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## From Darla's desk...

Greeting Park County farmers and ranchers!!!

**Attention producers in the Meeteetse area...** Due to a resignation on the Park County Committee, we will be holding a Makeup Election to fill the position. If you are interested in being on the County Committee, you must fill out a nomination form prior to December 4, 2023. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding the position.



Please remember if you want 2024 NAP coverage for fall-seeded and perennial crops, including grass, the deadline for coverage is December 1, 2023.

With winter approaching, please remember to take pictures of any dead animals and keep good records. The LIP program is one that requires extensive records and proof of death.

Sheep producers, the wool rate is currently at \$0.40 per pound. The deadline to submit an application for a Loan Deficiency Payment (LDP) on your 2023 wool is January 31, 2024. Please contact the office if you have questions or need more information.

Important Dates to Remember:

November 23 – Office closed for Thanksgiving

December 1 – NAP Application Deadline

December 4 – Deadline for ballots to be returned to County office

December 13 – COC Election Day

December 25 – Office closed for Christmas

January 1 – Office closed for New Year's

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## FSA Encourages Farmers and Ranchers to Vote in County Committee Elections



The 2023 Farm Service Agency County Committee Elections will begin on November 6, 2023, when ballots were mailed to eligible voters. The deadline to return ballots to local FSA offices, or to be postmarked, is December 4, 2023.

County committee members are an important component of the operations of FSA and provide a link between the agricultural community and USDA. Farmers and ranchers elected to county committees help deliver FSA programs at the local level, applying their knowledge and judgment to make decisions on commodity price support programs; conservation programs; incentive, indemnity and disaster programs for some commodities; emergency programs and eligibility. FSA committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws.

To be an eligible voter, farmers and ranchers must:

- Be of legal voting age or, if not of legal voting age, supervise and conduct the farming operation of an entire farm.
- Have an interest in a farm or ranch as either:
  - An individual who meets one or more of the following:
    - Is eligible and capable to vote in one's own right.
    - Is a partner of a general partnership.
    - Is a member of a joint venture.
  - Participates or cooperates in any FSA program that is provided by law. A cooperating producer is someone who has provided information to FSA about their farming or ranching operation(s) but may not have applied or received program benefits.

Eligible voters in Local Administrative Area #2, who do not receive a ballot can obtain one from their local FSA county office. Customers can identify which LAA they or their farming operation is in by using our new GIS locator tool available at [fsa.usda.gov/elections](https://fsa.usda.gov/elections).

Newly elected committee members will take office January 1, 2024.

The candidate in this year's election is:

Adam George is nominated in LAA #2 in Park County, Wyoming, to serve as a County Committee member for a 3-year term. Adam resides between Cody and Powell on his family's dairy operation, where they produce corn and alfalfa. After college, Adam returned to the dairy and has been there for 16 years.

More information on county committees can be found at [fsa.usda.gov/elections](https://fsa.usda.gov/elections) or by contacting the Park County FSA office.

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## NAP Coverage for 2024

The Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) helps you manage risk through coverage for both crop losses and crop planting that was prevented due to natural disasters. The eligible or "noninsured" crops include agricultural commodities not covered by federal crop insurance.

*You must be enrolled in the program and have purchased coverage for the eligible crop in the crop year in which the loss incurred to receive program benefits following a qualifying natural disaster.*



NAP basic coverage is available at 55% of the average market price for crop losses that exceed 50% of expected production. Buy-up coverage is available in some cases. NAP offers higher levels of coverage, ranging from 50% to 65% of expected production in 5% increments, at 100% of the average market price. Producers of organic crops and crops marketed directly to consumers also may exercise the "buy-up"

option to obtain NAP coverage of 100% of the average market price at coverage levels ranging between 50% and 65% of expected production. Buy-up coverage is not available for crops intended for grazing.

For all coverage levels, the NAP service fee is the lesser of \$325 per crop or \$825 per producer per county, not to exceed a total of \$1,950 for a producer with farming interests in multiple counties. Premiums apply for buy-up coverage.

If a producer has a Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, Beginning and Veteran Farmer or Rancher Certification (form CCC-860) on file with FSA, it may serve as an application for basic coverage for all eligible crops beginning with crop year 2022. These producers will have all NAP-related service fees for basic coverage waived. These producers may also receive a 50% premium reduction if higher levels of coverage are elected on form CCC-471, prior to the application closing date for each crop.

To learn more about NAP visit [fsa.usda.gov/nap](https://fsa.usda.gov/nap) or contact your local USDA Service Center at (307) 754-9411.

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## Producers in Wyoming Encouraged to Apply for Conservation Assistance to Improve Irrigation, Conserve Water

Agricultural producers in Wyoming interested in conservation practices to manage soil moisture, improve irrigation efficiency, or otherwise conserve ground and surface water resources are encouraged to apply for assistance through U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) conservation programs. Wyoming has 3 priority areas for the [WaterSMART Initiative \(WSI\)](#), a joint effort between Bureau of Reclamation and USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to coordinate investments in the western US to help farmers conserve water and become more resilient to drought impacts.

"The WaterSMART Initiative provides additional funding for producers looking for help with practices to improve irrigation and conserve water," said Jackie Byam, NRCS State Conservationist in Wyoming. "We encourage producers in Wyoming to contact their local office to learn about the WaterSMART Initiative as well as our many other programs."

NRCS and the Bureau of Reclamation have identified nine new priority areas for fiscal year 2024. In total, \$29.7 million in EQIP funding is available through the initiative in [45 priority areas in 16 states](#) including Wyoming

Priority areas in Wyoming include: Heart Mountain Irrigation District, Lovell Irrigation District, and Hanover Irrigation District Area.

The collaboration between NRCS and the Bureau of Reclamation is a priority of the [National Drought Resilience Partnership](#). NRCS makes funding for WSI available to producers in priority areas in the American West through its Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). The funding helps producers apply conservation practices to complement projects funded by the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART programs. Reclamation's WaterSMART investments help states, tribes, and local entities plan for and implement projects that increase water supply by providing funds to modernize existing infrastructure and otherwise build drought resilience.

Common practices to save water in irrigated agriculture include:

- Irrigation water management to build drought resilience;
- Irrigation pipeline to replace open canals;
- Sprinkler irrigation systems, low pressure types reduce water demand;
- Pumps, higher efficiency types reduce water demand;

To learn more about NRCS programs, producers can contact their local [USDA Service Center](#). Producers can also apply for NRCS programs, manage conservation plans and contracts, and view and print conservation maps by [logging into their farmers.gov account](#). If you don't have an account, [sign up today](#).

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under the Biden-Harris administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit [usda.gov](#).

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## Reminders for FSA Direct and Guaranteed Borrowers with Real Estate Security

Farm loan borrowers who have pledged real estate as security for their Farm Service Agency (FSA) direct or guaranteed loans are responsible for maintaining loan collateral. Borrowers must obtain prior consent or approval from FSA or the guaranteed lender for any transaction that affects real estate security. These transactions include, but are not limited to:



- Leases of any kind
- Easements of any kind
- Subordinations
- Partial releases
- Sales

Failure to meet or follow the requirements in the loan agreement, promissory note, and other security instruments could lead to nonmonetary default which could jeopardize your current and future loans.

It is critical that borrowers keep an open line of communication with their FSA loan staff or guaranteed lender when it comes to changes in their operation. For more information on borrower responsibilities, read [Your FSA Farm Loan Compass](#).



### Park County USDA Service Center

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Soil Conservationist  
Dicksie Hildebrand

Soil Conservation Technician  
Randy Gibson

Engineer  
Leslie Hackworth

Soil Conservationist  
Justin Thomas

**County Committee**

Emily Karst - Chairperson  
Lynn George - Vice-Chairperson  
Vacant - Regular Member

**Next County Committee Meeting: December 13, 2023**