



Niobrara County Service Center

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October 2015

USDA ANNOUNCES CONSERVATION INCENTIVES FOR WORKING GRASS, RANGE AND PASTURE LANDS

Farmers and ranchers can now apply for financial assistance to help conserve working grasslands, rangeland, and pastureland while maintaining the area as hay land or livestock grazing land.

The initiative is part of the voluntary Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), a federally funded program that for 30 years has assisted agricultural producers with the cost of restoring, enhancing and protecting certain grasses, shrubs and trees to improve water quality, prevent soil erosion and reduce loss of wildlife habitat. In return, the USDA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance.

The CRP-Grasslands initiative will provide participants who establish long-term, resource-conserving covers with annual rental payments up to 75% of the grazing value of the land. Cost-share assistance also is available for up to 50% of the covers and other practices, such as cross fencing to support rotational grazing or improve pasture cover to benefit pollinators or other wildlife. Participants may still conduct common grazing practices, produce hay, mow, or harvest for seed production, conduct fire rehabilitation, and construct firebreaks and fences.

Applications will be scored against published ranking criteria and approved based on the competitiveness of the offer. The end of the first ranking period will be November 20, 2015.

To learn more about participating in CRP-Grassland call the office to set up an appointment or visit www.fsa.usda.gov/crp.

ACREAGE CERTIFICATION

Producers are reminded to report their 2016 acreage for fall seed and permanent crops. Filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs. Failed acreage must be reported within 15 days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date. Crop acreage reports must be certified by the **November 16, 2015**. Please call the office and set up an appointment.

COC ELECTION

The 2015 COC Election will be held in LAA 2 (the northern part of the county). Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters in early November. If you are an eligible voter in LAA 2 and you do not receive a ballot contact the office for a replacement. Ballots must be postmarked or delivered to this office by December 7, 2015.

NAP APPLICATION DEADLINE

The application signup deadline to obtain Non-Insurance Program (NAP) coverage for the 2016 crop year for all crops has been changed to **April 1, 2016**. The application fee is \$250 per crop/pay type. Basic coverage is offered at 50% of the approved yield and 55% of the posted price. The intent of the program is to provide yield protection in the event of catastrophic loss due to natural disaster.

Producers of actual production based crops, such as hay, can now purchase additional coverage up to 65% of the approved yield and 100% of the posted price. Contact the office for premium costs or other information.

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 county FSA office staff.

NIOBRARA COUNTY FSA OFFICE
PO BOX 720
LUSK, WY 82225

LIVESTOCK INDEMNITY PROGRAM

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who have suffered livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather. Producers who suffer losses must file a notice of loss within 30 days of the date of death. **Proper documentation, including photos with dates, is crucial to ensure eligibility for this program.** Livestock owners should record all pertinent information of livestock death losses, including losses due to normal causes.

NAP PRODUCTION RECORDS

NAP producers, now is the time to submit production evidence for your 2015 crops. Submitting production evidence for harvested crops, such as bale counts and weights are necessary to maintain accurate yields for coverage. Accurate yields are essential in calculating payments for losses. You can still submit previous year's records if you forgot in the past and those values will be used for your 2016 approved yield.

Important Dates to Remember	
November 11	Veteran's Day – Office Closed
November 16	Fall Crop Reporting Deadline
November 20	CRP-Grasslands Offer Deadline
November 26	Thanksgiving Day – Office Closed
December 7	Final Day to return COC Election Ballots
Within 15 days of noticing crop loss	File NAP Notice of Loss
Within 30 days of noticing livestock loss	File LIP Notice of Loss

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department (not all prohibited bases apply to all programs). Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities and wish to file a program complaint must contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish). Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) must contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax at (202) 690-7442 or e-mail at program.intake@usda.gov. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.