foreign Buyers Notification:** The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act 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, realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

► **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.

► **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 Crook County FSA office staff directly or by phone at [\(307\) 283-2870 ext. 2](tel:3072832870).

► **Bank Account Changes:** Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into your bank account. In order for timely payments to be made, producers need to notify the FSA County office staff if your account has been changed or if another financial institution purchases your bank. Payments can be delayed if the FSA office is not aware of updates to your account and routing numbers.

► **Power of Attorney:** For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., we have 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. If you want a crop loan, a power of attorney form will need to be completed for husband and wife, if both do not come into the office to sign the forms on the day the loan is disbursed.

► **Spousal Signatures:** 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.

► **Payment Limitation/Eligibility:** Program participants are reminded of the requirements to timely and accurately file payment limitation forms. USDA payments and benefits are subject to producer eligibility and limitation provisions as defined by law. Documents and forms to determine eligibility and limitation once completed are reviewed on an annual basis. It is the producer's responsibility to report changes in the farming operation which may affect payment eligibility and payment limitation.

Entities such as corporations, limited partnerships, trusts and estates are required to provide names, addresses, and ID numbers of their members. The members of entities are required to designate which permitted entities are to receive USDA benefits.

Spouses may be considered as separate "persons" for payment limitation purposes if applicable requirements are met.

► **Loans for Socially Disadvantaged:** The Farm Service Agency (FSA) can make and guarantee loans to socially disadvantaged applicants to buy and operate family size farms and ranches. Funds specifically for these loans are reserved each year. A socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of the group without regard to their individual qualities. For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, and Asians and Pacific Islanders. Contact your local FSA Farm Loan Manager or Officer for more details and assistance in applying.

► **Farm Storage Facility Loans Storage Limitations:** If you noticed you didn't have enough room to store your silage then maybe it is time for a new bunker, or if your grain bin structure or storage capacity is not adequate, then maybe its time to build additional bins. Did you know FSA's Facility Loan Program provides funding to finance bunkers, grain bins and other facilities? If interested, be sure you contact the office for details. It is important to remember that you cannot start any work on the site nor have any material delivered until after your loan has been approved by FSA.

► **Applications for FSA Loans:** Farmers and ranchers that intend to apply to the Farm Service Agency for loan assistance for the upcoming crop year are encouraged to file their applications as early as possible. Filing early will help ensure that your loan is processed and approved as early as possible so that planting decisions can be made. Failure to apply early can result in a delay in processing loans due to the volume of applications that must be processed in date order. Contact your local FSA farm loan manager or officer for more details and assistance in applying. The contact person for Crook County is Rob Weppner in the Gillette office: number is 682-8843.

► **Youth Loans:** Remember FSA makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to establish and operate income producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be initiated, developed, carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organization or with a vocational teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and operated with the assistance of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and

provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. Contact your local FSA farm loan manager for more details

### **BREAKING UP NEW SOD**

Remember, if you will be breaking up new land, sod or very old cropland that has gone back to pasture, you need to **contact this office prior to planting a crop**. To be in compliance with sodbuster provisions you must notify this office, Farm Service Agency, of the area to be broken out and must file a revised form AD-1026. We will then delineate the "field" boundary and refer the new land to NRCS for a determination of highly erodible. If the land to be broken up and farmed is highly erodible you must comply with the conservation plan developed by NRCS. Contacting NRCS and getting their concurrence to break up this land without first contacting this office to complete the necessary paperwork does not constitute compliance with sodbuster provisions. Producers who violate sodbuster provisions risk becoming ineligible for program benefits through USDA.

### **WOOL/MOHAIR/UNSHORN PELTS**

The consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008 authorizes Marketing Assistance Loans and Loan Deficiency Payment programs for 2008 crops of wool, mohair and unshorn pelts. The Act authorizes FSA to accept and process 2008 application requests through **March 15, 2008**. Forms that must be completed and submitted by this date include pages 1 and 4 of form CCC-633EZ. Page 1 MUST be filed before you lose beneficial interest (the control of the commodity such as before selling it or contracting). This has always been the case with page 1. Page 4 can be filed before or after you deliver the wool to the buyer. If page 4 is filed before delivery to buyer you can "certify" to a quantity of wool (caution that certification be on the light side). In order to certify to a quantity the commodity (wool, mohair, unshorn pelts) must be in existence – meaning it must be shorn or pelts in hand. *Note:* This change in the application deadline is effective because of the above mentioned Act. It is possible that the Act deadline could be extended beyond March 15<sup>th</sup> but it may not be. It is also possible that the new farm bill, whenever it is signed, will include provisions for the remainder of calendar year 2008 wool, mohair and unshorn pelts. We hope that this will be the case as many of you do not shear until May.

### **APPEAL PROCESS**

When you file a program application with FSA that application must be reviewed and approved or disapproved. If a FSA official makes an adverse determination on your application or request for FSA programs, you will be sent a letter informing you of the decision made and options available to you if you disagree. Generally, program participants have three choices: 1/ an informal review with the original agency decision maker (i.e. the county committee or state committee); 2/ an opportunity for mediation; 3/ appeal to the National Appeals Division.

### **COUNTY COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The county committee has set the third Wednesday of the month at 11:00 am as the date and time of their county committee meetings. Meetings are open to the public except for those items restricted by the Privacy Act and other Agency rules and regulations.

### **IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER**

**IMMEDIATELY...FILE notification of NAP loss forms within 15 days of loss**

**...Notify county office of direct deposit changes**

**...Notify county office of farm record changes or management changes**

**March 15...Deadline to file Wool/Mohair applications for 2008**

**March 15...Deadline to purchase Crop Insurance from your agent**

**March 31...Last day to file LDP applications for 2007 small grain crops for grain and hay**

**April 1...Purchase policy on spring seeded NAP crops**

**ANYTIME...Continuous CRP enrollment**

**Call FSA prior to breaking up sod (new land) and before planting a crop on sod**

**For more information on any Farm Service Agency program, visit or call our office, or visit the FSA Homepage at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)**

Have a Nice Day, /s/ Mike Idler, CED

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all

programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication or 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, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964 (voice and TDD).

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

**CROOK COUNTY FARM SERVICE AGENCY**

**P.O. BOX 1070**

**SUNDANCE, WY. 82729**