January 2011

Happy New Year and Welcome 2011!

Lewis County Farm Service Agency Office

Karel Wemhoff, County Executive Director
521 Oak Street, Room 9
Nezperce ID 83543
Karel.Wemhoff@id.usda.gov

(208) 937-2291 Ext 2 Phone
(208) 937-2234 Fax
www.fsa.usda.gov/id

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

Lewis County Staff
Jennifer Lux, PT
Jennifer.Lux@id.usda.gov

Kaci Ralstin, PT
Kaci.Ralstin@id.usda.gov

Jeannette Dreadfulwater, PT
Jeannette.Dreadfulwater@id.susda.gov

FSA Committee meetings are open to the public. Regular COC meetings are held the second Thursday of each month at the Nezperce USDA Service Center, beginning at 8:00 a.m.

Another New Employee

Jeannette Dreadfulwater joined the

Lewis Co FSA team January 18th, taking the place of Justin Allen who transferred to Madison County FSA. Jeannette will handle Price Support and the Conservation Reserve Program, as well as taking over duties as the Administrative clerk. Please join us in welcoming her!

SURE Signup

Signup for the 2009 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) began Jan. 10, 2011. SURE provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters. For SURE, all crops must be covered by crop insurance, NAP or eligible for waivers.
A farm enrolled in SURE is eligible when either:

- a portion of the farm is located in a county covered by a qualifying natural disaster declaration (USDA Secretarial Declarations only) or a contiguous county; or,
- The actual production is less than 50% of the normal production.

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Dennis Behler, who was re-elected to his third consecutive term to represent farmers from the Craigmont-Winchester-Reubens area on the County Committee. FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

The committee members held their organizational meeting January 14th, with the following results:

Chairperson	Dave Baldus
Vice-Chairperson	Nathan Riggers
Regular Member	Dennis Behler

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

The noninsured crop disaster assistance program (NAP) is a federally funded program that helps producers reduce their risk when growing food and fiber crops, specialty crops and crops for livestock feed. These benefits are only available for crops for which the catastrophic level of crop insurance is not available. Application for coverage must be filed by the applicable crop's application closing date.
Production records for all crops must be reported to FSA no later than the acreage reporting date for the crop for the following year. FSA requires that any production reported in a loss year be verifiable according to Agency specifications. *NAP Losses must be reported within 15 days of loss.*

ACRE Production Records

Participants in the ACRE program are required to furnish actual production records each year by July 15th of the year following harvest. Now would be a good time to gather all those records up and bring them in to the office. Records must be marked with the tract number where the grain came from – let us know if you need a copy of your maps.

Foreign Buyers Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. FSA administers this program for USDA.

All individuals who are not U.S. citizens, and have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA within 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form (FSA-153) could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

Farming Operation Changes

If you have bought or sold land, or if you have added or dropped rented land from your operation, make sure you report the changes to the office as soon as possible. This is especially important if you have CRP contracts.

You need to provide a copy of your deed or recorded land contract for purchased property. Failure to maintain accurate records with FSA on all land you have an interest in can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. Making the record changes now will save you time in the spring. Update signature authorization when changes in the operation occur. Producers are reminded to notify the office of any changes in operations on a farm so that records can be kept current and accurate.

Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation Compliance

Landowners and operators are reminded that in order to receive payments from USDA, compliance with Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions are required. Farmers with HEL determined soils are reminded of tillage, crop residue, and rotation requirements as specified per their conservation plan.

Producers are to notify the USDA Farm Service Agency prior to conducting land clearing or drainage projects to insure compliance. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in the loss of eligibility and all Federal payments.

Special Accommodations

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the county FSA office staff directly or by phone.

Power of Attorney

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., FSA has a power of attorney form available that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. If you are interested, please contact our office or any FSA office near you for more information.

Bank Account Changes

Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into your bank account. In order for timely payments to be made, producers need to notify the FSA county office if your account has been changed or if another financial institution purchases your bank. Payments can be delayed if the FSA office is not aware of updates to your account and routing numbers.

Appeal Process

After an FSA official makes a decision on your request for USDA services or application, you will be sent a letter informing you of the decision and options you can pursue if you disagree.

Generally, program participants have three choices — an informal review with the original agency decision-maker, an opportunity for mediation and finally an appeal to the next level of authority within the agency.

FSA Signature Policy

Husbands and wives may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation programs in which either has an interest. This option is automatically available unless a written request for exclusion is made to the county office staff.

There are exceptions to the rule, where spouses may not sign on behalf of each other for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations or other similar entities.

Individual signatures are also required on certain Farm Loan Program and Farm Storage Facility Loan documents.

For more clarification on spousal signature authority, feel free to contact your local FSA office.

Customer Statement

January signals the beginning of a new year, and a time to start thinking about filing taxes. Producers who have signed up for a USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account will be able to access their farm data via their Customer Statement.

The Customer Statement puts a range of USDA services and programs into a single report that's at your fingertips and available online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

It allows USDA customers to view their participation, application and payment status in various commodity and conservation programs; information on farm loans; and conservation plan and land unit information.

IRS Form 1099-G

Producers annually receive CCC-1099-Gs detailing payments producers have received from the Commodity Credit Corporation. The annual report of program payments on CCC-1099-Gs is a service intended to help our customers report taxable income. It is not intended to replace the producers' responsibilities to report income to the IRS. FSA staff cannot interpret IRS regulations or advise producers about which payments to report on their income tax returns. However, county office staff can review payments for accuracy.

Risk Management Agency (RMA)

USDA's Spokane Risk Management Agency (RMA) Office reminds producers of the important link between Federal Crop Insurance and FSA's Supplemental Agricultural Disaster Assistance programs including the new SURE program.

To maintain eligibility for most Supplemental Disaster Programs producers must obtain a policy or plan of insurance of at least the catastrophic level (CAT) of insurance for the crop year 2011.

The next round of sales closing dates for Federal crop insurance are:

January 31, 2011
Final date to obtain or change AGR insurance in select counties in Idaho, Oregon and Washington. Final date to submit required documents to continue or change 2011 AGR-Lite insurance for EXISTING POLICY HOLDERS in AK, ID, OR and WA.

March 15, 2011
Final date to obtain 2011 Adjusted Gross Revenue-Lite (AGR-Lite) insurance for NEW APPLICATION/ENROLLMENT POLICIES.

Final date to obtain or change ALL OTHER Spring Seeded Crop insurance coverage (excluding wheat in counties with Fall and Spring planted types).

Note: The Adjusted Gross Revenue-Lite program meets the linkage requirements for SURE. Also, if there is no crop insurance coverage in a county for a specific crop, and that crop is insurable in another county under the traditional Federal crop insurance program, a producer may be eligible for crop insurance coverage under a written agreement. Interested producers should contact their local crop insurance agent for details.

Controlled Substance

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant.

Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium, poppies and other drug producing plants.

Lewis County FSA Office
521 Oak Street, Room 9
Nezperce, ID 83543

United States Department of Agriculture
Farm Service Agency

PRESORTED STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Kansas City, MO
PERMIT #BM-2175

Interest Rates January 2011	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating - Direct	1.750%
Farm Ownership - Direct	4.500%
Conservation Loan	4.500%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.500%
Emergency – Actual Loss	3.750%

Dates to Remember	
Jan. 17	Martin Luther King's Birthday
Jan. 31	Last day to request 2010 Mohair, Wool and Unshorn Pelt LDP
Feb. 21	George Washington's Birthday

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.