



NEWSLETTER



NOVEMBER 2019

**Sheridan ~ Johnson County
FSA Office**

1949 Sugarland Drive, Ste 126
Sheridan, WY 82801

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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:

Office Closed

***November 11th Veterans Day**

***November 28th Thanksgiving**

November 15th – Crop

Acreage Deadline

December 2nd – NAP 2020

Signup Deadline

December 6th – MFP Signup

Deadline

Next COC Meeting:

TBD



A Minute With Linda...

Hello Producers~

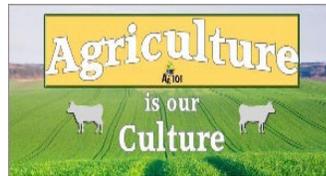
Our county committee election is coming up soon. The Local Administrative Area (LAA) #3 is up for this year's election. This is the eastern part of Sheridan and Johnson counties (please see description below/map in county FSA office). Thad Stoltz is our nominee for the election. He has served two terms (3 years each). Thank you, Thad for your dedication and service to the producers.

The 2019 Market Facilitation Program (MFP) signup that began July 25th will end Friday, December 6th. Please see additional information provided below on the eligible crops.

Thank you, farmers and ranchers, for your hard work! Staci, Justine and I wish you and your family a Happy Thanksgiving.

Best Regards,

Linda Benzel, CED



Elections for the 2019 County Committee

Voting is now open for the USDA's Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Sheridan~Johnson County Committee.

It is important that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the USDA. The 2019 election in Sheridan~Johnson County will be conducted for the representative for Local Administrative Area (LAA); LAA 3 correlates with school district 3 in Sheridan County and in Johnson County lies north of Township 44N, on the East side of I-90 and I-25 to the Campbell County line.

County committee members are a critical component of FSA operations. Committees should be comprised of members who reflect the diversity of producers involved in production agriculture. This means that producers representing underserved groups or communities should be on the committee to speak on behalf of their constituency.

County committee election ballots will be mailed to eligible voters on Nov. 4, 2019. The last day to return completed ballots to the Sheridan County USDA service center is Dec. 2, 2019.

For more information on eligibility to serve on FSA county committees, visit:
fsa.usda.gov/elections.

FSA Encourages Farmers and Ranchers to Vote in County Committee Elections

The 2019 Farm Service Agency County Committee Elections began on Nov. 4, when ballots were mailed to eligible voters. The deadline to return the ballots to local FSA offices, or to be **postmarked, is Dec. 2, 2019.**

To be an eligible voter, farmers and ranchers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm, may also be eligible to vote.

The candidate in this year's election is:

Thad C. Stoltz is nominated in LAA 3 Sheridan~Johnson County, to serve as a committee member for a 3-year term. Stoltz resides in Arvada and raises sheep and has had a cow/calf operation for the past 10 years; along with a custom calving enterprise.

He is an active member of the FSA COC, Johnson County Cattlemen's and has recently been nominated to sit on a committee to help produce a resolution for the sage grouse (election pending at time of printing.)

More information on county committees, such as the new 2019 fact sheet, can be found on the FSA website at fsa.usda.gov/elections or at a local USDA Service Center.

NAP Coverage Updates for 2020

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced that higher levels of coverage will be offered through the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), a popular safety net program, beginning April 8, 2019. The 2018 Farm Bill also increased service fees and made other changes to the program, including service fee waivers for qualified military veterans interested in obtaining NAP coverage.

NAP provides financial assistance to producers of commercial crops for which insurance coverage is not available in order to protect against natural disasters that result in lower yields or crop losses or prevent crop planting.

NAP Buy-Up Coverage Option

The 2018 Farm Bill reinstates higher levels of coverage, from 50 to 65 percent of expected production in 5 percent increments, at 100 percent of the average market price. Producers of organics and crops marketed directly to consumers also may exercise the "buy-up" option to obtain NAP coverage of 100 percent of the average market price at the coverage levels of between 50 and 65 percent of expected production. NAP basic coverage is available at 55 percent of the average market price for crop losses that exceed 50 percent of expected production.

Buy-up coverage is not available for crops intended for grazing.

NAP Service Fees

For all coverage levels, the new NAP service fee is the lesser of **\$325 per crop** or \$825 per producer per county, not to exceed a total of \$1,950 for a producer with farming interests in multiple counties. These amounts reflect a \$75 service fee increase for crop, county or multi-county coverage. The fee increases apply to obtaining NAP coverage on crops on or after April 8, 2019.

Deadline to apply for 2020 coverage is December 2, 2019.

NAP Enhancements for Qualified Military Veterans

The 2018 Farm Bill NAP amendments specify that qualified veteran farmers or ranchers are now eligible for a service fee waiver and premium reduction, if the NAP applicant meets certain eligibility criteria.

Beginning, limited resource and targeted underserved farmers or ranchers remain eligible for a waiver of NAP service fees and premium reduction when they file form CCC-860, "*Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource and Beginning Farmer or Rancher Certification.*"

For NAP application, eligibility and related program information, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/nap or contact your local USDA Service Center. To locate your local FSA office, visit www.farmers.gov.

USDA Opens Signup for Market Facilitation Program

Enrollment Open through Dec. 6

Signup is ongoing for the Market Facilitation Program (MFP), a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) program to assist farmers who continue to suffer from damages because of unjustified trade retaliation from foreign nations. Through MFP, USDA will provide up to \$14.5 billion in direct payments to impacted producers, part of a broader trade relief package announced in late July. The sign-up period runs through Dec. 6, 2019.

MFP payments will be made to producers of certain non-specialty and specialty crops as well as dairy and hog producers.

Non-Specialty Crops

MFP payments will be made to producers of alfalfa hay, barley, canola, corn, crambe, dried beans, dry peas, extra-long staple cotton, flaxseed, lentils, long grain and medium grain rice, millet, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, rapeseed, rye, safflower, sesame seed, small and large chickpeas, sorghum, soybeans, sunflower seed, temperate japonica rice, triticale, upland cotton, and wheat.

MFP assistance for 2019 crops is based on a single county payment rate multiplied by a farm's total plantings to the MFP-eligible crops in aggregate in 2019. Those per acre payments are not dependent on which of those crops are planted in 2019. A producer's total payment-eligible plantings cannot exceed total 2018 plantings. [View payment rates by county.](#)

Dairy and Hogs

Dairy producers who were in business as of June 1, 2019, will receive a per hundredweight payment on production history, and hog producers will receive a payment based on the number of live hogs owned on a day selected by the producer between April 1 and May 15, 2019.

More Information

Payments will be made in up to three tranches, with the second and third tranches evaluated as market conditions and trade opportunities dictate. If conditions warrant, the second and third tranches will be made in November and early January.

MFP payments are limited to a combined \$250,000 for non-specialty crops per person or legal entity. MFP payments are also limited to a combined \$250,000 for dairy and hog producers and a combined \$250,000 for specialty crop producers. However, no applicant can receive more than \$500,000. Eligible applicants must also have an average adjusted gross income (AGI) for tax years 2015, 2016, and 2017 of less than \$900,000, or 75 percent of the person's or legal entity's average AGI for those tax years must have been derived from farming and ranching. Applicants must also comply with the provisions of the Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation regulations.

More information can be found on farmers.gov/mfp, including payment information and a program application.

Environmental Review Required Before Project Implementation

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires Federal agencies to consider all potential environmental impacts for federally-funded projects before the project is approved.

For all Farm Service Agency (FSA) programs, an environmental review must be completed before actions are approved, such as site preparation or ground disturbance. These programs include, **but are not limited to**, the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program and farm loans. If project implementation begins before FSA has completed an environmental review, this will result in a denial of the request. There are exceptions regarding the Stafford Act and emergencies. It is important to wait until you receive written approval of your project proposal before starting any actions, including, but not limited to, vegetation clearing, site preparation or ground disturbance.

Remember to contact your local FSA office early in your planning process to determine what level of environmental review is required for your program application so that it can be completed timely.

Applications cannot be approved contingent upon the completion of an environmental review. FSA must have copies of all permits and plans before an application can be approved.

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

Important FSA Dates and Deadlines

- ◆ **November 11, 2019** – Veterans Day – Office Closed
- ◆ **November 15, 2019** – Fall Crop Acreage Reporting Deadline
- ◆ **November 28, 2019** – Thanksgiving – Office Closed
- ◆ **December 2, 2019** – NAP 2020 Signup Deadline
- ◆ **December 2, 2019** – LAA 3 Ballots postmarked Deadline
- ◆ **December 6, 2019** – MFP Signup Deadline



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).