



JUNE 2020



## NIORARA COUNTY NOTES

### Niobrara County FSA Office

905 S Main St / PO Box 720  
Lusk, WY 82225

Phone: 307-334-2953, Ext. 2  
Fax: 855-415-3433

#### Office Hours

8:00 am - 4:30 pm  
Monday - Friday

#### County Executive Director

Laura Kessler  
[laura.kessler@usda.gov](mailto:laura.kessler@usda.gov)

#### Program Technician

Kimberly Nusbaum  
[kimberly.nusbaum@usda.gov](mailto:kimberly.nusbaum@usda.gov)

#### Farm Loan Manager

Dixie Mount  
307-322-4050  
[dixie.mount@usda.gov](mailto:dixie.mount@usda.gov)

#### County Committee

Jason ZumBrunnen, Chairman  
Joe Kruse, Vice Chairman  
Kurt Gaukel, Member  
Carol Geisinger, Minority Advisor

**Next County Committee Meeting:**  
TBD

### IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

June 30th - Deadline to enroll 2020

ARC/PLC Contracts

July 3<sup>rd</sup> - Office Closed -

Independence Day Holiday

July 15<sup>th</sup> - Crop Acreage Reporting  
Deadline (Perennial / Spring Crops)

**30 Days** - Contact the office to  
report adverse weather conditions  
& livestock losses within 30 days of  
realizing the loss

**15 Days** - File notice of loss on NAP  
covered crops 15 days after  
realizing loss

Greetings Niobrara County Farmers and Ranchers!

It has been a hot, windy and dry summer. Conditions are not the best here in Niobrara County. We want producers to know that we are submitting all the reports we can in order to make our conditions known. Hopefully we either start getting rain, or our efforts for drought assistance may open some programs to assist you through this time. Anyone who carries our Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) Coverage please make sure you notify us with a Notice of Loss as soon as you are aware you have a loss on pasture or forage, which I am sure most everyone already does. We have heard from many of you but there are still many producers who carry policies that we have not heard from yet.

We are currently at 'D1 – Moderate Drought' level on the U.S. Drought Monitor. Many livestock disaster programs such as the Livestock Forage Program (LFP), as well as CRP Emergency Haying and Grazing, are tied to the drought monitor and assistance in any of these programs is dependent on the drought monitor indicating the level of severity of our situation. If you feel that our current level shown on the drought monitor is not accurate, we strongly encourage you to submit a drought impact report at the following website:

<https://droughtimpacts.unl.edu/ConditionMonitoringObservations.aspx>

This is how you can impact the possible availability of disaster programs that relate to drought conditions for our local area.

We are extremely busy in the office with the new Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP). The CFAP program compensates farmers and ranchers for various crops and livestock that the markets have not been kind to lately. If you are interested in learning more or applying for the program, please call the office and visit with us. We have created a questionnaire that will help pull your numbers together for the application. Please contact the office so that we can get a questionnaire to you. Please read the CFAP article contained in this newsletter for more detailed information.

Many of you have not yet reported your spring planted crops or forage crops for the year. Please make sure you contact the office **before July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020** to get your crop report completed. We have many producers who have not finalized their report for the 2020 crop year.

It is a busy time and our workload is very high right now, if you call and get our voicemail or you knock on our door and we do not come right away, we are more than likely assisting other producers and will assist you as soon as we can, but please be sure to leave us a message so that we can return your call. If you plan to stop by the office, please make sure to call ahead. We are currently at Stage 2 of the re-opening process; we are operating as much as possible via mail, email and phone, but can let a producer in the office one at a time, therefore making an appointment or at least calling ahead is essential.

## FARMERS & RANCHERS IN WYOMING CAN NOW APPLY FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE THROUGH USDA'S CORONAVIRUS FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CFAP)

Agricultural producers can now apply for USDA's Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP), which provides direct payments to offset impacts from the coronavirus pandemic. The application and a payment calculator are now available online, and USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) staff members are available via phone, fax and online tools to help producers complete applications. The agency set up a call center in order to simplify how they serve new customers across the nation.

Applications will be accepted through August 28, 2020. Through CFAP, USDA is making available \$16 billion for vital financial assistance to producers of agricultural commodities who have suffered a five-percent-or-greater price decline due to COVID-19 and face additional significant marketing costs as a result of lower demand, surplus production, and disruptions to shipping patterns and the orderly marketing of commodities.

We also want to remind producers that the program is structured to ensure the availability of funding for all eligible producers who apply. In order to do this, producers will receive 80 percent of their maximum total payment upon approval of the application. The remaining portion of the payment, not to exceed the payment limit, will be paid at a later date nationwide, as funds remain available.

Producers can download the CFAP application and other eligibility forms from [farmers.gov/cfap](https://farmers.gov/cfap). Also, on that webpage, producers can find a payment calculator to help identify sales and inventory records needed to apply and calculate potential payments.

Additionally, producers in search of one-on-one support with the CFAP application process can call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee ready to offer assistance. This is a good first step before a producer engages the team at the FSA county office at their local USDA Service Center.

### Applying for Assistance

Producers of all eligible commodities will apply through their local FSA office. Those who use the online calculator tool will be able to print off a pre-filled CFAP application, sign, and submit to your local FSA office either electronically or via hand delivery. Please contact your local office to determine the preferred method. Find contact information for your local office at [farmers.gov/cfap](https://farmers.gov/cfap).

Documentation to support the producer's application and certification may be requested after the application is filed. FSA has streamlined the signup process to not require an acreage report at the time of application and a USDA farm number may not be immediately needed.

### Additional Commodities

USDA is also establishing a process for the public to identify additional commodities for potential inclusion in CFAP. Specifically, USDA is looking for data on agricultural commodities, that are not currently eligible for CFAP, that the public believes to have either:

1. suffered a five percent-or-greater price decline between mid-January and mid-April as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic,
2. shipped but subsequently spoiled due to loss of marketing channel, or not left the farm or remained unharvested as mature crops.

More information about this process is available on [farmers.gov/cfap](https://farmers.gov/cfap).

### More Information

To find the latest information on CFAP, visit [farmers.gov/cfap](https://farmers.gov/cfap) or call 877-508-8364.

USDA Service Centers are open for business by phone appointment only, and field work will continue with appropriate social distancing. While program delivery staff will continue to come into the office, they will be working with producers by phone and using online tools whenever possible. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with the FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, or any other Service Center agency are required to call their Service Center to schedule a phone appointment. More information can be found at [farmers.gov/coronavirus](https://farmers.gov/coronavirus).

## USDA REMINDS PRODUCERS TO COMPLETE CROP ACREAGE REPORTS

The Niobrara County office for USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is currently open to phone and virtual appointments only but can still work with producers on timely filing crop acreage reports. FSA staff can provide assistance over the phone, by email and through virtual meetings via Microsoft Teams.

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for Niobrara County:

### **July 15, 2020**                      **Perennial crops (including pasture), and spring seeded crops**

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers must file an accurate crop acreage report by the applicable deadline. FSA staff is still able to assist producers in completing acreage reports, including providing maps.

After completed maps and all acreage reporting information is received, FSA will make software updates and [mail, email] producers the completed *Report of Acreage* form (FSA-578) to sign. Producers must return the signed form certifying their acreage report to the FSA office through by **July 15<sup>th</sup>**.

The following exceptions apply to acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.

Producers should also report crop acreage they intended to plant, but due to natural disaster, were unable to plant. Prevented planting acreage must be reported on form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date as established by FSA and USDA's Risk Management Agency.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP-covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

If you have applied for organic certification and do not receive it before the acreage reporting deadline, you may provide the necessary documentation to FSA immediately upon receipt from the certifying agent.

For questions, please contact FSA's Niobrara County Office at 307-334-2953, Ext. 2.

## REPORT NON-INSURED CROP DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (NAP) LOSSES

The Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters including freeze, hail, excessive moisture, excessive wind or hurricanes, flood, excessive heat and qualifying drought (includes native grass for grazing), among others.

Eligible producers must have purchased NAP coverage for 2020 crops. A notice of loss must be filed the earlier of 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent or 15 days of the final harvest date. Producers of hand-harvested crops and certain perishable crops must notify FSA within 72 hours of when a loss becomes apparent.

Eligible crops must be commercially produced agricultural commodities for which crop insurance is not available, including perennial grass forage and grazing crops, fruits, vegetables, mushrooms, floriculture, ornamental nursery, aquaculture, turf grass, ginseng, honey, syrup, bioenergy, and industrial crops.

For more information on NAP, contact your local FSA office or visit [fsa.usda.gov/nap](https://fsa.usda.gov/nap).

NIOBRARA COUNTY FSA OFFICE  
PO BOX 720  
LUSK, WY 82225-0720

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To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, \*--or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the form call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Office of the Assistant Secretary of Civil Rights

1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.

Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

fax to (202) 690-7442

e-mail at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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