NEWSLETTER

SMITH COUNTY
Farm Service Agency

March 6, 2012

319 Roger Barta Way
Smith Center KS 66967

PH (785) 282-3832
FAX (785) 282-6830
www.fsa.usda.gov/ks

Hours
Monday - Friday
7:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Office Staff

Cary Tucker,
County Executive Director
Marci Overmiller, Judy Schmidt, Cathy Lanus & Cherie Herredsberg
Program Technicians

County Committee

Darin Hawkins,
Chairperson
Dianna Rice,
Vice Chairperson
Craig Doane,
Member

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, audiotape, 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.

General CRP Signup #43

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is offering a general sign-up period from **March 12, 2012 through April 6, 2012**. A portion in the southern part of Smith County is again in a priority area, which will increase the chances of those offers being accepted.

Landowners enrolled in CRP receive annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish long-term, resource conserving covers on environmentally sensitive land. Land that is not currently enrolled in CRP and land expiring Sept. 30, 2012 can be offered during signup if all eligibility requirements are met. Offers for CRP contracts will be ranked according to the Environmental Benefits Index (EBI). Each eligible offer is ranked in comparison to all other offers and selections are made from the ranking. CRP fact sheets can be obtained online at www.fsa.usda.gov then click on Fact Sheets.
Producers interested in offering acreage will need to contact the FSA office and complete necessary forms.

Acreage Reporting

Acreage reporting is required by the DCP and ACRE programs. It is also a requirement of commodity loans and LDPs. CRP eligibility also requires annual acreage reports, along with the NAP program.

May 31 is the final date to timely report planted acres of wheat, barley, triticale and **oats**. Native grass pasture and forage acres are also reported by this deadline.

July 15 is the final date to report corn, milo, soybeans, feed, and other spring planted crops. **Please note the spring crop reporting date is earlier than in previous years.**

2012 DCP and ACRE Signup

Signup for the 2012 DCP and ACRE programs is currently underway. There are no advance payments this year. The entire payment will be issued in the October final payments. The farm program contract (CCC-509) requires all owners and operators to sign the form. The final date to return signatures is June 1, 2012.

We are conducting this signup by appointment. Numerous eligibility forms are also completed at the appointment. **New this year**: The AGI eligibility form (CCC-931) **CANNOT** be signed by Power-of-Attorney's. Operators will be responsible to get landowner signatures and return the form to our office.

Darin Hawkins

Congratulations to Darin Hawkins who was elected to the Smith County Office Committee (COC) during the election held last December. Darin will represent the middle part of the county for the next three years. The COC meets the second Thursday of every other month. April is the next meeting month.

NAP Sales Closing Date Approaches

March 15, 2012 is the final date to purchase a NAP policy on forage sorghum and dual purpose forage sorghum. The SURE program is not authorized for 2012, however, if the new farm bill includes any type of disaster program it may require NAP coverage on non-insurable crops. Producers may want to take another look at insuring their feed crops.

Remember that feed acres intended to be chopped for silage are no longer covered under NAP. Insurance on these silage acres must be purchased down town through your RMA insurance provider. Report all forage crop production losses within 15 days of the occurrence. Producers must keep records giving the date of harvest and number of bales and a representative number of scale tickets for each type of forage. Maintain all records for the current year and the immediate three past years for spot check purposes.

Farm Stored Facility Loans

Under the Farm Stored Facility Loan program, we issue low interest loans to participants to erect new farm storage. The program requires at least a 15% down payment, and loans over $50,000 must be secured by real estate. The current interest rate is 1.375% on a 7 year fixed note. Larger loans may be stretched out for 10 or 12 year repayments, but the interest rate does increase to 2.000% and 2.250% respectively. Producers wishing to apply for a Facility Loan will need to provide current financial information in the form of cash flow and balance sheets, an estimate for the cost of the bins to be erected and a $100 application fee. We can also loan on hay storage, silage pits, and cold storage for vegetables under this program.

PREVENTED PLANTING

Producers who request prevented planting benefits through their Federal Crop Insurance representative should also request the identical acreage credited as prevented planting to FSA.

Prevented planting must be reported within 15 calendar days of the crop's final planting date and form CCC-576 "Notice of Loss" filed. The County Committee may accept late filed prevented planting reports. FSA approval of prevented planting acreage and Federal Crop Insurance approval of the same prevented planting acreage is not necessarily required before a producer receives Prevented Planting benefits from Federal Crop Insurance.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Reasonable accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment to attend or participate in meetings or events sponsored by the Farm Service Agency. If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in one of our events, please call the FSA county office at 785-282-3832, and we will be happy to make any needed arrangements.

FOREIGN LAND OWNERSHIP REQUIREMENT

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Act, (AFIDA), requires foreign persons, including corporations, partnerships, trusts, estates, associations or like entities who acquire, transfer or hold interests in Ag land, to report these holdings and changes to the Secretary of Agriculture. Reports must be submitted within 90 days of the date the land is bought, sold or transferred. Forms for reporting are available at any FSA office. Failure to timely file an accurate report may result in a penalty of up to 25% of the fair market value of the agricultural land.

REPORT FARM RECORD CHANGES

If you have bought, sold, or are renting different land (including pasture), make sure you report the changes to FSA within 30 days of the record change. Do not wait until DCP signup. Failure to report record changes within 30 days may cause the loss of all FSA benefits. For farm ownership changes you will need to provide a recorded deed or signed contract for sale and the sales agreement. Ensure the sales agreement addresses all CRP and other FSA payment disposition. Name changes such as forming corporations, LLC's, partnerships, etc also need to be reported.

SODBUSTING PURCHASED LAND, NEWLY RENTED ACREAGE AND EXPIRED CRP

Prior to sodbusting **any** acreage including expired Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres and before planting a crop on newly purchased or rented acreage, check the Conservation Plan of Operation (CPO). Planting a crop on sodbusted acreage or on newly acquired land that does not have a fully implemented CPO will cause the loss of all USDA benefits on all acreage owned and operated. Form AD-1026 must be approved by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) prior to breaking any acreage or planting a crop on acreage that does not have a completed CPO.

SIGNATURE AUTHORITY FOR SPOUSES

Spouses can sign FSA program documents on behalf of each other for programs in which either has an interest without filing special power of attorney forms. This authority will remain in effect until written notification has been received by FSA revoking this authority. Spouses must have form FSA-211,"Power of Attorney" to sign on behalf of each other for commodity loans or Farm Loan Program documents. **Exception: The AGI Eligibility Form (CCC-931) cannot be signed by a spouse.**

2010 SURE Signup

Signup for the 2010 SURE program is currently underway and will continue through June 1, 2012. Under this program producers are reimbursed for crop losses incurred during the 2010 crop year. Smith County is a Secretarial Disaster Designated county, so producers must only have a 10% loss on a crop of economic significance in order to be eligible for payments. A requirement of the SURE program is that all crops of economic significance are covered by insurance or NAP.

CONTINUOUS CRP PRACTICES

The following CRP practices may be offered at any time under the continuous signup:

Filter Strips

Shelter Belts and Windbreaks

Waterways

Contour Grass Strips on the Terrace

Contour Grass Strips off the Terrace

Any Acreage with an Erodibility Index of 20 or Greater

SAFE Acres, CP38E
The SAFE practice stands for State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement. Five acres or 20% of a field, whichever is larger, may be enrolled in the SAFE

Habitat Buffers for Upland Birds
These acres are planted to grass and their main focus is also to provide nesting habitat for upland birds. This practice is limited to buffer strips on the outside edge of farmed fields.

Riparian Buffers
These are acres along streams and rivers in marginal pasture land. They are planted to trees, shrubs, and grass to prevent pollutants from entering the water.

Under the continuous CRP, producers earn annual rental payments based upon the soil types of the soils being offered, earn cost share equal to approximately 90% of last year's average cost when all incentives are applied, and also earn a signup incentive of a one-time payment equal to $100 per acre for each acre enrolled.

Dates to Remember	
3/12/2012	General CRP Signup #43 starts
3/15/2012	Last day to buy NAP on Forage Sorghum Feed and other spring planted forage crops
4/6/2012	Final Day of General CRP Signup #43
5/31/2012	Final Wheat, Barley, and Oats reporting date
6/1/2012	Final date to sign into DCP or ACRE
6/1/2012	Final date of 2010 SURE signup
7/15/2012	Final feed grain reporting date