November 2011

Cassia County FSA Office

Cassia County FSA
1351 E 16th St
Burley, ID 83318

(208)678-1157 phone
(208)677-2070 fax
www.fsa.usda.gov/id

Hours
Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Cassia County Staff

Cary Curtis
County Executive Director

Gloria Hernandez
Program Technician

Teresa Ambriz
Program Technician

Kaye Sigman
Program Technician

County Committee Voting Begins

Ballots for this year's county committee election will be mailed to eligible voters on Nov. 4, 2011. Voters must complete their ballots and return them to the Farm Service Agency county office by the close of business on Dec. 5, 2011. If mailed, ballots must be postmarked by midnight Dec. 5, 2011.

The candidates are: **Thomas H. Garrard** and **Ty Beck**.

Eligible voters in local administrative area Local Administrative Area (LAA) 1 who have not received a ballot should contact the FSA county office staff.

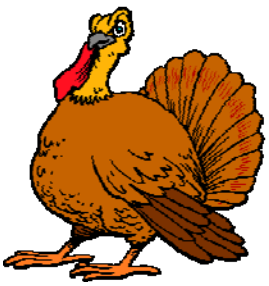
Voter Requirements - Persons meeting requirements in **1** *or* **2**, *plus* **3**, below, are eligible to vote:

1. Legal voting age and have an interest in a farm or ranch as any of the following: an individual, an authorized representative of an entity, spouses when property is owned jointly or in community property states.

2. Not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations on an entire farm.

3. Participates or cooperates in any FSA program that is provided by law.

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.



Move with FSA to Instant Electronic Information

The USDA Farm Service Agency offices are moving toward a paperless operation.

Producers can now enroll in the new GovDelivery system for notices, newsletters and electronic reminders and discontinue their slow and costly paper copies received through the mail.

FSA, like many other organizations, is working smarter and more efficiently. Conversion to electronic notifications via email helps conserve resources and save taxpayer dollars.

County Committee ballots will continue to be mailed to all eligible producers.

Subscribe now to receive free e-mail updates by going to http://www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe or use the box "Sign up for updates" on the FSA homepage.

2012 DCP/ACRE

2012 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) enrollment begins Jan. 23, 2012 and ends June 1, 2012.

Here are IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

1) All producers planting on **DCP base** acres must be identified on the DCP/ACRE contract and receive a proportionate share of DCP/ACRE payment for the farm.

2) Changes on the farm after enrolling June 1st in DCP/ACRE **must** be reported to your local FSA office such as:

- Ownership changes
- Producer changes (Individuals and Entities)
- Change in crop shares arrangements

3) Changes cannot be made after Sept. 30, 2012.

NOTE: As required in the 2008 Farm Bill there are no 2012 advance payments for DCP and ACRE.

Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE)

The sign-up for 2010 losses begins **Nov. 14, 2011** and will end **June 1, 2012.**

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters that incurred in the crop year 2010. SURE is available to eligible producers on:

- Farms in counties with Secretarial disaster declarations, including contiguous counties that have incurred at least a 10% crop production or quality loss, or both. All economically significant crops grown by a producer are eligible, **except** grazed crops.
- Any farm in which disaster-related conditions reduced the actual crop year production on the farm to 50 percent or less than normal production of the farm.

Hispanic and Women Farmers

A process to resolve the claims of Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who believe they were discriminated against when seeking USDA farm loans has been established.

If you believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) improperly denied farm loan benefits to you between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation.

For additional information on this and other settlement issues contact:

- **Hispanic and Women Farmer Claims Process:**
  www.farmerclaims.gov or call 1-888-508-4429
- **Pigford – The Black Farmers Discrimination Litigation:**
  www.blackfarmercase.com or call 1-866-950-5547
- **Keepseagle - The Native American Farmers Class Action Settlement:**
  www.IndianFarmClass.com or call
  - 1-888-233-5506

Marketing Assistance Loans

Marketing Assistance loans are commodity loans available to producers who share in the risk of producing the crop. To be eligible, you must maintain beneficial interest in the crop through the time of application. Beneficial interest means retaining the ability to make decisions about the commodity, maintaining responsibility for loss or damage to the commodity, and maintaining title to the commodity. Once beneficial interest in a commodity is lost, the commodity is ineligible for a loan.

Commodity loan eligibility also requires compliance with conservation and wetland protection requirements; reporting use of cropland acreage on the farm and ensuring that the commodity meets CCC minimum grade and quality standards. For commodities to be eligible they must have been produced by an eligible producer, and exist in a storable and merchantable condition for food, feed or other uses as determined by CCC. The quality of the commodity in farm storage must be maintained throughout the term of the loan.

Producers do not have to participate in the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program to be eligible for commodity loans.

Violating provisions of a marketing assistance loan may trigger administrative actions, such as assessing liquidated damages, calling the loan and denial of future farm-stored loans.

The most common violations are removing or disposing of a commodity being used as loan collateral without prior authorization and providing an incorrect quantity certification.

Unauthorized Disposition of Grain

If grain under loan 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 producer's name is placed on a loan violation list for a two-year period. Always call to check for restrictions before you haul any grain under loan.

NOTICE TO HISPANIC AND/OR WOMEN FARMERS OR RANCHERS

COMPENSATION FOR CLAIMS OF DISCRIMINATION

If you believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) improperly denied farm loan benefits to you between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic, or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation.

To register your name to receive a claims packet, call the Farmer and Rancher Call Center at 1-888-508-4429 or visit: www.farmerclaims.gov

The claims package will have detailed information about the eligibility and claims process.

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Disaster Assistance Programs

The array of FSA disaster assistance programs include:

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

To be eligible for SURE, TAP, and ELAP, producers must purchase catastrophic risk protection insurance for all insurable crops, and coverage for non-insurable crops. For LFP, grazed land must be covered.

Farm-Raised Fish means all fish being produced for sale by an 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 Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource Producer or Beginning Farmer or Rancher do not have to meet this risk management purchase requirement.

Adjusted Gross Income Report to IRS – Act Now

Producers should remember they must submit an Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) verification consent form (CCC-931) to maintain eligibility for 2010 and 2011 program benefits. Individuals and legal entities now are using one form: CCC-931 Certification and Consent.

The consent form authorizes IRS to verify that a producer's AGI is within the requirements for FSA programs eligibility. Producers who failed to file these forms before Sept. 2011 will receive a final notice from the National Office. This notice will give the producer a final opportunity to submit the CCC-931 prior to becoming ineligible for all program payments (with the exception of some earlier multi-year CRP contracts.) The letter will provide instruction on where the completed form must be sent.

IRS requires written consent from all individuals or legal entities before verification of AGI eligibility can be provided to USDA.

For more information contact your local FSA office.

Online Services

Producers with Internet access can fill out a variety of FSA forms online. Producers can also register for secure electronic access that will allow them to electronically sign and transmit some forms directly to the county office staff. If you are new to the website, first you will want to obtain a Level 2 USDA Service Center Customer ID and password at: http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/ and then click on "*Create an Account Page*" link.

If you already have a Customer ID and password, then click on the following eForms website at: http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainservlet and then click on the "*Sign In*" button. A disclaimer window will open and after you read the "Warning message" click on the "Continue" button.

Then the USDA Web services page will open to the eAuthentication login page. Enter your login User ID and password and then click on the "Login" button. To sign and transmit forms electronically, you must sign-up and get a User ID and password.

Loans for the Socially Disadvantaged

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Funds are available for operating loans and to purchase or improve farms or ranches (ownership loans.)

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 someone who has been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as a member of a group, without regard to his or her individual qualities.

For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

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USDA United States Department of Agriculture

Changing Banks

Almost all Farm Service Agency payments are made electronically using Direct Deposit.

To maintain efficient payment processing, it is critical to keep the county office staff up to date on changes you might make with your financial institutions.

If you have made changes to accounts or have changed banking institutions, these changes might affect the direct deposit of your FSA payments. When changes like these are made, be sure to contact the FSA county office so we can update our records to ensure efficient and uninterrupted service.

RMA Reminds Idaho Producers of the Upcoming Perennial Crop Sales Closing Date

Risk Management Agency (RMA) Spokane Regional Office reminds growers of upcoming sales closing date for 2012 crop year Multi-Peril Crop Insurance (MPCI) perennial fruit crops.

- **November 21, 2011** (November 20 falls on a Sunday) - Apple, ARH Cherry Pilot, Grape, Pear and Stonefruit crop insurance

RMA also reminds producers, if there is no coverage in a county for a specific crop under the traditional MPCI program; producers may ask a crop insurance agent whether they would be eligible for coverage under a written agreement.

Producers are encouraged to visit with their crop insurance agent soon to learn specific details for the 2012 crop year. Federal crop insurance program policies are sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance companies and agents. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers throughout the United States or on the RMA Web site at http://www3.rma.usda.gov/tools/agents.

Selected Interest Rates for November 2011	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating - Direct	1.375%
Farm Ownership - Direct	3.750%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.500%
Emergency	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility Loan (7 year)	1.500%
Farm Storage Facility Loan (10 year)	2.00%
Farm Storage Facility Loan (12 year)	2.25%

Dates to Remember	
Nov. 4	COC Ballots mailed
Nov. 14	SURE Sign-up begins
Dec. 1	NAP Signup for Perennial Crops Ends
Dec. 5	COC Ballots due back in County Office by COB
Jan. 23	2012 DCP Enrollment begins

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