



June 2004

Missouri Producer

Missouri Farm Service Agency

Parkade Center, Suite 225
601 Business Loop 70 W
Columbia, MO 65203

Hours

Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

State Committee

Don Fischer, Chairman
Fred Ferrell
Julie Hurst
Craig Westfall
Barbara Wilson

Staff

Tim Kelley, State Executive Director
Patty Dick, Administration
Dan Gieseke, Farm Loans
Bo Wendleton, Compliance
Gerald Hrdina, Conservation
Maurine Long, Price Support
Max Sell, Production Flexibility

Grassland Reserve Program

USDA has published the Grassland Reserve Program interim final rule and can now implement the program to help landowners restore and protect rangeland, pastureland, shrub land and other grasslands as well as those needing rehabilitation.

This fiscal year, USDA is providing \$54.2 million in financial assistance to GRP participants. \$3.2 million in assistance is planned for Missouri.

This voluntary conservation program promotes the nation's grasslands, which provide significant ecological benefits and enhance the quality of our environment.

The program is implemented through the cooperative efforts of the Farm Service Agency, Natural Resource Conservation Service and the Forest Service.

Applications for GRP may be filed at any time throughout the year by visiting either an FSA or NRCS office.

Producers have the choice of an easement or rental agreement. Easements can be permanent or have a 30-year duration. Rental agreements are shorter-term plans of 10, 15, 20 or 30 years in length.

Easement reimbursements are based on an appraisal of the land's fair market value minus the grazing value. Rental values, on the other hand, are set as a percentage of the grazing value of the land.

Funding for grassland restoration is also available for easement or rental situations.

All landowners with a clear title to privately owned lands and landowners or operators with evidence of lifetime control of grassland acreage can submit an application for GRP participation.

Protecting grasslands contributes to the economy, provides biodiversity of plant and animal populations and improves the general quality of the environment.

For more information about GRP or other conservation programs, contact FSA county office staff or look online at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/grp>.

Producer Information Helpful

Each year, the Farm Service Agency earmarks a portion of each state's direct and guaranteed loan funds for producers who qualify as socially disadvantaged applicants. To help ensure that we allocate sufficient funding for SDA producers,

Dates to Remember	
Today	Report changes to farming operation.
May 31	Memorial Day holiday. FSA offices closed
June 1	Deadline to apply for loans, LDPs for feed grains, soybeans, cotton, rice, sunflowers
June 1	DCP signature deadline
June 30	Final reporting date for small grains
July 5	Independence Day holiday observed. FSA offices closed
July 31	Final reporting date for all other crops
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loans
Continues	Grassland Reserve Program

FSA loan applicants can voluntarily complete the “Voluntary Information for Monitoring Purposes” section of the application.

This section of the application asks applicants volunteer information about their sex and race or nationality. The agency uses this information to allocate loan funding for socially disadvantaged applicants in future years.

Regulations prohibit agency staff from asking producers for this information or making visual determinations and filling in the appropriate selections. Producers must voluntarily contribute this information and fill in the application themselves.

A socially disadvantaged applicant 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, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

Prevented Planted Acreage

If you were unable to plant crops this spring due to a natural disaster, you should report these prevented planted acres to the Farm Service Agency county office staff.

Crop and acreage reporting are required for participation in many FSA programs, and it is a good way to maintain cropping history. Certified crop reports are used by the county office staff to determine compliance with certain farm programs and, perhaps, eligibility for future programs.

If a crop could not be planted because of a natural disaster, report it to the county office staff within 15 days of the crop's established final planting date to maintain eligibility for some FSA programs.

For crops for which federal crops insurance is not available, you may be eligible for assistance on prevented planted acres under the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program. The acres of non-insurable crops that are kept from being planted must be reported within 15 days of the end of the normal planting period for the specific crop.

Contact the county office staff for additional information.

CCC-709 Signed Before Harvest

If you're interested in applying for field direct LDPs, don't forget about completing your CCC-709s before harvest.

Field direct LDPs are available to producers who: will lose beneficial interest when the commodity is delivered directly from the field to the processor, buyer, warehouse or cooperative; want to receive an LDP based on the date delivered directly from the field; or, will feed the commodity during harvest.

Selected Interest Rates for June 2004	
90-Day Treasury Bill	1.000%
Farm Operating - Direct	3.500%
Farm Ownership - Direct	5.500%
Limited Resource	5.000%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	4.000%
Emergency	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility	4.250%
Sugar Storage Facility	5.125%
Commodity Loans 1996- Present	2.625%

You must complete your CCC-709: on or before the date of harvest for the commodity; for one or more farm's expected production; and for all or a portion of the expected production. CCC-709s completed after harvest begins will be applicable only to un-harvested quantities.

You do not have to participate in the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program to be eligible for LDPs. However, you must comply with various program requirements, such as acreage reporting for *all* crops (CCC-471), certifying compliance with Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation requirements (AD-1026), and filing a Farm Operating Plan for Payment Eligibility Review (CCC-502).

For more information, stop by or call the office staff before harvest begins.

Maintenance of CRP Cover

As a CRP participant, cover maintenance is your responsibility and must be done according to your conservation plan. All CRP maintenance activity, such as mowing, burning and spraying, must be conducted outside the primary nesting season for wildlife and in accordance with the conservation plan.

Spot treatment of the acreage may be allowed during the primary nesting season if certain criteria are met. The ending date for the primary nesting season in Missouri is July 15. Visit or call the county office staff for more information.

Crop Acreage Reports

Filing an accurate and timely acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent loss of benefits for a variety of Farm Service Agency programs. All cropland on the farm must be reported to receive benefit from the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, Marketing Assistance Loans and Loan Deficiency Payments.

Conservation Reserve Program acreage must be reported to receive annual CRP rental payments. And, crop acreage for which Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) may be requested must be reported.

Crop reports, form FSA-578, must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. Check with the staff of your Farm Service Agency county office for report deadlines.

Prevented planting and failed acreage should also be reported.

Prevented planting occurs when a crop cannot be planted during the established planting period because of a natural disaster. To be timely filed, prevented planted reports must be submitted no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date for the applicable crop.

Failed acreage comprises tracts of properly-planted and managed crops that did not grow or were destroyed due to a natural disaster.

Acreage reports for failed acreage must be filed before disposition of the crop, and producers must be able to establish, to the satisfaction of the county committee, that the crop failed and was prevented from being replanted through the normal planting period because of natural disaster conditions.

Measurement Service

Farmers who would like a guarantee for their crop and land use acreages will be ahead of the game to use FSA's measurement service. Producers must file a request with the county office staff and pay the cost of furnishing the service.

Measurement service guarantees compliance with a program, if the planting is limited to the measured area. Incorrect acreage certification could result in reduced program payments or marketing quota penalty or loss of price support for the crop.

CRP Continuous Sign Up

We did not have a Conservation Reserve Program general sign up this spring as anticipated. However, that does not mean producers with eligible cropland are out of luck. Environmentally desirable land devoted to certain conservation practices may be enrolled in CRP at any time under continuous sign up provisions. Offers are automatically accepted provided the land and producer meet certain eligibility requirements. Offers for continuous sign-up are not subject to competitive bidding.

To be eligible for continuous CRP, a producer must have owned or operated the land for at least 12 months prior to submitting the offer. Exceptions to the rule include,

- if the new owner acquired the land due to the previous owner's death;
- the ownership change occurred due to foreclosure where the owner exercised a timely right of redemption in accordance with state law; or
- the circumstances of the acquisition present adequate assurance to FSA that the new owner did not acquire the land for the purpose of placing it in CRP.

To be eligible for placement in CRP, land must be either cropland (including field margins) that is planted or considered planted to an agricultural commodity four of the previous six crop years from 1996 to 2001, and which is physically and legally capable of being planted in a normal manner to an agricultural commodity; or certain marginal pastureland.

The following conservation practices are eligible for CRP continuous sign up: riparian buffers; wildlife habitat buffers; wetland buffers; filter strips; wetland restoration; grass waterways; shelterbelts; living snow fences; contour grass strips; salt tolerant vegetation; and shallow water areas for wildlife.

All eligible owners and operators, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status, shall have an opportunity to submit requests to place land in CRP.

Contact the county office staff for details or visit <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/publications/facts/html/crpcont03.htm>.

The U.S. 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 for communication of 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, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C., 20250-9410, or call 202-720-5964 (voice or TDD).