August 2014-Special Printed Edition

NEWSLETTER

Idaho Farm Service Agency

August 2014 County Newsletter

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IMPORTANT: The 2014 Farm Bill has provided a rare opportunity to issue this hardcopy newsletter. In order to stay informed of FSA programs and important deadlines contact your local county FSA office with your current email address or go to www.fsa.usda.gov and click on the red envelope icon at the bottom of the page to sign up for GovDelivery.

New Highly Erodible Land (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Requirements

The approval of the 2014 Farm Bill has brought to the forefront some of the rules for compliance with soils and wetlands. Because so much of Idaho's cropland areas are classified as Highly Erodible Land (HEL), the importance of following a fully applied conservation system is of critical importance for producers to maintain eligibility with USDA programs. Eligibility includes not only FSA disaster and safety net programs, but also the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), the Conservation Security Program (CSP) and in 2015 compliance also includes Federal Crop Insurance (FCIC) programs. Violations of HEL compliance will result in fines and loss of the beneficial benefits gained in the year of violation.

A plan or system describes the crop rotation, tillage and practices applied to the ground as well as irrigation water application. NRCS continues its yearly review of 5% of the farms for annual spot check reviews that received ANY PAYMENTS from any USDA program. As part of the 1985 Food Security Act, farms had plans constructed with NRCS. It is being recommended that you review your plan with your local conservation planner and note the changes so that eligibility is not lost. If spot checked you may be called upon to share the details of your operation to determine if compliance is being achieved. Voluntary compliance reviews with NRCS give a one year waiver in case of violation that would otherwise implement fines and returns of beneficial payments.

If you have any wetlands present on your farm , you should contact NRCS prior to taking any actions such as draining, dredging, leveling, filling, stump removal, or excavation that allows the planting of an agricultural commodity on a wetland. Violations of the wetland provision can result in loss of all USDA benefits from the crop year in which the wetland is manipulated until the wetland is restored or mitigated.

Early Outs Option for Eligible Conservation Reserve Contracts (CRP)

An "early out" option has been announced for some CRP participants to withdraw acreage with no penalties or repayments. Eligible contracts must have been in effect for at least 5 years and meet other eligibility criteria based on practice, erodibility index and location. Producers must file a request to terminate all or a portion of eligible acreage by January 30, 2015, and elect a termination date between October 1, 2014 and September 30, 2015.

ARC/PLC Program

Under the 2014 Farm Bill the annual commodity programs are now the Agriculture Risk Coverage County Coverage (ARC-CO) or Agriculture Risk Coverage Individual Coverage (ARC-IC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC). By mid-winter all producers on a farm will be required to make a one-time, unanimous and irrevocable election between price protection and county revenue protection or individual revenue protection for 2014-2018 crop years. Producers can expect to sign contracts for ARC or PLC for the 2014 and 2015 crop years in the spring of 2015.

ARC/PLC Program Cont.

As an owner/operator on a farm, you recently received a form showing the 2008-2012 planting history of grains and oilseeds. This information should be reviewed for accuracy prior to making the decision whether to reallocate bases on the farm. Late filed crop reports for the 2009 through 2012 crop year may be filed with no fee. Reallocated bases are computed based on the average of the individual crops seeded 2009-2012 divided by the total acreage plantings of grain/oilseeds on the farm. No increase from the total effective 2013 base acres is allowed. Crop yields may be proven based on the 2008 through 2012 planted crop for the PLC program. No deadline has been announced for the base reallocation process or yield updates; however, we anticipate this will be required by fall of 2014.

Under the **PLC** program payments will be issued when the effective price, determined on a national level, is less than the reference price established for that crop. The crop **does not** have to be planted, payments will be computed based on 85% of the farm's base acres of the applicable commodity and the yield established on the farm.

The **ARC-CO** program payments will be issued when actual county crop revenue of a covered commodity is less than the ARC-CO guarantee and is based on county data not individual farm data. The crop **does not** have to be planted. Payments are computed using 85% of the base acres times the difference between the ARCO-CO guarantee and the actual county crop revenue.

The farm, for **ARC-IC** purposes, is the sum of the producer's interest in all of the producer's farms in the state which are enrolled in the ARC-IC program. Payments are issued when the actual farm crop revenue for all covered commodities is less than the ARC-IC guarantee for all covered commodities on the farm. The crop **must be planted** in the current year to be eligible for payment and is limited to 65% of the total base acres on the farm.

For more information on the programs please contact the FSA office or visit the official FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov . Under the Programs and Services tab select ARC/PLC for an overview of the new programs and access to further information.

LIVESTOCK DISASTER PROGRAMS

2013 & 2014 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP):

LFP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers that have suffered grazing losses due to drought on non-irrigated privately owned or cash leased pasture and range land, or fire on federally managed land. Eligible producers must physically be located in a county affected by a qualifying drought during the normal grazing period for the county. Producers who suffered eligible grazing losses in 2013 and/or 2014 should submit a completed CCC-853 and supporting documentation by January 30, 2015.

2012, 2013, 2014 Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP):

LIP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers that have suffered livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather and attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law. Producers who suffered livestock death losses in 2013 or 2014 should submit a notice of loss and an application for payment to their local FSA office by January 30, 2015.

2014 Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP)

ELAP provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish that have losses due to disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires. ELAP assistance is provided for losses not covered by LFP and LIP. Producers who suffer eligible livestock, honeybee or farm-raised fish losses during the 2014 program year, the notice of loss and an application for payment must be submitted by November 1, 2014.

For more information, producers can review the LFP, LIP and ELAP Fact Sheets on the Farm Bill webpage at www.fsa.usda.gov.

HAVE YOU CHANGED BANK ACCOUNTS?

Please notify us immediately with new account information to avoid payment delays.

Farm Loan Funds Available

Loan funds are available for Direct and Guaranteed Loans and we anticipate having funds available for the remainder of this fiscal year. We encourage anyone interested in a farm loan to contact your local FSA farm loan team for a information.

Loans for the Socially Disadvantaged

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operating and/or purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided priority funding for members of socially disadvantaged applicants.

A socially disadvantaged applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities.

Beginning Farmer Loans

FSA assists beginning farmers 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 a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's average size farm.

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

Guaranteed Loan Eligibility

Changes to FSA regulations have removed Guaranteed Operating Loan term limits. Borrowers who were not eligible for further guaranteed loans due to the previous 15 year eligibility term limit may now be eligible for further guaranteed loans through their commercial lender.

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) Announces Online Hay and Grazing Acres Locator Tool

For many years, FSA's ***Hay Net*** website www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet has been used as an online resource for agricultural producers to list information concerning the need for hay or the availability of hay.

Now, in response to requests from livestock producers and landowners, FSA has expanded the site to include the option to list a need for grazing acres or to list acres available for grazing.

If, due to extenuating circumstances, producers are in need of hay and/or grazing acres to support livestock, please use ***Hay Net*** to post an advertisement seeking these resources. Likewise, landowners who have hay and/or grazing acres available for livestock producers should post a ***Hay Net*** advertisement as well.

A few things to remember when using the ***Hay Net*** website:

- There is a one-time registration process that should be completed by all users who want to post an ad online.
- Users who just want to browse ads DO NOT NEED to have an eAuthentication user id.
- Hay and grazing acre ads will be automatically removed after a period of 13 months.
- Please help your fellow farmer and rancher by keeping ads current and up to date and remove ads you no longer need or want advertised on ***Hay Net***. Please, no corporate advertisements on this site.

Hay Net is brought to you by FSA as a public service. The sole purpose of this online resource is to provide a site for the exchange of information. FSA does not endorse, guarantee, or otherwise make representations of any kind regarding any user of this site and FSA is not responsible for defining the terms of grazing agreements or lease contracts.

For more information about ***Hay Net*** and other FSA services and programs, please contact your local FSA office. For local FSA Service Center contact information, please visit: http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app.

2014 MAL and LDP Requests

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) is accepting requests for marketing assistance loans (MALs) and loan deficiency payments (LDPs) for eligible 2014 commodities. MALs and LDPs provide financing and marketing assistance for wheat, feed grains, soybeans, and other oilseeds, pulse crops, rice, wool, mohair and honey.

MALs and LDPs for the 2014 crop year become available to eligible producers beginning with harvest.

MALs provide producers interim financing after harvest to help them meet cash flow needs without having to sell their commodities when market prices are typically at harvest-time lows. A producer who is eligible to obtain a loan, but agrees to forgo the loan, may obtain an LDP if such a payment is available. When market prices fall below the crops applicable loan rate, LDPs equal the difference. An LDP is triggered when the Posted County Price (PCP) falls below the loan rate.

You must apply for an LDP OR MAL BEFORE you lose beneficial interest in the crop. To maintain beneficial interest you must have control, title and risk of loss in the crop. Beneficial interest is lost when the commodity is sold or immediately fed. If you select an LDP you are no longer eligible for a commodity loan.

To be eligible for an LDP or MAL Producers must:

- File CCC-633 EZ, page 1, before loss of beneficial interest
- For LDP benefits, file CCC-633 EZ, page 2, 3, or 4, as applicable, on or before the final availability date March 31 for grain and oilseeds, May 31 for corn and pulse crops, and January 1for Wool.

The 2014 Farm Bill also establishes payment limitations per individual or entity not to exceed $125,000 annually on certain commodities for the following program benefits:

- price loss coverage payments
- agriculture risk coverage payments
- marketing loan gains (MLGs) and LDPs.
- These payment limitations do not apply to MAL loan disbursements.

Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) provisions were modified by the 2014 Farm Bill, which states that a producer whose total applicable three-year average AGI exceeds $900,000 is not eligible to receive an MLG or LDP.

National and county loans rates for 2014 crops are posted on the FSA website at: www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport.

For more information, please visit a nearby USDA Service Center or FSA's website www.fsa.usda.gov.

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2015 & Future Years Crop Reporting Deadlines

Take note of the new crop reporting deadlines that are in effect for 2015 and future years. Instead of having a single, county-wide reporting deadline, the crop reporting date is based on the planted crop and corresponds with Multi-Peril Crop Insurance reporting deadlines. Keep this chart for future reference.

November 15	Forage (includes new and established alfalfa for hay, mixed forages, and grass hay), pasture, rangeland, Apiculture (honeybee forage)
December 15	Fall wheat, fall barley, fall canola, fall planted dry peas, fall mint, fall planted and established alfalfa for seed, and all other fall planted small grains.
January 2	Honey (Colonies)
January 15	Apples, cherries, fresh apricots, fresh freestone peaches, fresh nectarines, grapes, plums
July 15	Spring planted alfalfa (forage or seed), spring barley, spring wheat, spring canola, potatoes, sugar beets, corn, sweet corn, dry beans, flax, green peas, sprint mint, mustard, oats, onions, processing beans, safflower, CRP, and all other crops.

SELECTED AUGUST INTEREST RATES	
Farm Operating Loans—Direct	2.125%
Farm Ownership Loans—Direct	3.75%
Farm Ownership Loans—direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Emergency Loans	3.125%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years)	2.125%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (10 years)	2.625%

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.