

September 2020



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

# BULLETIN

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## Weston County FSA Updates

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### Weston County FSA Office

1225 Washington Blvd, Ste. 2  
Newcastle, WY 82701  
Phone: 307-746-2701, ext. 2  
Fax: 307-746-2870 or  
855-415-3437

### County Executive

**Director:** Peggy Livingston,  
ext. 101

### Farm Loan Manager:

Rob Weppner, 307-682-8843

### Program Technician:

Sherie Hilgenkamp, ext. 100

### County Committee:

Chuck Grieves, Chairman  
Randy Oleson, Vice Chairman  
Harry Tavegia, Member  
Robin Riesland, Minority Advisor

### From the desk of CED Peggy Livingston

We are seeing great amount of activity as the season begins to change and everyone is gearing up for fall. We are getting several questions from our producers about programs and have several deadlines coming up.

Many of you have been asking about programs covering grazing losses. As of September 17<sup>th</sup>, a small portion of our county has been designated D2 Severe Drought by the US Drought Monitor. In order for the Livestock Forage Program to be implemented, the US Drought Monitor rating must be at least a D2 Severe Drought for 8 consecutive weeks. If eligibility for the Livestock Forage Program becomes available in our county, news releases and/or other forms of notification will be sent out.

In regard to those producers who obtained Non-Insurable Crop Assistance Program (NAP) coverage on pastureland, the grazing losses will be determined after **October 15<sup>th</sup>**. The County Office will be notifying NAP producers, once the percent of loss for grazing has been approved by the County and State Committees. As a reminder, if you have leased ground, we will need a current lease in order to be considered for payment on those acres. This includes all State, BLM, TBNG, IKGA, and private leases.

A reminder for those producers who have planted fall crops, the deadline for reporting them is **November 15<sup>th</sup>**. If you do not report your fall seedings

**Next County Committee Meeting:**

October 20 @ TBD

by this deadline, a late filed crop report fee will be assessed. Other acre reporting notes:

Timely planning of a crop by the final planting date, may prevent loss of or decrease in program benefits. Since the final planting dates vary by crop and planting period, please contact us for our county's specific planting date.

If you are planting cover crops to rehabilitate and protect your soil this fall, please know you can report your cover crops as one of the following four categories: Cereals and other grasses, Legumes, Brassicas and other broadleaves, and Mixtures

If the cover crop is harvested for any use other than forage or grazing and is not terminated according to policy guidelines, then that crop will no longer be considered a cover crop and the acreage report must be revised to reflect the actual crop.

New operators or owners, who pick up a farm after the acreage reporting deadline has passed and the crop has already been reported on the farm, have 30 calendar days from the date when the new operator or owner acquired the lease on land, control of the land or ownership and new producer crop share interest in the previously reported crop acreage. Under this policy, appropriate documentation must be provided to the County Committee's satisfaction to determine that a legitimate operator or ownership and producer crop share interest change occurred to permit the revision. The County Office will need to add this land to your Operating Plan and your Acreage Report for 2021.

If you are planning to obtain **2021 NAP Coverage** on grazing and/or other eligible crops, the deadline is **December 1<sup>st</sup>**. Other NAP program notes:

For producers who did NAP buy-up on their eligible hay crops for 2020, be on the lookout for notification in the mail sometime between now and **February 2021** with the premium payment you owe for the additional coverage. If you have questions, or do not receive the notification, please contact our office. The notification in the mail is generated at the National level, and the county office does not see a copy of your letter.

The County Office is still processing 2020 NAP payments for lost hay production. Please bear with us as we work through them, the process **required** for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> level reviews has recently become very lengthy and time consuming.

Please report any changes of address, zip code, phone number, email address, an incorrect name or business name, or bank account on file to our office. Also, report changes in your farm operation, like the addition of a farm by lease or purchase. **You should also report any changes to your operation in which you reorganize to form a Trust, LLC or other legal entity.**

We rolled out a new program September 21<sup>st</sup>: Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 (CFAP2). CFAP 2 provides additional vital financial assistance to agricultural producers who continue to face market disruptions and associated costs because of COVID-19. This is a new and separate program from the CFAP program offered earlier and we encourage all our producers to apply. Several crop commodities and livestock categories are eligible for the program. Any producers who wish to apply for the new program have until December 11<sup>th</sup> to do so. Contact our office for more information and to set up an appointment.

Please remember that if you need service from our office, you may call ahead and make an appointment. The number is (307) 746-2701 extension 2. The building doors are still locked, so park in the west lot when you come for your appointment and we will let you.

Wishing you all a safe and healthy fall,

Peggy Livingston

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## Attention all Buyers of Agricultural Products

It is required that buyers of agricultural products check or register with the Secretary of State's Office to determine if there are liens against the Seller of the product. If a lien is found, you are required to place the lien holder's name on the check as well as that of the Seller. Ag Products include but are not limited to: livestock (including horses), crops used for feed (hay, silage, oats, etc.), machinery, equipment and all other crops. **Failure to place the lien holder's name on the check may result in civil legal action being taken against the Buyer of the product. Protect yourself as a Buyer!** You may contact the Secretary of State's Office at 1-307-777-7311.

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## USDA Accepting Applications to Help Cover Costs for Organic Certification

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced that organic producers and handlers can apply for federal funds to assist with the cost of receiving and maintaining organic certification through the [Organic Certification Cost Share Program](#) (OCCSP). Applications for eligible certification expenses paid between Oct. 1, 2019, and Sept. 30, 2020, are due Oct. 31, 2020.

OCCSP provides cost-share assistance to producers and handlers of agricultural products for the costs of obtaining or maintaining organic certification under the USDA's National Organic Program. Eligible producers include any certified producers or handlers who have paid organic certification fees to a USDA-accredited certifying agent. Eligible expenses for cost-share reimbursement include application fees, inspection costs, fees related to equivalency agreement and arrangement requirements, travel expenses for inspectors, user fees, sales assessments and postage.

### Changes in Reimbursement

Due to expected participation levels for fiscal year 2020, FSA revised the reimbursement amount through fiscal year 2023. Certified producers and handlers are now eligible to receive reimbursement for up to 50 percent of the certified organic operation's eligible expenses, up to a maximum of \$500 per scope.

This change is due to the limited amount of funding available and will allow a larger number of certified organic operations to receive assistance. If additional funding is authorized later, FSA may provide additional assistance to certified operations that have applied for OCCSP, not to exceed 75 percent of their eligible costs, up to \$750 per scope.

The changes to the payment calculation and maximum payment amount are applicable to all certified organic operations, regardless of whether they apply through an FSA county office or a participating state agency. State agencies that are interested in overseeing reimbursements to producers and handlers in their states must establish new agreements with FSA for fiscal 2020.

### More Information

To learn more about organic certification cost share, please visit the [OCCSP webpage](#), view the [notice of funds availability on the Federal Register](#), or contact the [FSA county office](#) at your local USDA Service Center.

To learn more about USDA support for organic agriculture, visit [usda.gov/organic](https://usda.gov/organic).

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## Report Banking Changes to FSA

Farm Service Agency (FSA) program payments are issued electronically into your bank account. In order to receive timely payments, you need to notify your FSA servicing office if you close your account or if your bank information is changed for any reason (such as your financial institution merging or being purchased). Payments can be delayed if FSA is not notified of changes to account and bank routing numbers.

For some programs, payments are not made until the following year. For example, payments for crop year 2019 through the Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage program aren't paid until 2020. If the bank account was closed due to the death of an individual or dissolution of an entity or partnership before the payment was issued, please notify your local FSA office as soon as possible to claim your payment.

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## Dates to Remember

September 30	Deadline to request a PLC yield update
October 1	Election and enrollment opens for ARC/PLC crop year 2021, continuing through March 15
October 12	Office closed for Columbus Day
November 11	Office closed for Veterans Day
November 15	Acre/Crop Report deadline for Apiculture (bees) and fall-seeded small grains
December 1	Deadline for applying for 2021 coverage of Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) crops, including planned 2021 spring seeded crops
December 11	Application closing deadline to sign up for Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 (CFAP2)

- **NAP Notice of Loss for Crops** 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.
- **LIP Notice of Loss for Livestock Losses** must be filed within 30 calendar days of when the loss is first apparent.
- **Leases and/or Land Ownership including operational changes** must be reported within 30 calendar days of change to avoid late fees, repayment of funds issued and/or ineligibility for program participation

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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact Peggy Livingston at 307-746-2701 extension 2 or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through

the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

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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).