



August 18, 2003

# The Hartley County Harvester

**Hartley County FSA  
District 1**  
PO Box 177  
Hartley, TX 79044-0177

Voice: (806) 365-4453  
FAX: (806) 365-4446

**Hours:**  
Monday-Friday  
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

**County Committee:**  
Joe Parker  
Jason Schniederjan  
Bud Snead

**Minority Advisor:**  
Babette Spinhirne

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

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

Regular Committee Meetings  
held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of  
each Month.

### Dates to Remember

**September 1<sup>st</sup> – Office  
Closed for the Labor  
Day Holiday**  
**September 2<sup>nd</sup> – Last Day  
to purchase 2004 FSA  
NAP Coverage for  
Graze-Out Small Grain  
Crops**  
**September 5<sup>th</sup> – Final Date  
to Nominate Candidates  
for the 2003 COC  
Election**  
**September 30<sup>th</sup> – Last Day  
to purchase 2004 FCIC  
Coverage for Small  
Grain Grain Acres**  
**September 30<sup>th</sup> – Last Day  
to purchase 2004 FSA  
NAP coverage for  
Hay/Ensilage Small  
Grain Acres**

**On the World Wide Web:**  
USDA Washington Office  
[www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)  
FSA Washington Office  
[www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)  
Texas State FSA Office  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/tx](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/tx)  
Hartley FSA  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/tx/tx205](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/tx/tx205)



## 2003 COC Election

This year's County Committee Election will be held in December and is for the election of a COC representative from the western portion of the County to serve a 3-year term. Included with this newsletter is an FSA Fact Sheet detailing the election process and the importance of the County Committee System.

Through Friday, September 5, 2003, this office will be accepting nominations for the election. Producers should note that, unlike previous years in which 4 candidates had to be listed on the ballot, there is not a minimum number for this year's election. In the past, the County Committee was required to complete the ballot with additional candidates to ensure that the ballot contained 4 candidates, however; this year, the Committee will not add additional candidates to the ballot unless no nominating petitions are received. If one or more nominations are received by the September 5<sup>th</sup> deadline, these nominees will be the only candidates on the ballot regardless of the number nominated.

The dates for this election are:

- Today – Request nomination forms and begin nominations
- September 5<sup>th</sup> – Last day to file nomination form
- November 18<sup>th</sup> – Ballots will be mailed to voters
- December 1<sup>st</sup> – Final day to return ballots
- January 1<sup>st</sup> – Elected committee member and alternates take office

We encourage all producers in the election area to take an active role in the election including, nominating the candidate of your choice, actively seeking the position, and casting your ballot for the candidate of your choice.

## Managed Haying & Grazing on CRP

Cutting hay and grazing livestock on land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program, in the absence of a weather-related emergency, is now acceptable if you modify the existing conservation plans for the CRP acreage to include managed haying and grazing practices. The plans must be developed in conjunction with NRCS. Certain terms and conditions apply such as signing an agreement to re-establish - at your own cost - any cover destroyed or damaged as a result of haying or grazing and to remove all hay within 10 days of being notified that the managed haying and grazing season has ended.

Annual rental payments will also be reduced by 25 percent for acreage that is hayed or grazed.

## Selling CRP Land?

If you are selling part or all of your CRP acreage, please notify our office. We want to advise you of the procedure for transferring the contract to the new owner/operator if that individual wants to continue with the program. Likewise, we want to inform you of the consequences for terminating a CRP contract. Remember that your CRP contract is binding. We simply want to help you make a smooth transition concerning the transfer of the contracted acreage.

## CRP Cost-Sharing is Not Income

Besides the conservation benefits and the annual rental payments, do you want another reason to enroll environmentally sensitive land into the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP)? According to IRS bulletin number 2003-24 dated June 16, 2003, "all or a portion of cost-share payments received under CRP is eligible for exclusion from gross income to the extent permitted by section 126." We are not experts on tax law, so talk to your accountant about how this added CCRP benefit will help not only your farm, but also your operation's bottom line.

## Grassland Reserve Program

The Grassland Reserve Program has been implemented to conserve grasslands and pastures through long-term contracts. GRP is designed to provide farmers the flexibility to graze pastureland while preserving and protecting the ecological benefits of eligible lands. Harvesting restrictions apply to land during the wildlife-nesting season.

Applications will be accepted from FSA and NRCS on a continuous basis through the 2007 fiscal year.

Participants applying for permanent easements will receive a payment based on the fair market value of the property less the grazing value. For 30-year easements, the payment will equal 30 percent of what would be paid for a permanent easement, minus the land's grazing value. Rental agreements provide yearly payments equal to 75 percent of the land's grazing value for the length of the agreement. The grazing value in Hartley County is \$6/acre. Applications submitted now will be evaluated after October.

To participate in GRP, offers must be on privately owned land that includes at least 40 contiguous acres. Waivers may be authorized for less than the required acreage if a smaller parcel is capable of achieving the program's goals.

## ***NAP Insurance Sales Closing Dates***

All producers are reminded that September 2, 2003 is the final day to purchase NAP Insurance coverage through this office on your 2004 small grain crops intended for grazing. Producers should also note that September 30<sup>th</sup> is the final day to purchase 2004 FSA NAP Coverage for your small grains for hay or ensilage and is also the final day to purchase your 2004 FCIC small grains for grain coverage.

## ***2002 Counter-Cyclical Payments***

We will not issue a 2002 counter-cyclical payment for wheat, barley, or oats because the market price for these crops was higher than the crop's target price. The marketing period for 2002 cotton will end in August while the period for 2002 feed grains ends in September. If a payment for these crops is earned, the payments will be issued in September and October respectively. The final 2003 direct payments will be issued in October.

## ***Fraud Leads to Disqualification***

USDA announced its final rule on benefit disqualification for crop insurance fraud. Producers found to have committed crop insurance fraud are ineligible for a number of programs administered by FSA and CCC. Any person found to have committed fraud will receive a notice and will have an opportunity for a hearing on the record. The person may be disqualified from receiving any benefits under a number of programs for a period of up to 5 years. Other sanctions may also apply.

## ***Texas FSA State Executive Director Named SED of the Year***

FSA's National Association of Support Employees (NASE) has selected John T. Fuston, State Executive Director (SED) for Texas as the 2003 Outstanding SED. Mr. Fuston was selected from a pool of nominees and recognized for his strong leadership qualities, partnering ability and proactive approach to federal farm program delivery in Texas.

## ***Texas FSA Recognized for Outstanding Service***

The state's leading agricultural commodity groups presented Texas Farm Service Agency (FSA) employees with an award recognizing the agency for timely and efficient implementation of 2002 Farm Security and Rural Investment Act programs.

The award presentation was a joint effort by Texas Cotton Producers, Inc., Texas Corn Producers Board, Texas Grain Sorghum Association and Texas Wheat Producers Association, to recognize Texas FSA employees for insuring all eligible producers across the state are able to maximize their farm program benefits.

To date, the collective efforts of FSA's 870 County Office employees has resulted in delivery of \$899 million in federal farm program benefits to Texas farmers and ranchers since the Farm Bill legislation passed in May of 2002.

In the first phase of farm bill implementation, Texas FSA successfully processed 119,459 farms during the six-month Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) sign-up which ended in April of this year. The new DCP provisions allowed producers to update their bases and yields for the first time since 1985 – providing an opportunity for farm program payments to reflect improvements in farming practices and advancements in related technology.

Texas FSA received this honor in Richardson on June 28, 2003 at the annual convention of the Texas Association of FSA County Office Employees (TASCOE).

## ***Holiday***

This office will be closed on Monday, September 1<sup>st</sup> for the Labor Day Holiday. Have a safe and happy Labor Day.

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.