Greetings,

It is my hope that lambing, calving and planting crops is going well for everyone. It is nice to see the fields starting to green up.

The Service Center in Washakie County is now open to limited visitors by appointment only. Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff also continue to work with agricultural producers via phone, email, and other digital tools.

To make an in-person or phone appointment, call 307-347-2456.

The CFAP 2 Sign-Up has been reopened. If you missed out the first time, please contact us to receive your CFAP 2 payment.

If you have sold or delivered your wool, please drop the receipt by the office as the current rate for ungraded wool is $0.40/lb. If you have not sold or lost your ownership of your wool yet and have not completed paperwork at the office, please stop by, email or call.
and we’ll get you signed up for the Wool Loan Deficiency Payment (LDP) program.

If you have made any changes to your operation, please contact the office as soon as possible to allow us to keep your records up to date. Relevant changes might include adding or deleting members to a LLC, Corp, Trust, changing email addresses, contact information, or addresses and/or renting or buying different property. When you keep us informed of changes, then we can keep you updated on program information.

If you lose livestock to an eligible weather event, please remember that documentation is key for a successful application. Call the office if you need guidance on what documentation is required for the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP).

Best wishes to everyone,

Lisa Bower

CED

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**USDA Offers Disaster Assistance for Producers Facing Inclement Weather**

Severe weather events create significant challenges and often result in catastrophic loss for agricultural producers.

Despite every attempt to mitigate risk, your operation may suffer losses. USDA offers several programs to help with recovery.

**Risk Management**

For producers who have risk protection through [Federal Crop Insurance](https://www.fsa.usda.gov/insurance) or the [Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program](https://www.fsa.usda.gov/nicd) (NAP), we want to remind you to report crop damage to your crop insurance agent or the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office.

If you have crop insurance, contact your agency within 72 hours of discovering damage and be sure to follow up in writing within 15 days. If you have NAP coverage, file a Notice of Loss (also called Form CCC-576) within 15 days of loss becoming apparent, except for hand-harvested crops, which should be reported within 72 hours.

**Disaster Assistance**
USDA also offers disaster assistance programs, which is especially important to livestock, fruit and vegetable, specialty and perennial crop producers who have fewer risk management options.

First, the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybee and Farm-raised Fish Program (ELAP) reimburses producers for a portion of the value of livestock, poultry and other animals that died as a result of a qualifying natural disaster event or for loss of grazing acres, feed and forage. And, the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) provides assistance to producers of grazed forage crop acres that have suffered crop loss due to a qualifying drought. Livestock producers suffering the impacts of drought can also request Emergency Haying and Grazing on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres.

Next, the Tree Assistance Program (TAP) provides cost share assistance to rehabilitate and replant tree, vines or shrubs loss experienced by orchards and nurseries. This complements NAP or crop insurance coverage, which cover the crop but not the plants or trees in all cases.

For LIP and ELAP, you will need to file a Notice of Loss for livestock and grazing or feed losses within 30 days and honeybee losses within 15 days. For TAP, you will need to file a program application within 90 days.

**Documentation**

It’s critical to keep accurate records to document all losses following this devastating cold weather event. Livestock producers are advised to document beginning livestock numbers by taking time and date-stamped video or pictures prior to after the loss.

Other common documentation options include:

- Purchase records
- Production records
- Vaccination records
- Bank or other loan documents
- Third-party certification

**Other Programs**

The Emergency Conservation Program and Emergency Forest Restoration Program can assist landowners and forest stewards with financial and technical assistance to restore damaged farmland or forests.

Additionally, FSA offers a variety of loans available including emergency loans that are triggered by disaster declarations and operating loans that can assist producers with credit needs. You can use these loans to replace essential property, purchase inputs like livestock, equipment, feed and seed, or refinance farm-related debts, and other needs.

Meanwhile, USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides financial resources through its Environmental Quality Incentives Program to help with immediate needs and long-term support to help recover from natural disasters and conserve water resources. Assistance may also be available for emergency animal mortality disposal from natural disasters and other causes.

**Additional Resources**
Additional details – including payment calculations – can be found on our NAP, ELAP, LIP, and TAP fact sheets. On farmers.gov, the Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool, Disaster-at-a-Glance fact sheet, and Farm Loan Discovery Tool can help you determine program or loan options.

While we never want to have to implement disaster programs, we are here to help. To file a Notice of Loss or to ask questions about available programs, contact your local USDA Service Center. All USDA Service Centers are open for business, including those that restrict in-person visits or require appointments because of the pandemic.

FSA is Accepting CRP Continuous Enrollment Offers

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) is accepting offers for specific conservation practices under the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Continuous Signup.

In exchange for a yearly rental payment, farmers enrolled in the program agree to remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production and to plant species that will improve environmental health and quality. The program's long-term goal is to re-establish valuable land cover to improve water quality, prevent soil erosion, and reduce loss of wildlife habitat. Contracts for land enrolled in CRP are 10-15 years in length.

Under continuous CRP signup, environmentally sensitive land devoted to certain conservation practices can be enrolled in CRP at any time. Offers for continuous enrollment are not subject to competitive bidding during specific periods. Instead they are automatically accepted provided the land and producer meet certain eligibility requirements and the enrollment levels do not exceed the statutory cap.

For more information, including a list of acceptable practices, contact your Washakie-Hot Springs County USDA Service Center at 307-347-2456 ext. 2 or visit fsa.usda.gov/crp.

Applying for FSA Direct Loans

FSA offers direct farm ownership and direct farm operating loans to producers who want to establish, maintain, or strengthen their farm or ranch. Direct loans are processed, approved and serviced by FSA loan officers.

Direct farm operating loans can be used to purchase livestock and feed, farm equipment, fuel, farm chemicals, insurance, and other costs including family living expenses. Operating loans can also be used to finance minor improvements or repairs to buildings and to refinance some farm-related debts, excluding real estate.

Direct farm ownership loans can be used to purchase farmland, enlarge an existing farm, construct and repair buildings, and to make farm improvements.

The maximum loan amount for direct farm ownership loans is $600,000 and the maximum loan amount for direct operating loans is $400,000 and a down payment is not required. Repayment terms vary depending on the type of loan, collateral and the producer's ability to repay the loan. Operating loans are normally repaid within seven years and farm ownership loans are not to exceed 40 years.
Please contact your local FSA office for more information or to apply for a direct farm ownership or operating loan.

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in this meeting should contact Lisa Bower at 307-347-2456 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).