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Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

BULLETIN

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Washakie-Hot Springs County FSA Updates

Washakie-Hot Springs County FSA Office

208 Shiloh RD
Worland, WY 82401

Phone: 307-347-2456
Fax: 855-415-3445

County Executive Director:
Lisa Bower

Farm Loan Manager:
Bill Morrison
Tracy Neidig, FLOT

Program Technicians:
Teresa Shelton
Kelli Emmett

County Committee:
Julie Haun, Chairperson
Kirk Tolman, Vice Chairperson
Jim Butterfield, Member
Everett Jones, Member
Arnold Penoyer, Member

CED Comments

I hope this bulletin finds everyone safe and well. The office is open by appointment only at this time. Please take time to read the articles regarding how to report drought conditions and that Washakie-Hot Springs County Committee nominations are currently open for LAA #2.

Please read through the following program information. (Thanks to CED Hanlon for sharing her bulletin comments.)

- **CFAP (Coronavirus Food Assistance Program)** - This is the program authorized by the CARES act. Livestock producers, wool producers, and producers who have grown some specific grains or grain hays can participate in this program. Please contact the office for more information. Or, you can also visit www.farmers.gov/cfap to learn more. We are taking applications for this program through August 28, 2020.
- **Wool LDP (Loan Deficiency Payment)** - This program is available to ALL wool producers. If you still own your wool, please contact us to complete Page 1 of the CCC-633EZ, which must be on file before you lose beneficial interest.
- **Acres reporting** - Reporting for all spring planted crops, perennial hays, and grazing are due by July 15, 2020. If you have finished planting please make an appointment to do so. Acreage reports are a required eligibility item for many of our programs, and fees are assessed to file late reports.

Next County Committee Meeting: July 9th, 2020
at 1:00 PM

- **Production** - You have until July 15, 2020 to submit your 2019 production records. Also, don't forget to provide your 2020 production to the office when you complete your haying. If you decide to graze or leave your hay crop unharvested, please contact the office before you put cows on it.
- **Notices of Loss** - if you incur crop losses, grazing losses, livestock losses, or honeybee losses please contact the office to file a Notice of Loss (NOL) as soon as the loss is apparent. Many programs only allow 15 days to report the loss. Causes of loss are dependent upon the program, but a few of the common causes are **drought**, lightning, and flooding. It is much easier to have a successful application if you file your losses timely and keep good records of the loss event. For NAP producers, please also remember to contact the office before you graze or choose not to harvest a covered hay crop. Having an appraisal or other record of production is vital to completing the loss claim.

Best Wishes,

Lisa Bower
CED

Document the Drought: USDA U.S. Drought Monitor Offers Producers a Voice to Report Drought Impacts

The U.S. Drought Monitor's reporting feature offers producers an opportunity to submit drought impact and condition reports.

The USDA, in partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, produced the U.S. Drought Monitor to include a reporting feature that allows producers to report local drought impacts and conditions.

The report allows producers to:

- Provide a written description of drought impacts on livelihood, activities, etc.;
- Select categories to show losses and gains as a result of the drought;
- Report on the duration of drought event;
- Select **Affected Places** – geographic areas ranging from an entire state to a small area within a state;
- Submit images that document the drought and its impact;
- Provide contact information (includes an option to keep information confidential).

The reporting tool for producers to record the effects of the drought can be accessed at the following link: droughtreporter.unl.edu/submitreport/

More information including state specific drought impact maps can be found on the U. S. Drought Monitor homepage: droughtmonitor.unl.edu/Home.aspx

Nominations Open for the 2020 County Committee Elections

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) encourages all farmers, ranchers, and FSA program participants to take part in the Washakie-Hot Springs County Committee election nomination process.

FSA's county committees are a critical component of the day-to-day operations of FSA and allow grassroots input and local administration of federal farm programs.

Committees are comprised of locally elected agricultural producers responsible for the fair and equitable administration of FSA farm programs in their counties. Committee members are accountable to the Secretary of Agriculture. If elected, members become part of a local decision making and farm program delivery process.

A county committee is composed of 3 to 11 elected members from local administrative areas (LAA). Each member serves a three-year term. One-third of the seats on these committees are open for election each year.

The area up for election this year is LAA #2 in Washakie County, which is everything east of the Big Horn River, not including Ten Sleep and is currently held by Julie Haun. For more specific information regarding the boundaries of LAA #2, or to determine your LAA, please contact the office.

County committees may have an appointed advisor to further represent the local interests of underserved farmers and ranchers. Underserved producers are beginning, women and other minority farmers and ranchers and landowners and/or operators who have limited resources.

All nomination forms for the 2020 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA service center by Aug. 1, 2020. For more information on FSA county committee elections and appointments, refer to the FSA fact sheet: *Eligibility to Vote and Hold Office as a COC Member* available online at: fsa.usda.gov/elections.

Using FSA Direct Farm Ownership Loans for Construction

The USDA Farm Service Agency's (FSA) [Direct Farm Ownership loans](#) are a resource to help farmers and ranchers become owner-operators of family farms, improve and expand current operations, increase agricultural productivity, and assist with land tenure to save farmland for future generations.

Depending on the applicant's needs, there are three types of Direct Farm Ownership Loans: regular, down payment and joint financing. FSA also offers a [Direct Farm Ownership Microloan](#) option for smaller financial needs up to \$50,000.

Amongst other purposes, Direct Farm Ownership Loans can be used to construct, purchase or improve farm dwellings, service buildings or other facilities and improvements essential to an operation.

To do this, applicants must provide FSA with an estimate of the total cost of all planned development that completely describe the work, prior to loan approval and must show proof of sufficient funds to pay for the total cost of all planned development at or before loan closing. In some instances, applicants may be asked to provide certified plans, specifications or contract documents. The applicant cannot incur any debts for materials or labor or make any expenditures for development purposes prior to loan closing with the expectation of being reimbursed from FSA funds.

Construction and development work may be performed either by the contract method or the borrower method. Under the contract method, construction and development contractors perform work according to a written contract with the applicant or borrower. An applicant for a direct loan to finance a construction project must obtain a surety bond that guarantees both payment and performance in the amount of the construction contract from a construction contractor.

A surety bond is required when a contract exceeds \$100,000, an authorized agency official determines that a surety bond appears advisable to protect the borrower against default of the contractor or a contract provides for partial payments in excess of the amount of 60 percent of the value of the work in place.

Under the borrower method, the applicant or borrower will perform the construction and development work. The borrower method may only be used when the authorized agency official determines, based on information from the applicant, that the applicant possesses or arranges to obtain the necessary skill and managerial ability to complete the work satisfactorily and that such work will not interfere with the applicant's farming operation or work schedule.

Potential applicants should visit with FSA early in the initial project planning process to ensure environmental compliance.

For more eligibility requirements and information about FSA Loan programs, contact your local FSA office or visit fsa.usda.gov. To find your local FSA office, visit offices.usda.gov.

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in this meeting should contact [Lisa Bower](#) at [307-347-2456](tel:307-347-2456) extension 2 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).