



Farm Service Agency

April 2009

Cochise County Newsletter

Cochise County USDA Service Center

Cochise County FSA
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Hours of Operation
Monday – Friday
8:00 am – 4:30 pm

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ACRE/DCP SIGN UP DEADLINE EXTENDED

USDA has extended the sign-up deadline from June 1, 2009 to **August 14, 2009** for both the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) and the forthcoming Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program. This action extends the sign-up deadline by 10 weeks to give producers ample time to decide whether to participate in ACRE or remain in DCP.

Sign up for ACRE is expected to start in late April, with an official sign-up announcement to be made in the coming weeks. Producers can elect ACRE at their FSA county office after the sign-up period commences. The original June 1 deadline may have forced producers to rush their decision, which is why this extension gives producers more time to make an informed decision about staying with DCP for 2009 or participating in ACRE for crop year 2009 and beyond through 2012.

More information on the ACRE program is available in this newsletter.

ACREAGE REPORTING

DID YOU PLANT WHEAT, BARLEY AND/OR OATS?

Acreage reporting time will soon be here. Filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs.

Failed acreage must be reported within 15 calendar days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date.

Acreage reports are required for many Farm Service Agency programs. For crops other than NAP (Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program) crops, acreage reports are to be certified by the **May 15, 2009** deadline on small grains (wheat, barley, and/or oats) and a **July 15, 2009** deadline on all other crops, including fallow land.

To schedule an appointment or for questions regarding certifying your cropland, please contact your local FSA office.



THE ACRE PROGRAM

The Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) is a new program authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill that begins in crop year 2009. Through ACRE, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers producers an alternative to Direct and Counter-cyclical (DCP) payments. The ACRE alternative provides eligible producers a state-level revenue guarantee, based on the 5-year state Olympic average yield and the 2-year national average price.

ACRE payments are made when both state-level and farm-level triggers are met. By participating in ACRE, producers elect to forgo counter-cyclical payments. Producers also elect to receive a 20-percent reduction in direct payments and a 30-percent reduction in loan rates. ACRE sign-up dates will be announced soon so a producer can choose to participate in ACRE, or stay with DCP.

A decision to elect ACRE binds the producer to the program through the 2012 crop year, the last crop year covered by the 2008 Farm Bill. For more details, contact your local FSA office.



NAP PRODUCTION REPORTING

Production records for individual crops need to be filed with our office to establish an approved NAP yield. If this is the first year you participate in NAP, you can provide production and acreage information from prior years to establish your yield. If you participated in NAP in previous years, you must report you production and acreage on a yearly basis to keep your yield up-to-date. Records submitted must be reliable or verifiable. Records need to show crop disposition. We recommend producers submit 2009 production records as soon as harvest is complete. **All production records must be submitted by the subsequent crop year's final acreage reporting date.**

If 2008 production records have not been submitted to the county office, please do so as soon as possible.

DISASTER BUY-IN WAIVER EXTENTION

Producers who did not obtain crop insurance or Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for 2008 can pay a buy-in fee through May 18, 2009, to become eligible for 2008 disaster assistance programs authorized by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008.

Farmers have an additional opportunity to become eligible for several programs if they suffered 2008 agricultural losses due to natural disasters.

If you have not already taken the necessary steps to become eligible for the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE), Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP), and the Tree Assistance Program (TAP), you are required to complete the following steps by May 18, 2009:

1. Pay a \$100 "buy-in" fee per crop. The maximum fee is \$300 per county, per producer, not to exceed \$900 for multi-county producers.
2. In the case of each insurance crop, excluding grazing land, agree to obtain a policy or plan of insurance for the next insurance year for which crop insurance is available; coverage level should equal 70 percent or more of the yield at 100 percent of the price.
3. In the case of each non-insurable crop, agree to file the required paperwork and pay the applicable administrative NAP coverage fee by the applicable state application closing date for the next available year.

Those who choose to "buy-in" under this provision will be considered, for insured crops, to have obtained a policy or plan of insurance for the 2008 crop year at a level of coverage not to exceed 70 percent of the yield at 100 percent of the price. For non-insurable crops, producers will be considered to have a level of coverage equal to 70 percent of the yield. These levels of coverage will be used to calculate the 2008 SURE guarantee.

Producers who meet the definition of "Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource," or "Beginning Farmer or Rancher," are not required to pay the buy-in fee. The disaster buy-in waiver extension does NOT apply to the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP).

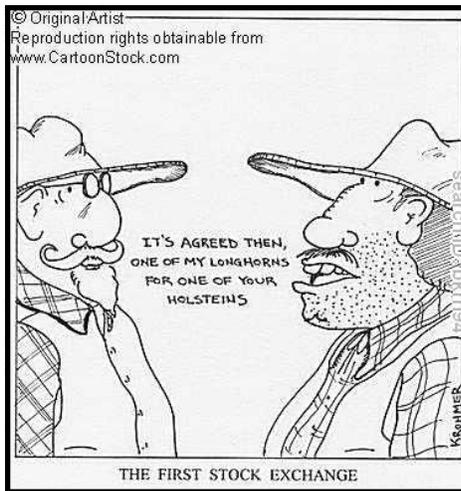
DIRECT & GUARANTEED LOANS

The Farm Service Agency is committed to providing family farmers with loans to meet their farm credit needs. If you are having trouble getting the credit you need for your farm, or regularly borrow from FSA, direct and guaranteed loans are available now.

Ask your lender about an FSA loan guarantee if you've had a setback and your lender is reluctant to extend or renew your loan.

Loan funds are available. However, producers are encouraged to apply early so that a loan can be processed and funded in a timely matter.

FSA employees will help you complete the necessary application and other forms, and help you understand what information is required, where to find it or who to contact to get it. To find out more about FSA loan programs, contact the county office staff.



TIMELY FILING OF LOSS

The CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report yield losses, failed acreage and prevented planting and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. Timely filing a Notice of Loss is required on **ALL CROPS INCLUDING GRASSES**. For losses on crops covered by the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and crop insurance, you must file a CCC-576 (notice of loss) in the FSA County Office within 15 calendar days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent. Since most of the state is suffering from drought, it might be time to get this done.

If filing for prevented planting, an acreage report and CCC-576 must be filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.

BEGINNING FARMERS & RANCHERS

FSA has a program to assist beginning farmers and ranchers to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- Does not own farm acreage in excess of 30 percent of the county's average size

Each member of an entity must meet the eligibility requirements. Loan approval is not guaranteed.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit www.fsa.usda.gov.



RURAL YOUTH LOANS

DO YOU NEED MONEY FOR YOUR
4-H OR FFA PROJECTS?



The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA) makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to establish and operate income producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be initiated, developed, and carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organization or with a vocational teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and operated with the assistance of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. Contact your local FSA office for more details.

ADDING PULSE CROPS TO BASE ACRES

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 provides that eligible pulse crop acres may be added as base acres. Pulse crops are defined as the following: dry peas, lentils, large chickpeas (Kabuli garbanzo beans), and small chickpeas (Desi garbanzo beans). The addition of pulse crop base acres is effective for the 2009 through 2012 crop years. For information on how to report your history to establish your pulse crop base acres, contact your local FSA office.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

May

- 15 Deadline to Certify 2009 Small Grain Crops (Wheat, Barley, and/or Oats)
- 18 Disaster "Buy-In" Waiver Extension Deadline
- 21 Cochise County Committee Meeting (Tentatively Scheduled)
- 25 Office Closed in Observance of Memorial Day

June

- 18 Cochise County Committee Meeting (Tentatively Scheduled)

July

- 3 Office Closed in Observance of Independence Day
- 15 Deadline to Certify 2009 Crops (Not including small grains)



Due to the heavy workload in the county office, it is recommended that appointments be set to avoid lengthy waits. To schedule an appointment, please call (520) 384-3588.

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Special accommodations will be made upon request for persons with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, please call Carol Case, CED at (520) 384-3588.