



## Ellis County Farm Service Agency

February 2011

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Hays, KS 67601

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### Hours

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

### Office Staff

Gregory W. Kerr,  
**County Executive Director**

Randal Thiel  
**Farm Loan Manager**

Josh Hagenmaier,  
**Farm Loan Officer**

Angie Dealy,  
**Program Technician**

Marge Shore,  
**Program Technician**

Melissa Bigge,  
**Program Technician**

Ruan Windholz,  
**Program Technician**

### County Committee

William Hoffman, Chairperson  
Opal Flinn, Vice- Chairperson  
Randy Huser, Member

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### General CRP signup starts March 14

Those wishing to enroll new lands or expired/expiring Conservation Reserve Program contracts are encouraged to visit their FSA office between March 14 and April 15 to make an offer. Offers for CRP contracts are ranked according to the Environmental Benefits Index (EBI). FSA collects data for each of the EBI factors based on the relative environmental benefits for the land offered. Each eligible offer is ranked in comparison to all other offers and selections made from that ranking. EBI factors to assess the environmental benefits for the land offered:

- Wildlife habitat benefits resulting from covers on contract acreage
- Water quality benefits from reduced erosion, runoff, and leaching
- On-farm benefits from reduced erosion
- Benefits that will likely endure beyond the contract period
- Air quality benefits from reduced wind erosion
- Cost

While parts of the EBI score is set by the characteristics of the land offered, the producer is able to increase their score by practice choice and wildlife enhancements. The Ellis County office will have a CRP informational meeting on March 2, 2011 at 1 PM at the Hays Service Center conference room, 2715 Canterbury Hay, KS. Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in this meeting should contact Greg Kerr at 785-628-3081, Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339, or [greg.kerr@ks.usda.gov](mailto:greg.kerr@ks.usda.gov) by 2/24/10

### State Acreage for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) CP-38E

SAFE is a Continuous CRP practice, which allows producers to enroll cropland fields under 5 acres, or up to 20% of a field into CRP. SAFE offers a signing incentive of \$100/acre, and additional 40% cost share incentives. With high input costs, this may be the perfect opportunity to take less productive lands out of production, provide habitat for wildlife, and improve your bottom line.

### COC Election Results

The Ellis County Committee held its election for LAA 3 December 9, 2010. Randy Huser was on the ballot for

### DCP/ACRE Signup

DCP and ACRE programs for the 2011 crop year have begun. The DCP and ACRE programs require an annual contract signed by all participants. The last day to sign-up in both programs is **June 1, 2011**. Advance payments are available to those interested producers upon approval of the contract. Call our office (785) 628-3081 to make an appointment to complete your 2011 contracts.

### Crop Reporting

Filing an accurate and timely acreage report for **all** crops and land uses, including **grass for grazing** is important for program eligibility. If no FSA-578 is filed, it could cause loss of program benefits in DCP, ACRE, SURE, Marketing Assistance Loans, LDPs, and CRP. The deadline to report small grains, including wheat, oats, and barley is **May 31<sup>st</sup>**. **The deadline for feed grains, grass, and CRP is August 1<sup>st</sup>**. Call the office for an appointment.

### Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE)

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE) provides financial assistance to producers who suffer qualifying losses due to natural disasters. To qualify for SURE producers must implement risk management measures by enrolling in either crop insurance or Non-Insured Crop Assistance Program (NAP) for all crops. SURE evaluates qualifying losses based on total farm revenue, not individual crop losses. The 2009 SURE signup is January 10<sup>th</sup> 2011-July 29<sup>th</sup> 2011.

### Changing Bank Accounts

In order to make timely payments, you need to notify the office if you close your account or if your bank is purchased by another financial institution by filing a new form SF-3881. Payments can be delayed if we are not aware of changes to account and routing numbers

### Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL)

Low cost financing for storage facilities is available for qualifying producers to build or remodel farm storage facilities for a variety of commodities, including wheat, rice, soybeans, corn, hay, renewable biomass, and cold storage for fruits and vegetables. The low interest rate changes monthly. Loan terms of 7, 10, and 12 years are available for the purchase and installation of new, eligible storage facilities or permanently affixed drying and handling equipment or for new components used to remodel existing facilities. Loan limits are up to \$500,000.

**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. *NAP Losses must be reported within 15 days of loss.*

**Farm Operation Changes**

If you have bought, sold, or acquired new rented land in your farm operation, make sure you report the changes to the office as soon as possible. Making the record changes now will save you time in the spring.

**Farm Loan Programs**

FSA offers loans for farmers and ranchers to purchase farmland, equipment, livestock, finance agricultural input expenses, and refinance some types of existing agricultural debt. FSA has a program to assist nearly every farm operator. Some common loan programs are rural youth loans, beginning farmer loans, direct or guaranteed farm ownership loans, direct or guaranteed operating loans, and a new conservation loan program released late last year.

FSA loans generally offer lower interest rates, lower collateral requirements, and longer repayment terms than standard commercial credit. Most FSA interest rates are fixed for the term of the loan. Operating term loans to finance machinery or livestock can be made up to a maximum of \$300,000 for 7 years with a current fixed rate of 1.75% (January rate). Farm ownership loans for real estate purchases or development can be made for a maximum of \$300,000 for up to 40 years with a current fixed rate of 4.5% (January rate). Beginning farmer real estate interest rates can be as low as 1.5%. Interest rates vary slightly each month. Your interest rate would be the rate available on the day your loan is approved or the rate on the date of loan closing, whichever is lower. FSA has numerous loan combinations and loan limitations up to a combined level of \$1,919,000.00 for 2011.

Contact FSA-Farm Loan Programs to discuss your particular situation, review eligibility requirements, and see how we can assist you with your financial needs. Farm Loans is headquartered in Hill City and serves Trego, Graham, Sheridan, Ellis and Rooks Counties.

**CRP- Lessor Prairie Chicken**

In western Kansas, 30,000 acres have been allocated to a new SAFE initiative in certain targeted areas designated within the range of the lesser prairie chicken. **Signup began December 1, 2010 and runs continuously until the acreage goal of 30,000 acres is met.** Expired CRP may be enrolled, but must have suitable wildlife cover. Eligible cropland must have been planted or considered planted in 4 of 6 years from 2002 through 2007.

The following payments are available:

- a one-time signing incentive payment of \$100 per acre (on new lands only)
- a one-time practice incentive payment equal to 40 percent of the eligible installation cost
- cost-share payments up to 50 percent of the eligible cost of establishing a permanent cover
- annual rental payment

**Highly Erodible Land (HEL) 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.

**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. Foreign persons who 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 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

Dates to Remember	
Jan. 10, 2011	2009 SURE Sign-up Begins
March 15, 2011	NAP deadline for Forage Sorghum
March 14- April 15	CRP General signup
May 31, 2011	Small Grains Certification Deadline
June 1, 2011	DCP/ACRE Signup Deadline