



NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2019

**Sheridan ~ Johnson County
FSA Office**
1949 Sugarland Drive, Ste 126
Sheridan, WY 82801

(307) 672-5820 Ext. 2
(307) 683-4202
Fax: 866-574-1670

Toll Free Number:
1-866-262-4396

Johnson County Office Day:
First **Wednesday** of each
month.
Buffalo USDA Service Center
500 Lott St., Unit A
Buffalo, WY 82834
(307) 684-2526 Ext. 3

FSA Office Personnel:
Linda Benzel, CED
Staci L. Green-Steiner, PT
Justine Scheeler, PT

County Committee Members:
Raymon Turk, Chairman
John Buyok, Vice Chairman
Thad Stoltz, Regular Member
Ray Daly, Regular Member
Gerry Miller, Regular Member
Susan Moyes, SD Advisor

Farm Loan Manager:
Rob Weppner
307-682-8843 ext. 2
Rob.Weppner@usda.gov

Dates to Remember:
**June 18, 2019 – Medusahead/
Ventenata Field Day**

**July 4, 2019 – Thursday, 4th
of July – Office CLOSED**

**July 15, 2019 – 2019 Crop
Acreage Report Deadline**

Next COC Meeting:
Wednesday, June 19, 2019



Greetings Sheridan and Johnson County Producers

To comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers, including livestock producers, are encouraged to file an accurate 2019 crop acreage report by the deadline of July 15, 2019.

We will be traveling to the Buffalo and Kaycee offices to assist producers to complete their report. The following travel dates are planned:

Buffalo * June 5th, 25th, & 27th * July 3rd

Kaycee * July 9th

Please give our office a call if you are unable to make your scheduled appointment. We look forward to meeting with you!

Wyoming Medusahead/Ventenata Field tour, June 18th, 8am-4pm, from Sheridan. Check in at 8am Sheridan College's Whitney Center for the Arts Concert Hall. Lunch Provided.

Please register by June 10th at: wymedusa2019.eventbrite.com

Best Regards,

Linda Benzel, CED

Sheridan ~ Johnson County Committee Nominations

All nomination forms for the 2019 election must be postmarked or received in the FSA county office by

Thursday, August 1, 2019 for LAA3 (Sheridan Co. and Johnson Co.).

Map of area boundaries available in both Sheridan & Buffalo offices.

Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in an FSA program may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee. Individuals may nominate themselves or others as a candidate. In addition, organizations representing underserved (minority and women) farmers or ranchers may nominate candidates.

To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign nomination form FSA-669A. The form includes a statement that the nominee agrees to serve if elected. Nomination forms are filed in the FSA office that administers a producer's farm records and is available at the FSA county office or online at www.fsa.usda.gov/elections.

Farmers and ranchers who are elected to serve on FSA county committees apply their judgment and knowledge to help with the decisions necessary to administer FSA programs in their counties, ensuring the needs of local producers are met.

Every eligible agricultural producer should participate in FSA county committees elections - whether you are a beginning or established producer, historically underserved producer, or whether you have a large or small operation -- because FSA county committees are your link with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

For program specifics or additional information about FSA county committees, visit a local FSA office or the FSA county committee website at www.fsa.usda.gov/elections.

Crop Acreage Reporting: What you need to know

As a farmer or rancher, you should file acreage reports with USDA. It is an important part of determining your eligibility for key programs, including price support, disaster relief and conservation programs. A crop acreage report documents all crops and their intended uses and is an important part of record-keeping for your farm or ranch. This report is needed to access many USDA assistance programs.

Acreage reporting establishes your eligibility for many programs including disaster programs. Even if there is no program payment that might be at issue when an acreage report could be filed or filed late with a fee, it is always better to file an acreage report and remit the late-file fee than to choose not to report the acreage. *Sometimes program or payment eligibility decisions or application deadlines extend beyond the final date when a late-filed acreage report can even be filed.* So, electing not to file and pay a fee could be final with regard to the potential eligibility of those acres and producers sharing in the acres.

Having an acreage report on file helps ensure eligibility for payments and disaster assistance; especially unforeseen future disasters or program payment eligibility.

Some crops have multiple plantings and each planting must be reported. Some crops are eligible for continuous certification. This means after a crop is reported once, the certification remains in effect until a change is made or the Conservation Reserve Program contract has expired. To see if your crops are eligible for continuous certification check with your local office. Farmers and ranchers must complete the crop acreage report with FSA even if you've already submitted a report to your crop insurance agency.

To schedule your appointment for 2019 Spring Crop Acreage Reporting, please call the Sheridan~Johnson County FSA office at (307) 683-4202. **DEADLINE IS MONDAY, JULY 15, 2019**

Organic Certification Cost Share Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP), administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), provides organic producers and handlers with financial assistance to reduce the cost of organic certification. The program reimburses producers and handlers for a portion of their paid certification costs. Once certified, organic producers and handlers are eligible to receive reimbursement for up to 75 percent of certification costs each year, up to a maximum of \$750 per certification scope—crops, livestock, wild crops, handling and State Organic Program fees.

Certified organic producers and handlers who have paid certification fees during the 2017 or 2018 program year may apply for reimbursement of the incurred costs. *OCCSP funds are limited and applications are paid on a first-come, first-served basis. Applications received after all funds are obligated will not be paid.

Organic certification cost share funds are only available to certified organic producers and handlers. Certification must be provided by a USDA-accredited certifying agent. If your operation is not currently certified organic and you would like to learn more about the certification process, please visit www.fsa.usda.gov/organic.

Eligible costs include application fees, inspection costs, fees related to equivalency agreement/arrangement requirements, travel/per diem for inspectors, user fees, sales assessments and postage.

You may apply to a participating state agency according to their deadlines, or you may apply directly to one of over 2,100 FSA offices. Applicants must typically submit a one-page application form, W-9 tax form (to participating state agencies), proof of certification and an itemized invoice of certification expenses.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

This fact sheet is for informational purposes only; other eligibility requirements may apply. For more information, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/organic or contact your local FSA office. To find your local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

POETRY

Spring 2019 marked the 3rd Annual Poetry contest for the Sheridan and Johnson County high school students. Rules are simple: be a current high school student in Sheridan or Johnson county; write an original poem using the theme Agriculture; and submit it by the deadline. This year's winner is Leif Norskog, a senior at Sheridan High School. Leif's poem, Ode to Cows, won him \$75 cash and a sling bag. His poem is featured to the right.



Ode to Cows

Down in the fields of grass lies a magnificent beast.
They live to die so that we can make them our feast.
Now the story they don't tell you at the hamburger stand,
is the journey they take on the widespread land.

They are born in the cold so their life starts out tough,
and they eat in the spring swelling up like cream puffs.
They wander around aimlessly for a few years,
laughing at the poor rancher causing him tears.

On the other side of the fence the grass is always greener,
so right through the fence they must go to get to the feeder.
Now the hay is locked up to keep the bovine out,
but those silly cows break in because they're very devout.

They're afraid of flowers and anything that moves,
so all over the hills you can hear their scared moos.
Up the hill you must go to find them and gather,
But hide in the bushes is what they would rather.

So don't leave your valuables out in the field of green,
cause they will be destroy or never again seen.
The ranchers' livelihood is made from cow-driven grief,
so all of the world can have their delicious ground beef.

~Leif Norskog
Senior, SHS

Rural Energy for America Program (REAP)

REAP provides assistance to agricultural producers and rural small business for renewable energy systems and energy efficiency improvements through Federal loan guarantees and grants. Funds may be used to purchase, install, and construct:

- *Renewable energy systems, including: Wind; Solar, Biomass, including anaerobic digesters; Geothermal; and more.
- *Energy efficiency projects, including: Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems; Insulation; Lighting; Cooling or refrigeration units; Controls and equipment; Doors, windows, and other building improvements; and more.

Grants can finance up to 25% of the project cost, and loans or loan and grant combinations can finance up to 75% of the project cost.

Value Added Producer Grants

Get more revenue from your raw agricultural products by processing or marketing them

Funds can be used for planning activities or for working capital expenses related to producing and marketing a value-added agricultural product.

This assistance is available to: Independent producers; Agricultural producer groups; Farmer or Rancher cooperatives; and Majority-controlled producer-based business.

Participants must obtain matching funds for half the total costs of their project.

For More Information

Information on all **USDA Rural Development** programs is available online or from the Sheridan County USDA Service Center, located in Sheridan, Wyoming. Visit: www.rd.usda.gov/wy or contact Debra Anderson, Area Specialist] Energy Coordinator at (307) 683-4191, debra.anderson@usda.gov or Jessica Taylor, Area Specialist at (307) 683-4188, jessica.taylor@usda.gov

USDA Farm Service Agency
Sheridan ~ Johnson Counties Office
1949 Sugarland Drive, Suite 126
Sheridan, WY 82801-5720

Important FSA Dates and Deadlines

- ◆ **June 16, 2019** – Father's Day
- ◆ **June 18, 2019** – Medusahead/Ventenata Field Tour, Sheridan, 8am-4pm
- ◆ **July 4, 2019** – Thursday, 4th of July, Office CLOSED
- ◆ **July 15, 2019** – 2019 Crop Reporting Deadline & 2018 NAP Production Due
- ◆ **August 1, 2019** – Nominations Due for COC Election for LAA3



The Sheridan FSA Office is open Monday through Friday from 8am to 4:30pm, closed from noon to 1pm

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in this meeting should contact Linda Benzel at 307-683-4202 or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).