Greetings Platte County Farmers and Ranchers!

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 Platte County FSA Office or visit fsa.usda.gov/crp for more information.

Again, another reminder about anyone who might endure livestock losses this year. 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 a loss 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!

- Platte County FSA Staff
Agricultural producers who have not yet completed their crop acreage reports after spring planting should make an appointment with the Platte 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 Platte County:

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

Contact the Platte County FSA office to set up an in-person or phone 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.
- Planting date(s).
- Producer shares.
- Irrigation practice(s).

The following exceptions apply to acreage reporting dates:

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.

For questions, please contact the Platte County FSA office at 307-334-2953, Ext. 2.
This is likely no surprise to you, but drought persists across the western U.S. and is intensifying in some areas. No geographic area is immune to the potential of drought at any given time. The U.S. Drought Monitor provides a weekly drought assessment, and it plays an important role in USDA programs that help farmers and ranchers recover from drought.

Fact #1 - Numerous agencies use the Drought Monitor to inform drought-related decisions.

The map identifies areas of drought and labels them by intensity on a weekly basis. It categorizes the entire country as being in one of six levels of drought. The first two, None and Abnormally Dry (D0), are not considered to be drought. The next four describe increasing levels of drought: Moderate (D1), Severe (D2), Extreme (D3) and Exceptional (D4).

While many entities consult the Drought Monitor for drought information, drought declarations are made by federal, state and local agencies that may or may not use the Drought Monitor to inform their decisions. Some of the ways USDA uses it to determine a producer’s eligibility for certain drought assistance programs, like the Livestock Forage Disaster Program and Emergency Haying or Grazing on Conservation Reserve Program acres and to “fast-track” Secretarial drought disaster designations.

Fact #2 - U.S. Drought Monitor is made with more than precipitation data.

When you think about drought, you probably think about water, or the lack of it. Precipitation plays a major role in the creation of the Drought Monitor, but the map’s author considers numerous indicators, including drought impacts and local insight from over 450 expert observers around the country. Authors use several dozen indicators to assess drought, including precipitation, streamflow, reservoir levels, temperature and evaporative demand, soil moisture and vegetation health. Because the drought monitor depicts both short and long-term drought conditions, the authors must look at data for multiple timeframes. The final map produced each week represents a summary of the story being told by all the pieces of data. To help tell that story, authors don’t just look at data. They converse over the course of the map-making week with experts across the country and draw information about drought impacts from media reports and private citizens.

Fact #3 - A real person, using real data, updates the map.

Each week’s map author, not a computer, processes and analyzes data to update the drought monitor. The map authors are trained climatologists or meteorologists from the National Drought Mitigation Center at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (the academic partner and website host of the Drought Monitor), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and USDA. The author’s job is to do what a computer can’t – use their expertise to reconcile the sometimes-conflicting stories told by each stream of data into a single assessment.

Fact #4 - The Drought Monitor provides a current snapshot, not a forecast.

The Drought Monitor is a “snapshot” of conditions observed during the most recent week and builds off the previous week’s map. The map is released on Thursdays and depicts conditions based on data for the week that ended the preceding Tuesday. Rain that falls on the Wednesday just before the USDM’s release won’t be reflected until the next map is published. This provides a consistent, week-to-week product and gives the author a window to assess the data and come up with a final map.

Fact #5 – Your input can be part of the drought-monitoring process.

State climatologists and other trained observers in the drought monitoring network relay on-the-ground information from numerous sources to the US Drought monitor author each week. That can include information that you contribute.

The Drought Monitor serves as a trigger for multiple forms of federal disaster relief for agricultural producers, and sometimes producers contact the author to suggest that drought conditions in their area are worse than what the latest drought monitor shows. When the author gets a call like that, it prompts them to look closely at all available data for that area, to see whether measurements of precipitation, temperature, soil moisture and other indicators corroborate producer-submitted reports. This is the process that authors follow whether they receive one report or one hundred reports, although reports from more points may help state officials and others know where to look for impacts.

There are multiple ways to contribute your observations:

Talk to your state climatologist - Find the current list at the American Association of State Climatologists website.

Email - Emails sent to droughtmonitor@unl.edu inform the USDM authors.

Become a CoCoRaHS observer - Submit drought reports along with daily precipitation observations to the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail & Snow Network.

Submit Condition Monitoring Observer Reports (CMOR) - go.unl.edu/CMOR.

For more information, read our Ask the Expert blog with a NDMC climatologist or visit farmers.gov/protection-recovery.
The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) announces that farmers and ranchers in Wyoming now can receive notifications thru email. To receive GovDelivery email notifications, subscribe online at www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe or contact the Platte County FSA office for subscription assistance. Producers can establish subscriber preferences by choosing to receive federal farm program information by topic, by state or by county. Producers can select as many subscriber options as they want, which allows producers who farm in multiple counties or across state lines to receive updates from each county in which they operate or have an interest.