Niobrara County Notes

Greetings Niobrara County Farmers and Ranchers!

March 22 is National Ag Day, a time for us to thank farmers and ranchers for feeding, sheltering and powering our nation. Our staff work one-on-one with producers to conserve natural resources, grow and improve their operations, and manage risk. This year’s National Ag Day theme is “Growing a Climate for Tomorrow.” We know from firsthand experience – farmers and ranchers are doing this, and have been for decades. On National Ag Day, and every day, we thank farmers and ranchers for food, fiber, and fuel – and our future.

The deadline to obtain coverage on spring seeded crops is April 1, 2022. NAP coverage is intended for crops that aren’t covered by Federal Crop Insurance. Please be sure to check with the FSA office to see if a particular crop you are interested in covering is eligible for NAP or FCIC.

A Grassland CRP Signup begins April 4, 2022, and runs through May 13, 2022. For more information about the Conservation Reserve Program and the signup process, please contact the Niobrara County FSA Office or visit fsa.usda.gov/crp for more information.

Again, another reminder about anyone who might endure livestock losses this winter. Please be sure to document the weather conditions responsible for your losses, document the losses themselves, and always remember to call the office to notify us you’ve lost livestock due to inclement weather. Please don’t wait until you’ve had multiple losses due to multiple events to notify the office. As for documentation, your personal records in a diary or calving book, along with pictures can go a long way in supporting an application.

Please keep in mind that FSA as a whole has been under immense workload for several years – from limited office access, to pandemic assistance, to disaster programs, to everyday workload. Our office makes every effort to notify producers of programs and approaching deadlines via paper newsletters, electronic bulletins, and postcard reminders and information is always available via the USDA Farm Service Agency page. We ask that producers take care to follow up when reminders are sent to them, and to take note of upcoming deadlines when they are publicized so that deadlines aren’t missed. Please also remember that it’s the producer’s responsibility to notify the office of any changes to your operation – such as buying or selling land, acquiring or losing a lease, changes in how you operate, etc.

Please help reduce the burden on FSA staff by making an appointment prior to visiting the office, so that you can be prepared for your visit and we can be prepared for you as well. Thank you!

As we enter the spring season, we hope everyone has a successful calving and lambing season, while we also hope that we have some moisture headed our way going into the 2022 growing season!

-Niobrara County FSA Staff
Please note the following important dates and deadlines:

April 1, 2022 – Deadline to purchase 2022 NAP coverage on spring seeded crops

May 13, 2022 – Deadline to submit a Grassland CRP offer

May 30, 2022 - OFFICE CLOSED – Memorial Day Holiday

July 15, 2022 – Acreage reporting deadline for perennial and spring seeded crops

Within 15 days of noticing crop loss – File NAP Notice of Loss

Within 30 days of noticing livestock, pasture, or feed loss – File LIP/ELAP Notice of Loss

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**Grassland CRP Signup**

The Grassland Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is part of the CRP program, a federally funded voluntary program that contracts with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive agricultural land is not farmed or railed, but instead used for conservation benefits. FSA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. Contract duration is 10 or 15 years.

Grassland CRP helps landowners and operators protect grassland, including rangeland, and pastureland, and certain other lands, while maintaining the areas as grazing lands.

The program emphasizes support for grazing operations, plant and animal biodiversity, and grassland and land containing shrubs and forbs under the greatest threat of conversion. Grassland CRP is reauthorized by the 2018 Farm Bill.

The Grassland CRP signup runs from **April 4, 2022 to May 13, 2022**.

More information will be available once the Grassland CRP signup opens.

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**USDA Reminds Producers to File Crop Acreage Reports**

Agricultural producers who have not yet completed their [crop acreage reports](#) after spring planting should make an appointment with the Niobrara County Farm Service Agency (FSA) before the applicable deadline.

An acreage report documents a crop grown on a farm or ranch and its intended uses. Filing an accurate and timely acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planted acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits.

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for Niobrara County:

**July 15, 2022** **All spring seeded and perennial crops, including grass**

Contact the Niobrara County FSA office to set up an appointment.

To file a crop acreage report, you will need to provide:

- Crop and crop type or variety.
- Intended use of the crop.
- Number of acres of the crop.
- Map with approximate boundaries for the crop.
- Planting date(s).
- Planting pattern, when applicable.
• Producer shares.
• Irrigation practice(s).
• Acreage prevented from planting, when applicable.
• Other information as required.

Acreage Reporting Details

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.

More Information

For questions, please contact the Niobrara County FSA office at 307-334-2953, Ext. 2.

Farmers.gov Feature Helps Producers Find Farm Loans that Fit Their Operation

Farmers and ranchers can use the Farm Loan Discovery Tool on farmers.gov to find information on USDA farm loans that may best fit their operations.

USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers a variety of loan options to help farmers finance their operations. From buying land to financing the purchase of equipment, FSA loans can help.

USDA conducted field research in eight states, gathering input from farmers and FSA farm loan staff to better understand their needs and challenges.

How the Tool Works

Farmers who are looking for financing options to operate a farm or buy land can answer a few simple questions about what they are looking to fund and how much money they need to borrow. After submitting their answers, farmers will receive information on farm loans that best fit their specific needs. The loan application and additional resources also will be provided.

Farmers can download application quick guides that outline what to expect from preparing an application to receiving a loan decision. There are four guides that cover loans to individuals, entities, and youth, as well as information on microloans. The guides include general eligibility requirements and a list of required forms and documentation for each type of loan. These guides can help farmers prepare before their first USDA service center visit with a loan officer.

Farmers can access the Farm Loan Discovery Tool by visiting farmers.gov/fund and clicking the “Start” button. Follow the prompts and answer five simple questions to receive loan information that is applicable to your
agricultural operation. The tool is built to run on any modern browser like Chrome, Edge, Firefox, or the Safari browser, and is fully functional on mobile devices. It does not work in Internet Explorer.