



FARM SERVICE AGENCY

Powder River County February 2009

Powder River FSA

PO Box 9

Broadus, MT 59317-0009

County Committee Members

Barry Russiff, Chairman

Bonnie Quade, Vice Chairman

Kenny Kolka, Member

FSA Office Personnel

Mike Riley, CED

Bea Patten, PT

Rhonda Buhmann, PT

Jeridee Cathey, PT

Casey Trainer, TF

Dates to Remember:

February 2 thru 27—AMS Request for Referendum on the Lamb Checkoff Program

February 16 – Presidents Day Office Closed

February 27 – CDP deadline

March 1 – New Loss Adjuster hiring deadline

March 16 – NAP Sales closing date for all crops except value loss crops and honey

March 16 – Crop insurance sales closing date for 2008 spring-seeded crops

March 25-28 – FFA Convention – Great Falls.

March 31 – Final loan/LDP availability date for various crops harvested in 2008

2009 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program Signup

The 2009 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment (DCP) program for farms with base acres began December 22, 2008 and will continue until June 1, 2009. Farms may not be enrolled after June 1 of the applicable contract period. There are no late filed provisions for contract years 2009-2012.

Commodities covered by DCP include: wheat, corn, grain sorghum, including dual purpose varieties that can be harvested as grain; barley, oats, soybeans, canola, flaxseed, mustard seed, safflower, crambe, sesame seed, rapeseed and sunflowers including oil and non-oil varieties. Pulse crops have been added as an eligible commodity for the 2009 crop year for counter-cyclical payments only. Pulse crops include dry peas, lentils, small chickpeas (Garbanzo bean, Desi), and large chickpeas (Garbanzo bean, Kabuli). Base acreage may not exceed the available DCP cropland acreage on the farm. A producer with the sum of the base acreage on the farm with 10 acres or less must be a minority or limited resource farmer or rancher to be eligible for DCP payments. Reconstitutions of farms with 10 base acres or less are now allowed.

Direct and Counter-cyclical payments for the 2009 year will be made on 83.3 percent of the farm's base acreage. Final direct payments will be issued in October 2009.

Direct payment rates are:

Barley	\$0.24/bu
Corn	\$0.28/bu
Grain Sorghum	\$0.35/bu
Oats	\$0.024/bu
Other Oilseeds	\$0.80/cwt
Soybeans	\$0.44/bu
Wheat	\$0.52/bu

Planting flexibility is allowed but includes planting restrictions for fruits and vegetables on base acreage without farm or producer history. To maintain eligibility: 1) meet Highly Erodible Land and Wetland provisions requirements; 2) report all cropland acres; 3) meet actively engaged in farming and person determination requirements; and 4) comply with adjusted gross income provisions. Payment limitation amounts are \$40,000 for direct payments and \$65,000 for counter-cyclical payments.

Secretarial Designations – Eligibility for Disaster Programs

Fifteen Montana counties were declared primary natural disaster areas during the period beginning January 1, 2008 and continuing.

The following counties have received the disaster designation:

Broadwater	Fallon	Prairie
Big Horn	Gallatin	Richland
Custer	Golden	Roosevelt
	Valley	
Daniels	Madison	Sheridan
Dawson	McCone	Wibaux

Contiguous counties include:

Beaverhead	Meagher	Silver Bow
Carter	Mineral	Stillwater
Carbon	Musselshell	Sweet
		Grass
Fergus	Park	Treasure
Garfield	Powder	Valley
	River	
Jefferson	Rosebud	Wheatland
Lewis and Clark	Sanders	Yellowstone

The disaster designation has an important significance in those counties as it allows eligible producers within those 15 counties and contiguous counties to participate in the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE). SURE was one of the disaster programs created under the 2008 Farm Bill. It provides financial assistance for crop production and or quality losses due to a natural disaster. Two triggers make the program available:

- A Secretarial Disaster designation **and** at least a 10 percent crop production loss on at least one crop of economic significance which is defined as a crop which is expected to contribute at least 5 percent of the farm's income (Nationwide); or
- In the absence of a secretarial disaster declaration, farms in which the actual production on the farm is less than 50 percent of the normal production on the farm. Producers in counties that did not receive a secretarial declaration or contiguous county declaration have only this option available to qualify for SURE.

SURE requires that all crops in all counties in the nation be included on one application regardless if only one county received a secretarial declaration.

In addition, producers must have crop insurance or Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for all crops excluding grazing lands. SURE does not

NAP Deadline March 16

For the 2009 crop year it is imperative to purchase Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and catastrophic (CAT) level of crop insurance for all insurable and non-insurable crops. This is not only for production coverage but also for eligibility for the new permanent disaster programs created in the 2008 Farm Bill.

In order for producers to be **eligible** for assistance under the Supplemental Revenue Assistance (**SURE**) Program and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, and Honey Bees, (**ELAP**), and the Tree Assistance Program (**TAP**) producers must obtain a plan of insurance for each insurable and non-insurable commodity on the farm, **excluding grazing**. To be eligible for assistance under the Livestock Forage Program (**LFP**) producers must obtain either coverage under the Pasture, Rangeland, and Forage Rainfall Index Pilot Program through crop insurance, or NAP coverage, or both on their grazing land.

Producers must file the required paperwork and pay the administrative fee by the NAP closing date of **March 16, 2009** for all crops except value-loss and honey. The deadline for value-loss and honey for 2009 has passed.

Please contact the office to ensure your eligibility for the new disaster assistance programs by March 16th.

Lamb Checkoff Program

The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) will conduct a Request for Referendum on the Lamb Checkoff Program February 2 through February 27, 2009. Persons who were engaged in the production, feeding or slaughtering of lambs and who provide documentation, such as sales receipt or remittance form showing that they were engaged in the production, feeding or slaughtering of lambs from Jan. 1, 2008 through Dec.31, 2008 are eligible to vote. Persons must vote in the referendum at the County FSA office where their administrative farm records are maintained.

Form LS-86 and all supporting documentation must be returned to the appropriate FSA county office by close of business on Feb. 27, 2009. The form and documentation returned by mail must be postmarked no later than midnight Feb. 27, 2009 and received in the FSA county office by March 6, 2009. Forms received without the required supporting documentation will not be considered valid forms. This form LS-86 is available at the FSA office or online at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/lsmarketingprograms>.

Changes to FSA Payment Processing

FSA began deploying a new payment processing system the first part of December.

Through the new system, all payments made through direct deposit will be processed through the Federal Reserve Bank and will be received in the participant's account within 2-3 days of processing.

New Loan Interest Rates Provided

The interest rate for Marketing Assistance Grain loans changed at the beginning of 2009. The interest rate is 1.625%. This rate will stay in effect until the loan is paid in full.

Powder River County Approved for SAFE Program

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) began signup January 5, 2009 in three areas within Montana through the State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) program to address local wildlife conservation needs. Powder River, Carter and Fallon counties are eligible for the Southeast Montana Sagebrush-Grassland Restoration SAFE area. The objective of this SAFE area is to re-establish vital habitat for the sage grouse by encouraging producers to plant eligible cropland to a native grass mixture including sagebrush.

Enrollment in SAFE is available under the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) continuous signup. Continuous signups will automatically be accepted if all eligibility requirements are met. The practices will address wildlife habitat that can be enhanced through the restoration of eligible cropland. Individual practices for each SAFE area were developed similar to CRP general signup practices. Contracts are between 10-15 years. Cost share is available at 50 percent with an additional signing incentive payment of \$10/acre/year and a practice incentive payment of 40 percent on the total cost of installing the practice. Practices will be monitored and evaluated to show an improvement to the wildlife habitat.

For further information regarding eligibility criteria, contact the Powder River FSA office at (406)436-2321. Additional information is available on the Montana Farm Service Agency website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt>.

Crop Disaster Signup Deadline

The deadline to signup for the Crop Disaster Program (CDP) will end **February 27, 2009**. The deadline date applies to both quantity and quality provisions of CDP.

The FSA-840 (Crop Disaster Program application) and all supporting documentation must be received in the FSA county office by the close of business on February 27, 2009. Late-filed applications will not be approved following the February 27th deadline.

Signup for the program began October 15, 2007 for crop years 2005-2007.



Assistance Available with Planting and Harvesting

Farm Rescue is a non-profit organization which plants and harvests crops free of charge for farm families that have experienced a major injury, illness or natural disaster. Priority consideration is given to applications received by March 15. Visit <http://www.farmrescue.org> or call 701/252-2017 for further information, to refer a family in need or obtain an application.

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to participate in FSA programs should contact Mike Riley, CED, Powder River County FSA, PO Box 9, Broadus, MT 59317-0009 or call 406-436-2321 or email mike.riley@mt.usda.gov.

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**2009 DCP Signup
Counties Receive Disaster
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February 16 – Holiday – Office closed
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except value loss crops and honey.

FSA Hiring Additional Loss Adjusters

FSA is currently accepting offers from new individuals interested in providing contracted crop adjusting services for the 2009 crop year. Applications for the 2009 crop year are due March 1 to the Montana State FSA Office.

Loss Adjusters perform loss adjustment and program services as assigned by FSA. Some duties included in those services are: 1) visiting farms to inspect damaged or destroyed crops; 2) appraise potential crop production; 3) determine and verify the cause and time of loss; 4) determine farm-stored production; 5) visit FSA offices and/or farms to perform inspections, reviews or other loss services.

Starting pay for new adjusters is \$10.00/hour. A pay raise will be received after full certification on at least one crop is received. All equipment necessary to perform loss-adjusting activities will be provided by FSA. Mileage and per diem will also be paid by FSA. Contracted adjusters are expected to provide their own mode of transportation.

All applications are to be sent to the Montana Farm Service Agency, Attention Leonard McArthur, P.O. Box 670, Bozeman, MT 59771. All applications postmarked by **March 1, 2009** will be reviewed and selections made based on the need of the area, work experience, agriculture background and availability. Applications may be found at any FSA county office; by logging on to the Montana FSA website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt> or by contacting Leonard McArthur at 587-6882 or Shelly Rolando at 587-6877.

**POWDER RIVER FSA
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