



June 25, 2002

The Hartley County Harvester

**Hartley County FSA
District 1**
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Hours:
Monday-Friday
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

County Committee:
Marvin Batenhorst
Joe Parker
Bud Snead

Minority Advisor:
Babette Spinhirne

Farm Program Staff:
Glen Clugy, CED
Becky Brown, PT
Becky Voight, PT
Teresa Gates, PT

Farm Loan Staff:
(Dalhart Office)
Marc Lathem, FLM
Barbara Koch, PT

Regular Committee Meetings
held on the 3rd Wednesday of
each Month.

Dates to Remember

June 28th -- Final Date to
Sign-Up for EQIP
July 4th -- Office Closed for
the 4th of July
July 15th -- Final Date to
Report your 2002
Spring-Seed Crop
Acreage

FSA Begins Farm Bill Implementation

Besides the weather, the main topic of conversation in the farming community is the farm bill. There seems to be more questions than answers now, but FSA is working towards turning the legislation into programs. Currently, Washington staff is writing the rules and regulations for \$115 billion worth of commodity, dairy, credit, conservation and livestock programs. Those rules must then go through a 30-day comment period. Meanwhile, software is being developed and tested, employees must be trained and sign-up dates need to be announced. All of this must be completed before the first check is issued. This is why we are saying payments for dairy and commodity provisions will not be issued until this fall.

You are probably reading and hearing all sorts of things about the programs. We are hearing some wild rumors too. A number of groups are all trying to explain the way the programs will work and what you will be paid. All of their speculation is subject to change because the rules have not yet been written. Some of the information is probably correct. However, we can not verify the accuracy of any report nor can we speculate what future payments may be.

The most reliable and up to date information available can be found at www.usda.gov/farmbill or by clicking on the 2002 farm bill logo on the FSA web page. This website will be continuously updated. Furthermore, there is an e-mail alert option available from the site so you can receive automatic updates when new information is posted.

Also enclosed with this newsletter is a 2002 Farm Bill Fact Sheet that may assist you with current farm bill information.

Hartley County Web Site

With the implementation of the 2002 Farm Bill, we have redesigned and updated the Hartley County FSA Internet Web Site. The site is located at www.fsa.usda.gov/tx/tx205 and we are updating it daily with new information to keep you informed of FSA happenings in Hartley County.

Office Closed

This office will be closed on Thursday, July 4th for the Independence Holiday. We hope you and your family have a safe and happy 4th of July.

Farm Bill General Information

We are still making 2002-year PFC payments to producers updating their PFC contracts. We anticipate LDP activity this year too. The new law provides some additional direct payments for 2002, and these will be made in the fall using updated acreage bases.

Base & Yield updates - A letter will be sent to you soon notifying you of base and yield data on file in our office for the 1998 through 2001 crop years. When the letter arrives, verify the data's accuracy. Now is the time to organize your farm records from the 1998 through 2001 years to compare and verify against FSA records. Do not provide information to the office until we notify you.

Acreage Reports for History - If you did not report your planted crop acres between 1998 and 2001, you will be able to submit a late-filed acreage report at no cost later in the year.

This history will be used to create a base history for direct and counter-cyclical payments. Late-filed acreage reports require that you provide acceptable evidence of the existence and disposition of the crop. Evidence may include:

- Sales receipts, diary, log book, and/or ledger sheets showing the number and units sold
- Records showing crops were fed
- Documentation showing payments were received
- Seed receipts showing the amount, variety, and date purchased
- Contract to produce a crop
- Receipts for cleaning, treating, etc., for the seed planted
- If unharvested, producer must provide a statement which shall include final use, date and method of destruction, and any supporting farm records.

Annual total-farm acreage reports will now be required for program participation in the direct and counter-cyclical programs.

Soybeans will be added as a contract commodity. You will be notified of base and yield options for soybeans too.

Finally, no farm bill program will go unannounced. We will make every effort to notify you of signup dates, rules, and program options so you can make an informed choice. We will hold or participate in public meetings and we will work with agriculture interest groups to help get the word out about these programs. So, watch for future newsletters and mailings from our office. These documents will contain information that will impact your farm for the next six years.

On the World Wide Web:
USDA Washington Office
www.usda.gov
FSA Washington Office
www.fsa.usda.gov
Texas State FSA Office
www.fsa.usda.gov/tx
Hartley FSA
www.fsa.usda.gov/tx/tx205



Acreage Reporting Time

The deadline for reporting 2002 hay, corn, soybeans, fruits, vegetables and all other crops acreage to this office is July 15, 2002. Acreage reports will be mandatory under the new farm bill and acreage reports are mandatory for farmers who:

- Plant fruit and vegetables on a farm enrolled in the 7-year Production Flexibility Contract (PFC) program,
- Apply for LDPs and commodity loans
- Are enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program
- Are enrolled in the NAP (Non-insurable Assistance Program) program.

A fee will be assessed for acreage reports filed after the deadlines.

2001 LDP for Non-Participating Farm & Time Extension

Farmers or ranchers not participating in the Production Flexibility Contract (PFC) program may now be eligible for an LDP on their 2001-crop of corn, wheat, barley or oats!

Producers who requested an LDP but were disapproved because they lost beneficial interest in the 2001-crop are also eligible to receive an LDP. Also, farmers who produced an eligible 2001-crop and retain title to the crop, but failed to request an LDP timely, are eligible for an LDP even though the deadlines have passed.

Farmers with the crop still on their farm will receive the rate in effect on the day they apply.

- If the crop was sold, the rate in effect will be based on the date of sale. Provide the office with sales receipts showing date of sale and amounts.
- Fed commodities will use the rate in effect on the dates the crop was fed. Provide the office the dates and quantities fed on those days. Also provide animal numbers that were fed.
- Quantities used for seed will use the LDP rate in effect on the date the commodity was seeded. Provide this office with the bushels used and acreage seeded.

The application deadline has not been announced yet. Inquire about the extension when you file your acreage report.

2002-LDPs

All corn, barley, wheat, and oats grown on either a participating or non-participating AMTA farm are eligible for LDP in 2002. You can check LDP rate on your computer by logging onto the Hartley County FSA webpage at www.fsa.usda.gov/tx/tx205.

2002 Graze-Out LDPs

Graze-Out payments are available instead of LDPs for eligible producers who elect to use acreage planted to wheat, barley, oats or triticale for grazing by livestock, and agree to forgo any other harvesting of the commodity on the affected acreage during the applicable crop year.

For additional information concerning this program, contact this office.

2002 Loan Rates

The 2002 Loan Rates for Hartley County have been announced and are:

Wheat	\$ 2.74 / bu.
Oats	\$ 1.44 / bu.
Barley	\$ 1.86 / bu.
Corn	\$ 2.30 / bu.
Sorghum	\$ 3.74 / cwt.
Soybeans	\$ 4.64 / bu.
Sunflowers, Oil	\$ 8.97 / cwt.
Sunflowers, Other	\$ 10.86 / cwt.

As in previous years, producers can pledge their eligible 2002 production as collateral for a nine-month low interest CCC loan OR request a Loan Deficiency Payment (LDP) for the production.

However; producers are reminded that, for LDPs, title, risk of loss, and control of the commodity must be maintained through the date the LDP is requested. Producers who lose these beneficial interest requirements at delivery should complete a 'field direct' LDP request prior to harvesting the commodity. Additionally, beneficial interest is lost at delivery for all commodities delivered to a feedlot or feed yard.

Also, please remember that, for 2002, all production may be eligible for Loans or LDPs regardless of whether it was produced on a farm participating in the Farm Program or not.

NAP Reminder

If you purchased a Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Policy for one or more of your crops, please keep the following in mind:

- Report planted crop acres to the office by acreage reporting deadlines. Total unit acreage reports including zero acre reports are required.
- File a Notice of loss (CCC-576) with the office within 15 calendar days after a damaging weather occurs or damage to the crop becomes apparent. Failure to report timely will result in loss of benefits.
- Contact the FSA office for an appraisal to be completed prior to destroying the crop or putting the crop to another use.

Hurry! Second Chance for EQIP Conservation Program Funds

The 2002 Farm Bill signed into law on May 13 further extend USDA's allocation of monies targeted for conservation practice application on private lands. EQIP signup began June 10, 2002 and ends June 28, 2002.

Any and all interested producers are encouraged to act quickly if they wish to take advantage of this 'second chance' opportunity for federal financial, educational and technical assistance provided through EQIP.

Although EQIP remains a voluntary, competitive program, the new Farm Bill outlines significant changes in program provisions pertaining to length of contract and payment limitations. However, the most notable change is the elimination of a "buy-down" option whereby a producer could increase their application's competitiveness by shouldering a higher percentage of the total cost of practice implementation.

If you are interested in this program, please contact our office or the NRCS office soon for more details!

CRP Emergency Grazing

Hartley County has been approved to implement emergency grazing of CRP acreage. After requesting use of the emergency provision with this office, CRP producers can now graze their CRP acreage with their own livestock or lease the acreage to another eligible Hartley County livestock producer.

Producers who utilize this program will be charged 25% of their annual rental payment for each acre grazed and the NRCS will provide a grazing plan to be followed on all acres grazed.

If you are interested in using this program, please contact this office for additional information before releasing livestock on the acreage.

Special Thanks to Texas Cooperative Extension

The Texas FSA would like to extend a special thank you to our partners at Cooperative Extension for their timely assistance in educating and informing the public regarding the 2002 Farm Bill. We greatly appreciate their efforts and look forward to further opportunities to partner as the provisions of the farm bill unfold.

If you have any questions about this newsletter or any FSA program, please come by this office or call us at (806) 365-4453 extension 2.