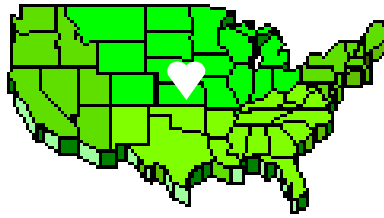




# FARM SERVICE FOCUS

FARM  
SERVICE  
AGENCY



Smith County FSA Office  
319 Roger Barta Way  
Smith Center, KS 66967

**COUNTY COMMITTEE:**  
Mary Arment CHAIRPERSON  
Robert Koops, VICE-CHAIRPERSON  
Darin Hawkins, MEMBER

Cary J. Tucker  
County Executive Director

REGULAR MEETING DATE SECOND  
THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH, 8:00 A.M.

**FROM THE HEART OF THE USA**

OFFICE HOURS 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
TELE: 785-282-3832 FAX 785-282-6830

June 2008

## Sodbuster Regulations

The term “sodbusting” is used to identify the preparation of erosion-prone grasslands for use as cropland. Sodbuster violations are un-authorized practices on highly erodible lands that converted native vegetation such as rangeland or woodland, to crop production after Dec. 23, 1985.

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 (FSA) programs.

Before producers clear, plow or otherwise prepare areas not presently under crop production, they are required to file an AD-1026, indicating the area to be brought into production. If NRCS indicates on a CPA-026 that the area will be highly erodible land, the producer will be required to develop and implement a conservation plan on the affected acreage, before bringing land into production.

Always review the Conservation Plan of Operation (CPO) with NRCS personnel prior to purchasing or renting crop land acres to ensure the acreage meets Conservation Compliance rules. Never remove trees along or in a natural drainage without consulting Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) personnel.

In addition, producers and the producer’s affiliates have to file an AD-1026 with the staff in the administrative or control county office before any farm program payments can be made. The AD-1026 is the producer’s signed certification that HELC, as well as wetland conservation, provisions will not be violated.

## EARLY LAND PREPARATION EXPIRING CRP

Producers with Conservation Reserve program (CRP) contracts expiring September 30, 2008 may begin land preparation to plant a **fall** crop as early as May 1, 2008. Only Smith and counties west may start land preparation in May. A fall crop must be planted if land preparation is started before September 30, 2008. Failure to plant a fall crop will result in the refund of all payments received plus liquidated damages and interest. Producers who start preparing the acreage early must file form CRP-1G prior to beginning preparation. Annual rental payments will be reduced through June 30 from the start date of the early preparation. Producers who elect to start preparation for a fall crop beginning July 1 will not lose any annual rental payments. All producers must obtain an approved Conservation Plan of Operation with NRCS prior to destruction of the CRP cover. CRP cover may be chemically destroyed on or after July 15, 2008 in preparation of planting a spring crop. Fall crops may be planted no earlier than September 1, 2008. All signatories to the CRP contract must sign the CRP-1G and the County Office Committee (COC) must approve before land preparation may begin.

## CP38E KANSAS UPLAND GAME BIRDS

The goal of the Kansas Upland Game Birds SAFE (State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement) is to improve populations of quail, pheasant, prairie chicken, and other grassland associated wildlife. The SAFE project will establish and maintain 30,100 acres of CRP. To be eligible for SAFE land must meet the basic CRP eligibility requirements and be cropland in four of six years 1996 thru 2001. Contracts are for not less than 10, nor more than 15 years. Signup for CP38E continues until the acreage goal of 30,100 is met.

**Rental rates** are based on the average value of dry-land cash rent for the three predominate soils. A one-time signing incentive of \$100 per acre for Contracts of 10 years or more is paid. A one time practice incentive payment is paid for installation costs and practice installation cost share. Producers “re-enrolling expiring CRP” into CP38E will not be eligible for the \$100 Signup Incentive (SIP) or practice installation cost share (PIP).

**Maximum Acreage** enrollment is 5 acres for fields less than 25 acres, or 20 percent of a field for fields greater than 25 acres, with a maximum acreage of 80 acres. Fields less than 5 acres may be enrolled in their entirety.

## TELEVISION CHANGE

On February 19, 2009 all TV broadcasts will go from analog to digital. The governmental Commerce Department will give those who apply two coupons worth \$40 each to buy an analog –to-digital converter box, which can be attached to analog TV’s.

## CCRP ENROLLMENT ON EXPIRING CRP

The continuous CRP Program (CCRP) allows producers to enroll, at any time, acreage into practices such as filter strips, windbreaks, quail buffers, and the Kansas Upland Game Birds SAFE project described above. New policy is now present for re-enrolling land under CCRP practices for “EXPIRING” general and continuous CRP practices.

In short the new policy will allow producers with expiring CRP to re-enroll all or a portion of the expiring acreage into a Continuous signup practice. The “needs and feasibility criteria” is preserved for the ground being re-enrolled if the ground is offered for enrollment before June 1 of the year following the year the CRP contract expires. Expired CRP acreage offered for re-enrollment past the June 1 final date to re-enroll would then be considered new land and would need to meet all CRP practice eligibility.

### **FARM STORAGE FACILITY LOANS**

FSA offers seven-year, low-interest loans to grain producers to build new or upgrade existing storage facilities and related essential, permanently affixed drying or handling equipment. Loan opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- New conventional-type cribs or bins, oxygen-limiting and other upright silo-type structures, and flat-type storage structures designed for whole grain storage,
- Perforated floors, safety equipment, electrical equipment and concrete components considered essential for a fully functional storage facility,

Farm storage facility loans must be approved prior to site preparation, equipment purchase or construction, and must be secured by a promissory note and security agreement. Special provisions apply for loans exceeding \$50,000.

The maximum loan amount will be 85 percent of the net cost of the applicant's needed storage or handling equipment, not to exceed \$100,000 per borrower. A minimum down payment to the supplier or contractor is required to bridge the gap between the net cost of the storage facility and the loan amount. Fixed interest rates on farm storage facility loans are equivalent to the rate of interest charged on U.S. Treasury Securities of comparable maturity on the date the loan is approved. May 2008 interest rate, for example, is 3.0 percent. There is a \$45 application fee.

### **Farm Loan Programs**

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers loans for farmers and ranchers to purchase farmland and finance agricultural operations. FSA loan programs are designed to help producers who are temporarily unable to obtain private or commercial credit. In many cases, applicants are beginning farmers who have insufficient net worth to qualify for financing through a commercial lender. In other instances, borrowers might have suffered setbacks from natural disasters or might be persons with limited resources.

Farm ownership loans or farm operating loans may be obtained as direct loans for a maximum of up to \$200,000. Guaranteed loans can reach a maximum indebtedness of \$949,000. Emergency loans are always direct loans for farmers who may have suffered physical or production losses in disaster areas designated by a Presidential or Secretarial disaster declaration. Rural Youth Loans, Loans to Beginning Farmers and loans for socially disadvantaged applicants are also available through FSA.

For detail information loan eligibility or the different available loan programs, just contact the county office staff for an appointment with a farm loan officer.

### **County Committee Election**

The election of responsible agricultural producers to FSA County Committees is important to all farmers and ranchers. It is crucial that every producer take part in this election because county committees are a direct link between the farm community and the U.S Department of Agriculture.

The 2008 election for Smith County Committee will be in Local Administrative Area (LAA) 2, the middle portion of the county. This includes the townships of Martin, Beaver, Washington, Lane, Center, Blaine, Banner and Harlan. The 2008 election process includes the following dates:

June 15, 2008      Nomination period begins  
August 1, 2008      Final day to file nomination at FSA  
November 3, 2008      Ballots mailed to eligible voters  
December 1, 2008      Final day to return ballots to FSA  
January 1, 2009.      Elected members and alternates take office