



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

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**Farm Service Agency**

## **Fact Sheet**

# **Computer Generated Maps**

## **Montana State Producer Handbook**



### **Background**

In the past, the Farm Service Agency has provided aerial photography of cropland for producers who were enrolled in FSA programs. These maps were generated from an aerial photograph of the cropland area which was taken from a plane flying above the area with a camera attached to the plane.

### **New Procedure**

FSA is currently involved in a new process for providing maps for producers. The new procedure involves a set of computer-generated maps for each farm. The acreage calculations using computer software is equal to or slightly more accurate than methods used in the past.



### **Certification Process**

The process of converting to a computer-based mapping system requires that FSA contact owners and operators to ensure that the field boundaries are in the correct location. Each FSA County office must certify that all the field

boundaries on the map are accurate and all the attributes are accurate.

### **Producer Participation**

Once a county has completed reviewing digitized aerial photographs and developed computer generated maps, each owner and operator will be sent a hard copy of their maps. At that point, the producer will have 30 calendar days from the date the letter was sent to them to contact their local county FSA office about any discrepancies. If the county FSA office does not agree with all of the requested changes to the maps, the producer will have the ability to appeal the decision to their local FSA County Committee.

Producers can appeal placement of field boundary lines, but not system-calculated acreages.

If the maps meet the producer's approval, the producer does not need to contact their local county FSA office. It will be assumed that the field boundary information is correct and it will be used for future USDA/FSA program purposes.

### **Future Uses**

What this process means for Montana producers is that eventually, producers who wish to do so, may one day be able to access and print their own map copies as well as conduct other business with FSA using their personal computer.

Currently, if a producer wishes to have an electronic version of their maps, they must contact their local FSA county office and request a copy.

### **When will the certification process be completed in Montana?**

The computer generated map process is scheduled to be completed for all counties across Montana by the summer of 2005. Until that time, FSA offices that have not completed digitizing and certifying their maps will be using hard copies of the map as in the past.

### **For More Information**

If your county has completed the computer generated map process, you may request a copy of your computer-generated map from your local County FSA office. In the future, the maps will be available electronically as well.

Contact your local county FSA office, located under "Government" in the telephone directory, for further information.

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