



NEWSLETTER



July 2011

**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 – KPT
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

- August 2 – 10 A.M -

2011 FSA County Committee COC Nomination Deadline

County committees (COC) play a crucial role in helping the county office staff implement the Farm Bill. Due to the important services that COC members provide, producers are encouraged to participate in the FSA county committee election process by nominating an eligible candidate by the Aug. 1, 2011, deadline.

To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign form FSA-669A. The form and other valuable information about FSA county committee elections are available online at:

http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/fsa0669a_committeeelectform.pdf

FSA county committee members make decisions on disaster and conservation programs, emergency programs, commodity price support loan programs and other important agricultural issues. Members serve three-year terms. Committees consist of three to five members who are elected by eligible local producers.

2nd Chances on DCP 2011 & Crop Reporting

June 30th marked the last day for the 2011 crop reports to be filed without a \$46.00 measurement service fee being assessed. Unlike previous years the Direct & Counter Cyclical (DCP) program has late filed provisions that allows you to still enroll and get a contract approved. The deadline is **August 1st** for all late field DCP contracts. The regular field crop report deadline ended **June 30th**, but for a measurement service fee of \$46.00 for

the first hour and \$8.00 for every additional hour, crop reports can be inspected and certified by the FSA office. A crop report is a requirement for payment in the DCP program. If you have questions about if completing the DCP contract and filing a late filed crop report makes monetary sense, please contact the office and we will calculate the cost benefits for you.

2010 ACRE Certification Deadline Extended

The deadline for a 2010 production certification to comply with the ACRE provisions for production reports has been extended to COB Sept. 1, 2011. Because of this extension, using a register on Sept. 1, 2011, is **not** authorized.

The extension is for completing both the farm benchmark yield (2005 through 2009) and the actual farm yield (2010). For more details contact the local FSA office.

Disaster Assistance

The Farm Service Agency would like to remind crop and livestock producers throughout states that have recently experienced severe damage from heavy rains, flooding, wildfires and tornadoes that FSA programs are available to assist with recovery.

FSA administers several important programs that help producers recover from disaster damage and livestock deaths. Among the key programs available to address impacts from disasters are the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP), the Noninsured Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and the

Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) Program.

Fact sheets for all of these programs can be found at www.fsa.usda.gov; click on Newsroom, then Fact Sheets.

We encourage all who have suffered a disaster due to the recent severe weather conditions to read the fact sheets and visit their local FSA county office so they get a quick start in the recovery process.



Twin Falls county office is participating in this national effort to provide food to local community organizations this summer. For more information stop by our office.

Farm Safety

Summer is an exciting and hectic time on Twin Falls County farms. **Be careful.** (Twin Falls County FSA employees care about our customers.)

Remember to: Walk around machinery and check shields and guards; make sure the PTO's master shield is in place; make sure Slow Moving Vehicle signs are on machinery.

If you are taking medicine, take it at the appropriate time and eat on schedule.

If you are working in grain bins know that flowing grain can kill, and it can kill quickly. It takes less than five seconds for a person caught in flowing grain to be trapped. Try not to work alone in bins or confined spaces, and if that's not possible let someone know where you are by checking in regularly by cell phone.

The American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) offers the following safety tips for farmers:

1. Educate yourself on farm equipment. Read and follow instructions according to the equipment's manuals about safety.
2. Conduct regular equipment inspections.
3. Don't wear loose clothing while entering confined spaces such as grain bins, silos and hoppers as this can prevent entanglements.
4. Install Rollover Protective Structures (ROPS) on tractors.



5. Use seat belts while operating tractors with a ROPS. Do not allow additional passengers on the tractor with you.

6. While operating tractors and other farm equipment, be very cautious on rural roadways.

7. Use protective gear when operating machinery: Be familiar with hazardous chemicals. Take extra precaution when handling chemicals such as anhydrous ammonia, carbon dioxide, methane gas and hydrogen sulfide.

8. Consistently educate your family and co-workers about safety practices, especially children.

FSA Farm Loans

FSA is committed to providing family farmers with loans to meet their farm credit needs. If you are having trouble getting the credit you need for your farm, or regularly borrow from FSA, direct and guaranteed loans are currently available.

Ask your lender about an **FSA Guaranteed Loan** if you've had a setback and your lender is reluctant to extend or renew your loan.

Farm Ownership Loans or **Farm Operating Loans** may be obtained as direct loans for a maximum of up to \$300,000. **Guaranteed Loans** can reach a maximum indebtedness of \$1,119,000. Producers are encouraged to apply early so that a loan can be processed and funded in a timely manner.

FSA employees will help you complete the necessary application and other forms, and help you understand what information is required, where to find it or who to contact to get it. To find out more about FSA loan programs, contact the county office staff.

Compliance Spot Checks

Compliance spot checks will be conducted on 2011 crops. Instead of locally selecting farms, contracts, deficiency loans, etc. for review, a nationwide selection of producers is employed. Spot check selections are to be conducted based on a producer's participation in Conservation Reserve Program, Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, Loan Deficiency Program, etc.

For more information about the spot check selection procedure, feel free to contact your local Farm Service Agency office for additional clarification.

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 is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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 type loans 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 Socially Disadvantaged Applicants (SDA).

A socially disadvantaged applicants are from groups whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as a member of the 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.

If producers or their spouses believe they would qualify as socially disadvantaged, they should contact their local FSA office for details. FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

Foreign Landowner 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. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA.

Foreign persons who 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 could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property.

County government offices, real estate agents, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

Beginning and Limited Resource Farmers

FSA assists beginning farmers and or members of socially disadvantaged groups 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 median size.

Each member of an entity must meet the eligibility requirements. Loan approval is not guaranteed.

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

Farm Reconstitutions

For FSA program purposes, tracts having the same owner and the same operator are grouped under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation take place, a farm reconstitution is necessary.

The reconstitution—or recon—is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by **August 1** for farms enrolled in specific programs.

The following are the different methods used when doing a farm recon:

Estate Method — the division of bases, allotments and quotas for a parent farm among heirs in settling an estate;

Designation of Landowner Method — may be used when (1) part of a farm is sold or ownership is transferred; (2) an entire farm is sold to two or more persons; (3) farm ownership is transferred to two or more persons; (4) part of a tract is sold or ownership is transferred; (5) a tract is sold to two or more persons; or (6) tract ownership is transferred to two or more persons. In order to use this method the land sold must have been owned for at least three years, or a waiver granted, and the buyer and seller must sign a Memorandum of Understanding;

DCP Cropland Method — the division of bases in the same proportion that the DCP cropland for each resulting tract relates to the DCP cropland on the parent tract;

Default Method — the division of bases for a parent farm with each tract maintaining the bases attributed to the tract level when the reconstitution is initiated in the system.

Sod Busting

Farmers and ranchers should be aware that if they use highly erodible land for crop production without proper conservation measures, they risk losing eligibility to participate in Farm Service Agency programs.

Before producers clear, plow or otherwise prepare areas not presently under crop production for planting, they are required to file an AD-1026, indicating the area to be brought into production.

Payment Limitations

Any producer who plans to participate in 2011 FSA programs that fall under Handbook 4-PL rules will be required to submit a completed CCC-902, CCC-926 and, if needed, a CCC-901. The completed forms are necessary to determine payment eligibility and payment limitation for FSA programs. The form used previously was called a CCC-502. The CCC-502 and related forms may still be required for certain programs, such as, successor-in-interest to CRP contracts approved under Handbook 1-PL rules.

All partners, stockholders, or members with an ownership interest in the legal entity must make a contribution, whether compensated or NOT compensated, for*

- Active personal labor
- Active personal management
- OR a combination of active personal labor and active personal management

*Note: There are exceptions, for example, “If the total direct payments under DCP received, both directly and indirectly for the program year by the partners, stockholders, and members does NOT exceed one limitation (\$40,000), the requirement of a significant contribution of active personal labor or active personal management may be met by partners, stockholders, or members who collectively hold at least 50 percent of the ownership interest in the legal entity.

Additional information on payment eligibility is available at FSA county offices or online at www.fsa.usda.gov.

GIS

As part of a program to digitally map the nation’s farms and fields, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has established the Common Land Unit (CLU) as a standardized GIS (Geographic Information Systems) data layer that has allowed mapping to be integrated easily on a nationwide basis. The Farm Service Agency manages this CLU data layer through a distributed database environment for all field service centers throughout the country.

Using GIS provides for more consistent and more accurate land measurements, such as field acreage and acreage boundaries of conservation practices, such as riparian buffers. With high quality digital imagery, new land use changes (farm transfers and land subdivisions) can be easily updated. Maps can be created in either paper or digital format for FSA customers or the public.

More information about the Common Land Unit and NAIP imagery can be found by visiting on-line, APFO (Aerial Photography Field Office) at www.apfo.usda.gov.

Maintaining CRP Cover

Maintenance of CRP acreage is your responsibility as outlined in the provisions agreed upon at the time the CRP contract was originated including your specific conservation plan. Proper maintenance includes:

- Adequate approved vegetative cover to control erosion for the contract period.
- Control weeds and other types of undesirable vegetation.
- All control measures outside of the primary nesting season.

Idaho’s primary nesting season is April 1st through August 1st.

Please keep in mind mowing for a cosmetic purpose is prohibited. That is why it is important to review your conservation plan and talk to FSA if you think undesirable plant species are invading your CRP land.

Common maintenance defaults:

- Unauthorized haying or grazing (this includes livestock of any ownership breaking through your fence and grazing on your CRP).
- Noncontrol of weeds, insects, rodents, or wind or water erosion.
- Failure to maintain eligible cover.

Defaults result in costly payment reductions. For example, the payment reduction for unauthorized grazing would be calculated by multiplying the value per acre of the grazed production as determined by the COC times the number of acres in violation, times 2. Don’t let it happen to you.

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.

Successor-In-Interest

Many FSA programs will allow payments to be made to heirs or successors when a program participant passes away. Additionally, contracts in programs such as CRP must be revised to reflect the successor(s) to a deceased participant's interest.

In the event of an FSA program participant's death, it is important that FSA be notified. Entities and joint operations that participate in FSA programs also need to notify FSA if a shareholder or member passes away. FSA benefits are reported to IRS and maintaining current, accurate records about participants is vital to ensuring that those payments are reported correctly

Selected Interest Rates for July 2011	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.18%
Farm Operating - Direct	2.375%
Farm Ownership - Direct	4.75%
Limited Resource	5.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Emergency	3.75%

Dates to Remember	
29 July	SURE application deadline for 2009 losses
1 Aug	COC Nomination Due in County Office
1 Aug	Reconstitutions Request Deadline
1 Sept	2010 ACRE Certification Deadline
30 Sept	Fall Seeded Deadline

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). 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.