Spring is quickly approaching and many of us are welcoming our newborns as the lambing and calving season is already underway. We know this season can make for some long days and nights, so we would like to open this newsletter with a word of thanks and gratitude for our agriculture producers, for your unwavering dedication to providing affordable, safe, and abundant food, fiber, and fuel to the nation and the world during what is quickly becoming a year of uncertainty. For all your hard work, we thank you.

Instead of focusing on specific programs for this issue of the newsletter, we wanted to include important information that will impact all FSA programs as well as resources to help you throughout the year.

Please do not hesitate to call the office if you have any questions or concerns. State safe and take care of yourselves and your families.

Regards,

Sherie Hilgenkamp
Acting County Executive Director

GENERAL INFORMATION

PRODUCER SERVICE CHANGES
Current workload resulting from disaster programs and Farm Bill mandated programs, combined with fluctuating COVID-19 restrictions and limited staff, have changed the way we can communicate with producers. Historically, our staff have taken a proactive approach to promoting programs by reaching out to many program participants individually via phone or e-mail to discuss eligibility criteria, enrollment deadlines, and other specific details. Moving forward in 2022, we ask that producers to assume this responsibility. Information on FSA programs is available through our monthly electronic bulletin (GovDelivery), a quarterly printed newsletter, the USDA FSA website, or a phone call to the office. In addition, many agricultural publications are an excellent source of timely information on FSA programs, as are your neighbors and agricultural service providers.

As a service to our producers, please note the attached annual Customer Calendar. Feel free to keep this calendar in a place to remind you of FSA programs and important deadlines.

KEEP YOUR FARM RECORDS UPDATED
FSA and NRCS program participants are required to promptly report changes in their farming operation to the County Committee in writing. This includes any changes of address, zip code, phone number, email address, an incorrect name or business name, or changes to your direct deposit bank account on file with our office. Changes made to your operation in which you reorganize to form a Trust, LLC or other legal entity should be reported or land changes, such as the addition of a farm by lease or purchase or removal of a farm due to lease changes or sales.

None of these changes are automatically reported to our office. We depend on you to keep your records accurate.

LEASES
Lease agreements show FSA and NRCS you have control of the property. If a written lease is unavailable, you can complete an Annual Lease Agreement Certification Statement on form CCC-855. Both a written lease and the CCC-855 should contain details of type of lease (cash vs. AUM), responsibilities of both parties, duration of the lease, and any other pertinent information to assist FSA and NRCS in assessing risk in the land.

The name of the individual or legal entity on the lease and/or CCC-855 must be the same as the producer requesting assistance. If a sublease is used, the original lease or permit must be provided to the office and allow for subleasing.

The producer must ensure that current leases and documentation are timely filed with the FSA office.

IMPACT OF LAND CHANGES
When changes in farm ownership or operation take place, changes in land ownership, or changes in leases, a farm reconstitution may be necessary. The reconstitution is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. A reconstitution is considered to be requested when all of the required signatures on applicable forms and all other documentation, such as proof of ownership, is submitted.

To be effective for the current Fiscal Year (FY), farm combinations and farm divisions must be requested by August 1 of the FY for which benefits are being requested. For any changes occurring after the acreage reporting deadlines and/or the reconstitution request deadline, land changes must be reported in writing no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease.

ACREAGE REPORTING
Remember - acreage reporting is your responsibility. Timely reporting all crops including rangeland on a ranch and its intended use, as well as failed acreage and prevented planted acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits. Failure to file an acreage report by the crop acreage reporting deadline may cause ineligibility for future program benefits and/or the assessment of late file fees. FSA will not accept acreage reports provided more than a year after the acreage reporting deadline.

Producers are encouraged to file their acreage reports as soon as planting is completed.

See farmers.gov or contact our office for additional details or questions.
HOW CAN WE HELP
WAYS WE HELP OUR FARMERS AND RANCHERS

FUND — Opportunities to access capital to fund your operation and manage financial risk through loans, cost-share programs, and initiatives such as with Farm Operating Loans, Farm Storage Facility Loans, Farm Programs and Conservation Programs.

CONSERVE — Opportunities to implement conservation on your operation through long-term strategies, technical assistance, to recover from damage caused by natural disasters, or for emergency water conservation measures in severe droughts.

MANAGE — Opportunities to lessen risk on your operation to protect your operation’s revenue from market condition changes, protections from crop losses due to eligible conditions, and manage financial risk through diversification, marketing or natural resource conservation practices.

RECOVER — Opportunities to help your operation recover from a natural disaster.

HOW TO CONTACT US
USDA WESTON COUNTY SERVICE CENTER

FSA Office
1225 Washington Blvd., Ste. 2
Newcastle, WY 82701

Phone: 307-746-2701 ext. 2
Fax: 855-415-3437

Acting County Executive Director:
Sherie Hilgenkamp
sherie.hilgenkamp@usda.gov

Program Technician:
Jennifer Jones
jennifer.jones4@usda.gov

Farm Loan Manager:
Rob Weppner
rob.weppner@usda.gov

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

Next County Committee Meeting:
TBD

NRCS Office
1225 Washington Blvd., Ste. 3
Newcastle, WY 82701

Phone: 307-746-3264
Fax: 866-574-1366

District Conservationist:
Paul Eitel
paul.eitel@usda.gov

Rangeland Management Specialist:
Tanner Jenks
tanner.jenks@usda.gov

NWTF Co-Operative Forester:
Austin Sommerville
austin.sommerville@usda.gov

WCNRD Manager:
Caleb Carter
ccarter.wcnrd@gmail.com

WCNRD Board:
David Tysdal, Chairman, Rural Supervisor
Tucker Hamilton, Vice Chairman, Rural Supervisor
Emily Hartinger, Secretary/Treasurer, Rural Supervisor
Gene Norman, Urban Supervisor
Tom Streeter, At-Large Supervisor

WCNRD Board Meetings:
Held the second Tuesday of the month at 3pm. The meetings will be held at the Pinnacle Bank in Newcastle until further notice

SAVE TIME
MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH NRCS AND FSA OFFICES

Producers are encouraged to schedule an appointment to ensure maximum use of their time. to make sure FSA staff is available to tend to their important business needs, or to discuss any records or documentation that might be needed during your appointment. Contact FSA at (307) 746-2701 ext. 2 or NRCS at 307-746-3264.
Various eligibility requirements are required for both Farm Programs and Farm Loans
Contact your local office for more information or to make an appointment

Farm Loans—No Application Deadlines
• Beginning Farmer & Rancher Loans
• Emergency Loans (Time Sensitive)
• Farm Operating Loans (Direct and Guaranteed)
• Farm Ownership Loans (Direct and Guaranteed)
• Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL)
• EZ Guarantee and Microloans
• SDA (Women/Minority) Farmer & Rancher Loans
• Youth Loans

Farm Programs
• Agricultural Risk & Price Loss Coverage (ARC/PLC)
• Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP)
• Commodity Marketing Assistance Loans (MAL)
• Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
• Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC)
• Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP)
• Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)
• Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP)
• Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)
• Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP)
• Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)
• Wildfires and Hurricanes Indemnity Program (WHIP)

Farm Program Deadlines
(dates listed below are subject to change)

MAL/LDP Availability (from harvest to the below deadline):
• January 31 - Wool, Mohair and LDP only for Unshorn Pelt
• March 31 - Barley, Honey, Oats, Wheat, and others
• May 31 - Corn, Dry peas, Grain sorghum, and others

NAP:
Application for Coverage Deadlines
• December 1 – All perennial grasses, fall seeded crops, mixed forage, and honey
• March 15 – Hemp
• April 1 – All spring seeded crops

For Hay/Crop Losses
• Report losses within 15 days of crop loss. This includes:
  - If hay cannot be harvested or is partially harvested, contact the office to arrange for appraisal of loss.
  - If hay is harvested at less than normal production expectations, contact the office to arrange for appraisal of loss or official bale count.

For Grazing Losses
• Grazing losses are independently assessed.
• Report losses only if other option(s) is used.

Application for Payment of ALL Losses
• Submit an Application for Payment by November 15 (varies by crop)

Report Production
• July 15 – Final date to report production for the preceding crop year

Acreage Reports:
• July 15 – Perennial grasses, spring-seeded crops, mixed forage, CRP, Hemp, and other crops
• November 15 – Apiculture (bees), fall-seeded crops

CRP:
• CRP General Sign-Up: December 9 through February 28
• Continuous CRP Sign-Up: August 21
• CRP Grasslands: March 16 to May 15

ARC/PLC:
• October of each contract year after 2020 – Election and Enrollment begins for the applicable year
• March 15 of each contract year after 2020 – Election and Enrollment ends for the applicable year

Days USDA Offices Are Closed
Jan. 1 - New Year’s Day Holiday
Jan. 17 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Feb. 21 - President’s Birthday
May 30 - Memorial Day
July 4 - Independence Day
Sept. 5 - Labor Day
Oct. 10 - Columbus Day
Nov. 11 - Veterans Day
Nov. 24 - Thanksgiving Day
Dec. 25 - Christmas Holiday

Important Links
Farmers.gov - https://www.farmers.gov/
FSA FencePost - http://fsa.blogs.govdelivery.com/

Questions?
Contact your local FSA office.
A directory of USDA Service Centers can be found online at offices.usda.gov

GovDelivery Email & SMS Text Updates
Contact your local FSA office ask how you can receive important FSA updates and reminders by email and SMS text subscriptions.

Have you moved?
Changed bank accounts?
Contact your local FSA to update your records.

Stay Connected with USDA:

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UPCOMING DEADLINES & IMPORTANT DATES

- April 1, 2022: FSA deadline to signup for 2022 NAP coverage for spring planted crops
- April 4, 2022: FSA opens signup period for Grassland Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contract offers, ends May 15.
- April 13, 2022: FSA deadline to timely submit a 2021 NAP application for payment for grazing losses
- May 30, 2022: Office closed for federal holiday

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency 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. To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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