



NEWSLETTER



TATER TALK – January / February 2011 – NEWSLETTER

**Twin Falls County
FSA Office**
1441 Fillmore
Twin Falls, ID 83301
(208) 733-5380 phone
(208) 734-5138 fax
www.fsa.usda.gov/Idaho

Hours

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

County Staff

Lance Phillips – CED
Candy Hansing – PT
Susan Kime – PT
Jenae Prescott – PT
Angela Sandoval – PT

County Committee

Carol Wells–Chair LAA 1
Kent Lierman – LAA 2
FT Freestone – LAA 3

FSA Committee Meetings @ USDA Service Center

- February 1 – 10 A.M -

Crop Disaster -SURE Sign up for 2009 Starts!!!!

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. 2009 did not have an eligible Secretarial Disaster Declaration in Twin Falls County.

Without that declaration to qualify for the SURE program a minimum of a 10% loss in at least one crop must be met and a total farm revenue reduction of 50% must be met to qualify for the program. Program signup ends July 29, 2011. If you would like more information please contact Candy Hansing at the FSA office.

County Committee Election Results – LAA 3 Kimberly / Hansen / Murtaugh

Congratulations to **FT Freestone**. FT was re-elected to represent farmers from the Kimberly / Hansen / Murtaugh in LAA 3 on the FSA county committee. FT was elected to his 2nd consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area 3 are:

FT will serve for the next three years in this position. No first or second alternate was nomination or voted for on the County Committee.

11% of eligible voters returned their ballots to the office.

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 will hold their organizational meeting on February 1st to determine who will serve as the county committee chairman and vice-chairman.

The Busiest Time of the Year!

2010 was, to say the least, a busy year for everyone. With cool, wet spring weather, planting was delayed on a variety of crops in the Twin Falls area. The result for Twin Falls FSA was about 165 late filed crop reports where producers paid for field inspections due to the amount of field work being done around the June 1st and June 30th deadline.

Even with newsletters and post cards, producers still struggled to get into the office by deadline time. In an effort to better help producers with these June 1st (DCP) and June 30th (Crop Report) deadlines, Twin Falls FSA would like to find more effective ways to communicate with our producers.

When you are in the office in 2011, let us know if another method to remind you would work better than post cards or newsletter mailings. Today's technology allows us to send emails to producers that are quick and cost effective and we are looking into cell phone text message reminders as another way to contact producers. Additionally, while FSA has many home phone numbers, if cell phone numbers is a better way to contact you, give us that number. We will keep any information provided to us as

confidential as we keep all of your personally identifiable information that we already have.

Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC) – Update!

FSA continues to implement the Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC) according to the same rules that were established in the 2008 Farm Bill and used in 2009 & 2010.

For the MILC program to establish a payment rate takes two factors into consideration. The first is the Boston Class 1 Milk Price, the second national feed costs. To determine both of these takes **30 days** after the end of the month to calculate. After that rate is established payments will be paid by the FSA field office within **60 days** or interest will be added. The current rate for November was confirmed at \$0.000. December's rate will be finalized at the end of January and so on.

Start month policy remains the same. If you wish to change your start month you need to come into the office and complete a CCC-580M by the **14th of the preceding month**. If you have questions about your current start month or the monthly rate, contact Angela Sandoval at the Twin Falls FSA Office.

Crop Reporting 2011

FSA begins a new online program for crop reporting in 2011. With any new

program software it takes time to work out the kinks and become familiar with the online changes.

Producers are reminded to come in and report crops planted before the June 30th deadline to avoid late filing fees and delayed program payments. Most FSA programs require a completed crop report before payments can be made.

As a reminder, remember to file a report with FSA only after all crops are planted. If you have questions about crop reporting rules please contact Jenae Prescott at the Twin Falls FSA Office.

Farming Ownership & Operation Changes

Both owners and operators of farmland are responsible for informing local USDA – FSA of changes in ownership of land, new operators, changes in lease conditions including amounts per acre or crop share changes for all farmland participating in FSA programs. A copy of a warranty deed or lease agreement is sufficient to complete these changes. Ownership changes are especially important if you have CRP contracts.

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.

If land has been moved into a trust or estate, FSA also needs to be notified and requests copies of these legal documents to help make these changes.

FSA continually compares the Twin Falls Assessors Office records with our farm records. Producers are reminded to contact the office of a change in operations on a farm so that records can be kept current and accurate.

DCP / ACRE Program

Starting October 1st 2010 the signup for DCP for FY 2011 began. These guaranteed payments can be advanced up to 22% if all signatures are received. The deadline for DCP signup is June 1st.

The ACRE revenue based program for 2009 made payments in Idaho for Wheat that exceeded more than 30 million dollars to eligible wheat producers. Producers who are participating in 2010 ACRE need to bring in 2010 production by July 15, 2011 to qualify for last year. If you have additional questions about ACRE or production requirements, contact Susan Kime at the Twin Falls FSA Office.

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 for 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.

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.*

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 starting 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 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:

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.

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 with 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.

Twin Falls County Office
 1441 Fillmore
 Twin Falls, ID 83301



**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, 2011	Martin Luther King's Birthday – Office Closed
Jan. 31, 2011	Last day request 2010 Mohair, Wool and Unshorn Pelt LDP
Feb. 21, 2011	George Washington's Birthday
Jan. 31, 2011	Yearly Deadline for Livestock Programs Application for Loss
30 days	Loss of Livestock reported to Office due to Natural Event
January 31, 2011	Deadline for Wool and Unshorn Pelts LDP & Market Assistance Loans for 2010
Spring 2011	New Signup for Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) to be announced
Spring 2011	Signup for 2009 Crop Disaster (SURE) program to be announced
March 15, 2011	Deadline for Spring Planted Crops to Purchase Non-Insured Assistance Coverage (NAP)
March 31, 2011	Deadline for Barley, Honey, Oats, Wheat LDP's and Market Assistance Loans (MAL)
May 31, 2011	Deadline for Corn and Dry Peas LDP & MAL's
June 1, 2011	DCP / ACRE Filing Deadline
June 15, 2011	Deadline for Completing 2011 Average Gross Income Statement to IRS
June 30, 2011	Crop Reporting Deadline
August 1, 2011	Election Nominations for LAA 2 (Twin Falls, Salmon Tract, Filer) due to local FSA Office
August 1, 2011	Deadline for Initiating a Farm Reconstitution (Changes in Farm Owner / Operators)
October 1, 2011	Start up for Initiating 2012 Reconstitutions (Changes in Farm Owner / Operators)
October 1, 2011	Signup for 2012 DCP / ACRE Begins
December 1, 2011	Deadline for Perennial Planted Crops to Purchase Non-Insured Assistance Coverage (NAP) for Alfalfa, Grass, Grazing, etc.
14 th of Preceding Month	MILC program monthly deadline to change start month for payments

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