

Lewis & Clark County FSA
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County Committee

Carol Troy, Chairperson
 Gary Dobler, Vice-Chair
 John H Baucus, Member

FSA Office Personnel

Nina Fonk, Co. Executive Director
 Kathy Peters, Program Technician
 Lesley Egbert, Program Tech.
 Fred Smith, Farm Loan Manager

Agricultural Lending Opportunities

Questions regarding obtaining credit to start or enlarge a farming or ranching operation; financing agricultural operating expenses; or livestock and machinery purchases call: Fred Smith, (406) 676-2811



Dates to Remember:

- Aug. 2 – Sept. 30** – Managed Haying Period
- Aug. 2 – Sept. 30** – Summer/Fall Managed Grazing Period
- Aug. 14** – DCP, ACRE and Pulse Crops Base Deadline
- Aug. 14** – Crop Acreage Report Deadline
- Sept. 1** – NAP Application Closing Date for 2010 Value Loss Crops
- September 30** – Final Date to Purchase Crop Insurance for 2010 Winter Wheat, Alfalfa, or Alfalfa/Grass Mixtures
- Oct. 7 & 8** – Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Symposium



Lewis & Clark County FSA News
August 2009

Program for Livestock Death Losses

Signup for the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) began July 13th. If you had livestock losses due to adverse weather during calendar year 2008 or 2009, you may be eligible to receive benefits from the LIP program.

To Apply:

- A notice of loss must be filed on form FSA-914 according to the following table.
- Proof of death of livestock must be provided and may include, but is not limited to, veterinary records, tax records, private insurance documents, and loan documents.
- Documentation must provide sufficient data that identifies the kind/type weight range of the livestock and the number of livestock.
- A third party certification may be accepted only when the participant certifies in writing that no other form of proof of death is available and includes the number and physical location of livestock in inventory at the time the death occurred. Documentation must also be provided to support the number of livestock in the inventory at the time the deaths occurred. The third party providing the verification must be a reliable source and shall not be a relative associated with the operation or a hired individual.

The following table provides the final dates to file a notice of loss and/or application for payment for either 2008 or 2009 livestock losses:

Date of Livestock Death	Final Date to File a Notice of Loss	Final Date to Submit an Application for Payment
Calendar Year 2008	Sept. 13, 2009	Sept. 13, 2009
Jan. 1, 2009 to July 12, 2009	Sept. 13, 2009	Jan. 30, 2010
July 13, 2009 to Dec. 31, 2009	Within 30 days of death being apparent	Jan. 30, 2010

LIP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers that have incurred livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality on or after Jan. 1, 2008 and before Oct. 1, 2011 due to adverse weather, such as blizzards, extreme cold, extreme heat, floods, and wildfires. The Montana State FSA Committee has established the normal mortality rates for each livestock kind/type and weight range.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

DCP and ACRE Deadline August 14

The deadline for the 2009 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program (DCP) and Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) was extended to **August 14**.

Participants may request an advance direct payment at 22% of the final payment rate with the final direct payments to be issued in October. All signatures to a share of the base acres must be received in the county office on or before August 14.

ACRE is a new farm revenue based program that provides producers an alternative to the counter-cyclical payment under DCP. Participants in ACRE will receive a reduced direct payment of 80% determined on the farm's base acreage and marketing assistance loan rates are reduced by 30%. ACRE participants may request an advance direct payment at 22% with final direct payments to be issued in October. If the state and farm's actual revenue is less than the historical revenue for the crop, an ACRE payment may be made on the planted acreage of eligible commodities. National market year average prices and actual state and farm yields are used in determining whether an ACRE payment is triggered. Owners have until **August 14th** to submit a CCC-509-ACRE to the office.



Pulse Crop Deadline August 14

Producers with farms identified as having pulse crops planted during the 1998 through 2001 crop years will receive a letter notifying them of available options to add pulse crop bases and yields to their farm. Pulse crops are defined as dry peas, lentils, Desi garbanzo beans (small chickpeas), and Kabuli garbanzo beans (large chickpeas). Pulse crops may be eligible for counter-cyclical payments under DCP and are eligible commodities under the ACRE program. Counter-cyclical yields will be set at 75% of the county average unless growers elect to update the yield by using the farm's actual yields for the crop years 1998-2001. All owners on the farm must agree to the election no later than **August 14, 2009**.



Policy Change for Dry Peas

Producers of dry peas intended for forage for hay (FG), grazing (GZ), and green manure (GM) are now allowed to include acreage of those intended uses in determining pulse crop base history.

Producers with pulse crop history with the additional eligible intended uses are encouraged to make their election of pulse base acreage as soon as possible.; However, the farm must be enrolled in DCP or elected/enrolled in ACRE by September 30th to be eligible for either program.

Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Symposium

The 9th Annual Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Symposium will be held at the Eagles in Lewistown, on October 7 & 8.

A few of the highlights include a panel discussing Carbon Credit Options for Agriculture, Horse Processing Issues, Update on Montana's Brucellosis Status, Thoughts from Trent Loos, Agriculture Policy as we see it and Water Rights/Irrigation. Representatives from six of the USDA agencies will be present to provide a short presentation on new programs and issues production agriculture operators should be aware of.

Pre-registration information should be submitted by September 15, 2009. The cost of registration is \$60.00. A block of rooms has been reserved at the Yogo Inn.

For further information or a registration form, logon to the Montana FSA website <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt>, contact any USDA Service Center or by calling Heidi Brewer at 406/232-7905 ext. 122.

The Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Symposium is sponsored by the State Food and Agriculture Outreach Council, the MT Agri-women, Montana Cattlewomen, MT Farm Bureau Federation Women, and WIFE.

Changes to Payment Eligibility, Payment Limitation and Adjusted Gross Income Limit for CRP

The 2008 Farm Bill made specific changes to payment eligibility, payment limitation, and average AGI requirements for participants in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). These requirements are effective for new CRP contracts for 2009 and subsequent years:

- Annual payments are limited to \$50,000, both directly and indirectly, to a person or legal entity by direct attribution;
- Permitted entity rules no longer apply;
- The average AGI limitation is now a \$1 million average gross nonfarm income limitation.
- The payment eligibility requirements of “actively engaged in farming” and the cash rent tenant rule are no longer applicable for participation in CRP for contracts approved **after** September 30, 2008.



CRP Managed Haying & Grazing Ends September 30.

Managed Grazing on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres begins August 2 and ends September 30, 2009. All livestock must be removed by September 30.

Managed Haying on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres ends September 30, 2009. All bales must be removed by September 30th.



Report Crop Acres by August 14

Please contact the county office before August 14, 2009, if you would like to report your 2009 crop acres.

Failure to report timely and accurately may result in loss of USDA benefits.



Treasury Implementation Project

Beginning August 3, 2009, any FSA or Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) payments made by direct deposit will be transmitted to the Department of Treasury through Kansas City.

The Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 (DCIA) requires that all Federal payments be offset for delinquent Federal debt. All payments will be matched against debt referred to Treasury, including payments made by a Treasury check. Payments to assignees will be subject to the Treasury Offset Program (TOP) if the assignee has a delinquent Federal debt in TOP. If the TOP database finds a match for a taxpayer identification number and name, the payment will be offset for the delinquent debt. The Treasury Department will notify the payment recipient of any offsets taken for debts due other agencies.

Currently, the description on the payee's bank statement reads, “USDA_FSAKCMOCDSP”. After August 3, 2009, the description on the bank statement will read, “FSA TREAS 310” for all payments that are disbursed by Treasury.

If there are questions about a TOP offset, the payee may call the TOP Call Center at 1-800-304-3107 to obtain the contact information for the offsetting agency. The payee will then need to call the offsetting agency to determine the origination of the debt.



Important crop insurance deadlines in September for Alfalfa, Alfalfa/Grass Mixes, Winter Wheat and Value Loss Crops. Every crop must be covered by either a crop insurance policy or a NAP policy for any crop to be eligible for 2010 Disaster Programs.

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Important Dates to Remember

Aug. 14 – DCP & ACRE Signup Deadline
Aug. 14 – Crop Acreage Report Deadline
Sept. 1 – NAP Application Closing Date for 2010 Value Loss Crops
Sept. 30 – Crop Insurance Deadline for 2010 Alfalfa, Alfalfa/Grass Mixtures, and Winter Wheat
Oct. 7 & 8 – Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Symposium

Important Crop Insurance Deadline – Required for 2010 Disaster Eligibility

The deadline to purchase crop insurance coverage for fall seeded crops (winter wheat) or forage crops (alfalfa or alfalfa/grass) is September 30, 2009. The deadline to apply for NAP coverage for all NAP crops except value-loss and honey is March 15, 2010. The sales closing date for honey is December 1, 2010. The closing date for value loss crops is September 1, 2009.

In order to be **eligible** for assistance under the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) for crop losses, Tree Assistance Program (TAP) or the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, and Honey Bees Program (ELAP), you must obtain a plan of insurance for each insurable commodity and NAP coverage for each non-insurable commodity. Coverage must be provided on all crops.

Message from the State Executive Director - Bruce Nelson

I began as the State Executive Director for the Farm Service Agency on July 13th. After eight years of involvement in other venues, I am excited to assume my duties as the State Executive Director for the Farm Service Agency in Montana.

My most recent position was serving as the Chief of Staff to Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer. I have stepped down from my executive roles at Triangle N Farms since becoming FSA State Executive Director.

In every state the agricultural community is unique and has varied needs and concerns and my role will be to work with USDA to ensure the needs of Montana agricultural producers are met.

Our primary mission at FSA is to assist Montana farmers and ranchers to secure the greatest possible benefit from programs administered by FSA such as farm loans, commodity price support, disaster relief, conservation, or other available resources.

The hard working men and women of Montana's 49 FSA county offices are at the forefront of our efforts and remain the primary contact for program participation. We encourage you to speak with the staff at your local FSA office on how we can be of service.