



Benewah/Kootenai CO

FSA News

USDA
**Benewah/
Kootenai County FSA**
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Hours
Monday – Friday
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

The County Committee meets the 1st Thursday of the 1st full week of the month at 1:00 p.m.

**Benewah/Kootenai
County Committee**
Fred Muhs
Dale Johnson
Larry Hansen
Herb Millhorn
Tom Rohde
Joanne Peone

Staff
Micki Linehan, CED
Tami Gauthier, PT
Angela Middleton, PT
Nichole Swallows, PT

Farm Loan Manager
Bardell Faux
208-746-9621



Voting for County Committee Begins

Ballots for this year's county committee election will be mailed to eligible voters on November 6, 2009. Voters must complete their ballots and return them to the Farm Service Agency county office by the close of business on December 7, 2009. If mailed, ballots must be postmarked by midnight December 7, 2009.

The candidates in this year's election are: Fred Muhs was nominated to represent LAA 1, which is the Harrison area. Muhs is currently the County Committee Chairman and has served on the County Committee for the last 6 years. Herb Millhorn was nominated to represent LAA 3, which is the Worley area. Millhorn has served on the County Committee for the last 2 years.

Eligible voters in local administrative areas who have not received a ballot should contact the FSA county office staff.

Voter Requirements

Persons meeting requirements in **1 or 2, plus 3**, below, are eligible to vote:

- 1.** Be of legal voting age and have an interest in a farm or ranch as either of the following:
an owner, operator, tenant or sharecropper,
or
a partner in a general partnership or member of a joint venture that has an interest in a farm as an owner, operator, tenant or sharecropper; *or*
- 2.** Not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations on an entire farm; *and*
- 3.** Eligible to participate in any FSA program that is provided by law, regardless of the status of funding.

Discrimination Prohibited

No person shall be denied the right to vote because of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital or family status.

Payment Problems

Producers are encouraged to closely monitor your farm program payments for fiscal year 2009. FSA has been transitioning from an old IBM System/36 computer system to online software systems to make payments. The System/36 is obsolete, and soon the agency will no longer be able to maintain it. The transition to the new systems has created temporary problems for issuing payments, as some of you may have experienced.

We are currently in the process of making final 2009 DCP and ACRE direct payments. If you received an advance DCP or ACRE direct payment earlier this year, that amount was offset from your final direct payment. However, it may have been offset from a different farm or by a different county office. Also, if you received multiple advance payments, they may all have been offset from one farm. In limited cases, these advance payments may have been offset from one or more of your CRP annual rental payments. Individual payment amounts may look different than you expect, but the total of all your payments should be similar to previous years, if nothing has changed.

Please know that we are trying to issue your payments as quickly as possible. Transaction statements are mailed directly from our Financial Services Center in Kansas City and may reach you after your payment is deposited into your bank account. If the total of all your payments is not what you expect, please let us know. We are working very hard at the State and County Office levels to make this new payment system work for all of us.

The ACRE Option

The optional ACRE Program provides a safety net based on state revenue losses and acts in place of the price-based safety net of counter-cyclical payments under DCP. A farm's payment is based on a revenue guarantee calculated using a 5-year average state yield and the most recent 2-year national price for each eligible commodity. For 2010, the 2-year price average will be based on the 2008 and 2009 crop years.

An ACRE payment is issued when both the state and the farm have incurred a revenue loss. The payment is based on 83.3 percent (85 percent in 2012) of the farm's planted acres times the difference between the State ACRE guarantee and the state revenue times the ratio of the farm's yield divided by the state expected yield. The total number of planted acres for which a producer may receive ACRE payments may not exceed the total base on the farm. In exchange for participating in ACRE, in addition to not receiving counter-cyclical payments, a farm's direct payment is reduced by 20 percent, and marketing assistance loan rates are reduced by 30 percent.

The decision to enroll in the ACRE Program is irrevocable. The owner of the farm and all producers on the farm must agree to enroll in ACRE. Once enrolled, the farm shall be enrolled for that initial crop year and will remain in ACRE through the 2012 crop year.

The June 1, 2010, deadline is mandatory for all participants. USDA will not accept any late-filed applications.

Acres Reports Needed For Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE)

Because of the delay in announcing the provisions of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, producers enrolling in the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) are reminded that 2008 crop reports are required for SURE participation. This includes crops planted on cropland and/or non-cropland, including native pasture or improved grass that will be hayed.

Physical evidence of the crop in the field is not required for Farm Service Agency (FSA) to accept late-filed 2008 acreage reports. "However, evidence of existence or disposition, is required.

The following requirements for 2008 SURE include:

- producers **must** report all crops, in all counties, in which they have an interest
- late filed fees shall be waived for late-filed

2008 acreage reports and physical evidence in the field is not required

- if the actual use of a crop is different from the intended use reported, the producer may report the final use to the County Office; however, the intended use shall **not** be changed.

The provisions noted are for 2008 only. For 2009 and 2010, normal acreage reporting requirements will be applied.

More details on the 2008 SURE Program are available at county FSA offices.

Supplemental Disaster Assistance Programs

The 2008 Farm Bill amended the Trade Act of 1974 to create five new disaster programs, collectively referred to as Supplemental Agriculture Disaster Assistance programs.

These programs include:

- Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP)
- Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP)
- Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)
- Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) Program
- Tree Assistance Program (TAP)

To be eligible for these programs, producers must purchase at least catastrophic risk protection (CAT) level of crop insurance for all insurable crops and/or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for non-insurable crops under SURE, TAP, and ELAP.

In the 2008 Farm Bill; in general, the term "farm" means the sum of all crop acreage in all counties that is planted or intended to be planted for harvest by the eligible producer. In the case of aquaculture, the term "farm" means all fish being produced in all counties that are intended to be harvested for sale by the eligible producer. In the case of honey, the term "farm" means all bees and beehives in all counties that are intended to be harvested for a honey crop by the eligible producer.

Producers who meet the definition of a Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource Producer, or Beginning Farmer or Rancher, do not have to meet this risk management purchase requirement

LFP Maps

FSA's Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) compensates eligible livestock producers for grazing losses suffered because of drought conditions that occurred from January 1, 2008, to October 1, 2011.

This program provides financial assistance to producers who suffered grazing losses due to drought or fire on or after January 1, 2008, and before October 1, 2011, during the calendar year in which the loss occurs. Fire losses must have occurred on federally managed lands.

Weekly LFP Payment Eligibility maps *Continue on Page 3: Livestock Feed*
Continue from Page 2 Livestock Feed that depict the weekly LFP payment eligibility by county for the US and Puerto Rico, based on grazing periods, drought intensity, and forage types can now be found on FSA's internet Web site at:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=diap&topic=lfp>.

The four most current county level LFP maps will be:

- posted in the Disaster Assistance Program section on the FSA Internet web site
- updated on a weekly basis
- provided for each year and each eligible grazing type.

Operating Loan Applications Needed Now

Farmers that plan to apply to the FSA for annual operating loan assistance this year are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. The earlier an application for loan assistance is filed, the quicker the FSA staff can process your request. In addition, due to budget constraints, farmers that wait until later in the year to apply, run the risk of finding out that our funding allocations have been utilized already. Farmers should also contact their FSA Farm Loan Manager or Officer at (208) 746-9621 for information as to what is required in order to have a complete loan application on file. Decisions on loans can not be made until a complete application is received.

Selling Land

If you're planning to sell farmland, there may be some program consequences you should be aware of. For example, if you're planning to

sell land that's enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program, the buyer must agree to continue the enrollment. If the buyer doesn't want to continue the CRP contract, you might have to refund all the payments you've received to date.

Reviewing program implications with your local Farm Service Agency staff before completing a sale of farmland is always a prudent precaution.

2010 Tree Seedling Sale

The Benewah Soil & Water Conservation District is gearing up for their 2010 tree seedling sale. They have contracted with a new nursery for the 2010 seedlings. These seedlings are sold at a very reasonable price for conservation and reforestation projects. Also, a controlled release fertilizer has now been added to the seedlings for your convenience. There are three other conservation districts in North Idaho who also purchase seedlings from this inventory, so the seedling varieties can sell out quickly.

For an order form, please contact Sherry Klaus, Administrative Assistant for the Benewah Soil & Water Conservation District at (208) 686-1699 extension 109.

2010 DCP Signup

Enrollment for the 2010 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) has begun and will continue through June 1, 2010. USDA urges producers to make use of the eDCP automated website to sign up, or producers can visit any USDA Service Center to complete their 2010 DCP contract.

USDA computes DCP Program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2010, eligible producers may request to receive advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment. USDA will issue advance direct payments beginning Dec. 1, 2009. Counter-cyclical payment rates vary depending on market prices. Counter-cyclical payments are issued only when the effective price for a commodity is below its target price. The effective price is the higher of the national average market price received during the 12-month marketing year for each covered commodity and the national average loan rate for a marketing assistance loan for the covered commodity.

Changing Banks

Almost all FSA payments are made electronically using Direct Deposit. This innovation has cut down on the number of missing and late payments and reduced the time required to move funds. It has been calculated that having a problem with a payment is 20 times greater with checks than with Direct Deposit. Another benefit is that Direct Deposit to your account can be made within 48 hours.

To keep the system running smoothly, it's critical to keep the county office staff up to date on changes you might make in your financial institutions.

If you have changed accounts or institutions that might affect the direct deposit of your FSA payments, contact the FSA county office so we can update our files to insure continued uninterrupted service.

Unauthorized Disposition of Loaned Grain

If loan grain has been disposed of through feeding, selling or any other form of disposal without prior written authorization from the county office staff, it is considered unauthorized disposition. The financial penalties for unauthorized dispositions are severe and a producers name will be placed on a loan violation list for a two-year period. Always call the office before any grain under loan is fed or sold.

Dates to Remember	
Nov 6	County committee ballots mailed
Nov 11	Veterans Day Holiday
Nov 26	Thanksgiving Day Holiday
Dec 1	NAP deadline on fall seeded & perennial crops
Dec 7	Ballots for COC Election must be postmarked

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