



## Ness County Farm Service Agency

January 2011

### James W. Jordan, County Executive Director

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### Hours

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

### Staff

Melody Julian, FLM  
Bonita Pfannenstiel, FLO  
Diane Bell, PT  
Susan Klitzke, PT  
Sherry Walker, PT  
Judy Klitzke, PT  
Stuart McDonald, PT  
Heather Burke, PT

### County Committee

Alan Goodman  
Kirk Schwartzkopf  
BJ Witthuhn

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### Ness County FSA Committee Election

The Ness County Farm Service Agency Committee opened ballots for the COC election on December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010 for a position to serve on the committee. This open position was for the Northeast area of Ness County, including the township of Bazine, North Center, & Waring.

The candidates for the election for this position were B.J. Witthuhn and Stephen Nichepor. The election results were close with B.J. Witthuhn 58 votes and Stephen Nichepor 48 votes.

The 2011 COC are made up of the following people:

Alan Goodman—Chairperson  
Kirk Schwartzkopf—Vice Chairperson  
B.J. Witthuhn—Member  
M. Jean Von Lehe—Advisor

### Farm Loans

Farm Loan Programs (FLP) have various programs to fit the needs of eligible farm operators seeking financing for operating expenses, livestock, machinery, and real estate purchases. Contact the following Farm Loan Program staff to discuss eligibility requirements and program details: Melody Julian, Farm Loan Manger  
Bonita Pfannestiel, Farm Loan Officer  
Diane Bell, Program Technician  
Susan Klitzke, Program Technician

### Administrative

#### **Changing Bank Accounts:**

All FSA payments should be electronically transferred into your bank account. 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. Payments can be delayed if we are not aware of changes to account and routing numbers.

#### **Civil Rights/Discrimination Complaint Process:**

As a participant or applicant for programs or activities operated or sponsored by USDA you have a right to be treated fairly. If you believe you have been discriminated against because of your race, color, national origin, gender, age, religion, disability, or marital or familial status, you may file a discrimination complaint.

The complaint should be filed with the USDA Office of Civil Rights within 180 days of the date you became aware of the alleged discrimination. To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington DC 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964 (voice or TDD), USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

*A complaint must be filed within 180 calendar days from the date the complainant knew, or should have known, of the alleged discrimination.*

#### **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 Farm Service Agency office near you for more information.

### Farm Programs

#### **Acreage Reporting**

Filing an accurate acreage report at your local FSA office can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs. Failed acreage is acreage that was timely planted with the intent to harvest, but because of disaster related conditions, the crop failed before it could be brought to harvest. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date. Annual acreage reports are required for most Farm Service Agency programs. Annual crop report deadlines vary based on region, crop, permanent vs. annual crop type, NAP or non-NAP crop and fall or winter seeding. Consult your local FSA office for deadlines in your area.

#### **Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program**

The Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) is a revenue-based commodity program authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill as an alternative to DCP. Sign up for ACRE occurs between October 1 and June 1 each crop year. The ACRE alternative provides eligible producers a state level revenue guarantee, based on the 5-year state Olympic average yield

and the 2-year national average price. Producers who elect the ACRE program for a farm agree to:

- forgo counter-cyclical payments;
- accept a 20-percent reduction of the direct payments;
- accept a 30-percent reduction in loan rates for all commodities produced on the farm.

Producers who elect ACRE commit to this option through crop year 2012. Commodities eligible for ACRE payments are wheat, corn, grain sorghum, barley, oats, upland cotton, long grain rice, medium and short grain rice, peanuts, soybeans, sunflower seed, canola, flaxseed, safflower, mustard seed, rapeseed, sesame seed, crambe, dry peas, lentils, small chickpeas and large chickpeas. The ACRE program was created to give producers an option in lieu of traditional counter-cyclical payments. To elect ACRE for a farm the first year, producers must complete an election form CCC-509 ACRE as well as an enrollment form. The producer must again enroll each year the producer intends to participate and receive benefits.

**Change in Farming Operation:**

If you have bought or sold land, or if you have picked up or dropped rented land from your operation, make sure you report the changes to the office as soon as possible. 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 contact the office of a change in operations on a farm so that records can be kept current and accurate.

**Direct & Counter-Cyclical Payment Program (DCP)**

Signup for the Direct and Countercyclical Payment (DCP) Program occurs annually with a June 1 deadline. FSA will not accept any late-filed applications. Signup in the ACRE option is also available through June 1 each year. If you elect the ACRE option, you are committed to this option through 2012, but you are still required to enroll annually by June 1. FSA computes DCP Program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. Each year you may request to receive advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment for

each commodity associated with the farm. Counter-cyclical payment rates vary depending on market prices and are issued only when the effective price for a commodity is statutorily set below its target price. The electronic DCP (or eDCP) service will save you time, reduce paperwork and speed up contract processing at FSA offices. It is available to anyone eligible to participate in the DCP Program. To access this online service, you must have an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires filling out an online registration form at [www.eauth.egov.usda](http://www.eauth.egov.usda) followed by a visit to the local USDA Service Center for identity verification.

**Payment Eligibility and Payment Limitation:**  
*Average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI):*

For commodity and disaster programs under the new farm bill, the AGI limitation was reduced from \$2.5 million from all sources to a three-year average non-farm AGI of \$500,000 such that a person or entity shall not be eligible for such programs if the non-farm AGI exceeds \$500,000. Also, under the new regulations, an individual or entity must have a 3-year average AGI less than or equal to \$750,000 per year from farm income in order to qualify for direct payments issued under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program. For conservation programs, the average nonfarm AGI limitation is \$1 million or less for eligibility. However, an individual or entity who has non-farm AGI in excess of \$1 million remains eligible for conservation programs only if 66.66 percent or more of the total AGI is derived from farming, ranching and forestry operations. In addition, the AGI limitation for conservation programs may be waived on a case-by case basis if it is determined that environmentally sensitive land of special significance would be protected.

Dates to Remember	
Date	What
01/13/2011	2009 SURE Signup Begins
03/15/2011	NAP-Final Date—Feed Insurance
5/31/2011	Small Grains for Grain Acreage Report
6/1/2011	Final Signup Date for 2011 DCP/ACRE
7/29/2011	Final Signup 2009 SURE