



NEWSLETTER



Atchison County FSA Office

302 E Hwy 136
Rock Port, MO 64482

660-744-5328 phone
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Hours

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

March 2012

County Office Staff

Corey Leshner,
County Executive
Director

William R. Dreyer,
Farm Loan Manager

Roger Uptergrove,
Farm Loan Officer

Pamela Husing
Pat Lane
Marilyn Thurnau
Karen Vette,
Program Technicians

Bernard Heits
Julie Joesting
Roger Martin,
County Committee

County Committee
Meets 2nd Wednesday
of Every Month at 8:00
a.m.

Visit our Website at:
www.fsa.usda.gov/mo

It is hard to believe it is March and we are once again thinking about planting another crop. I think it is safe to say we are all thankful for the mild winter we've had, especially so some repair work can be completed on the MO River bottom. I'm hopeful the fair weather trend will continue throughout this year.

As you have been working to complete tasks to be ready for the spring season, another task that can be taken care of now is completing paperwork at your local FSA office. Signup is underway for the annual farm program referred to as the DCP or ACRE program. Now is a great time to stop by the office and get farms enrolled before the spring rush of farming begins. The sign-up period ends June 1, 2012. See the article "**2012 DCP/ACRE Sign-Up**" for complete details.

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) Disaster signup for losses incurred during 2010 is still underway. This sign-up period also ends June 1, 2012. If you feel your 2010 yields or revenue suffered a 10% or greater loss and you have not already done so, contact your local FSA office for more details.

County Committee elections were held in December and the election results can be found later in this newsletter. I thank everyone who participated in the election process, whether you took the time to return a voted ballot, nominated someone to run for office, or placed your name upon a ballot to run for a County Committee position. The County Committee works to tailor national farm programs to better fit and serve local producers. The Committee member jobs and the election process are very important to local farm programs.

A general CRP signup will begin on March 12, 2012 and end on April 6, 2012. During this sign-up period new acreage as well as acreage that will expire from CRP on September 30, 2012 can be offered for participation in CRP. Lots of options for enrollment and participation are available. See the article entitled "**CRP Signup Announced**" for information on the CRP signup.

As everyone is aware, our agency is under budget restraints that are causing us to create new ways to serve you, our customers. One of the ways we are trying to reduce costs and actually notify you of program changes and deadlines in a timelier manner is through electronic notification using emails and texts. See the article entitled "**FSA Adopting Electronic Notifications**" for more details. Mailed newsletters, postcards and other notifications will soon be a thing of the past and the electronic notification will be the only option available to receive updates from the office.

Funding for the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) due to the 2011 flood has been received and County Committee approvals will be made on applications in the very near future. Due to the amount of damage and anticipated cost share amounts, some applications will have to be sent to the FSA State Office and /or National Office for approval, which will delay approval and payments. Once notified of approval from the applicable approving authority, you must respond and sign a form within 15 days to remain eligible. After work is complete, remember to provide FSA with copies of all invoices, bills, etc. so final evaluations can be made and cost-share payments issued. The payment limitation for the program is \$200,000.

Finally, a **change in the crop reporting deadline** will be implemented this year for spring seeded crops. The new deadline is July 15th, which coincides with the RMA reporting deadline in Missouri.

As always, if you have any program questions please don't hesitate to contact the office.

Corey Leshner

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Julie Joesting. Julie was re-elected to the FSA Committee in Atchison County to represent local farmers and ranchers. Julie will be serving her 3rd consecutive 3-year term. Brandon Oswald was elected as an alternate to the County Committee in Atchison County.

At the County Committee organizational meeting, Julie Joesting was elected Chairperson, Roger Martin elected Vice-Chairperson and Bernard Heits elected regular member.

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot and participate in the election process. The county committee system works only because of your participation. Thank you for helping us serve you better!

2012 DCP/ACRE Sign-up

2012 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP), commonly referred to as the annual farm program, enrollment will begin Jan. 23, 2012 and will end June 1, 2012. Here are some IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

- All producers with an interest in **DCP base** acres must be included on the DCP/ACRE contract and receive a proportionate share of DCP/ACRE payment for the farm.
- All producers receiving a share greater than zero on the DCP/ACRE contract must sign the contract no later than June 1, 2012.
- Changes on the farm enrolling in DCP/ACRE must be reported to your local FSA office. Changes include:
 - Ownership changes
 - Producer changes (Individuals and Entities)
 - Change in crop shares arrangements

Note: Changes cannot be made after Sept. 30, 2012.

Special Accommodations

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the county FSA office.

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 this requirement.

CRP Signup Announced – March 12-April 6, 2012

FSA will hold a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) general sign-up from March 12 through April 6, 2012. Land not currently enrolled in CRP and acreage under contracts expiring on September 30, 2012 may be offered during this sign-up period. To submit CRP offers, producers must visit their local FSA office. FSA will accept offers only during the sign-up period. In most instances, to be eligible, a producer must have owned or operated the land for at least 12 months prior to the sign-up period; the land must have been enrolled in CRP or planted to an agricultural commodity four of the six crop years from 2002 to 2007; the land must be physically and legally capable of being planted in a normal manner to an agricultural commodity.

In return for establishing long-term resource conserving covers, FSA provides rental payments to participants. Rental rates for the signup will remain the same as last year and are based on the relative productivity of the soils with the county and average cash rental rates in the county. County office staff will work with producers to calculate the maximum rental rate for each offer prior to submission of offers. Producers may offer land below the maximum rate to increase the likelihood that FSA will accept the offer. Whole fields or partial fields may be offered.

Cost-share assistance will be provided to producers to help establish the approved cover that they agree to. All offers received during the sign-up period will be ranked according to the Environmental Benefits Index (EBI). FSA collects data (primarily based on location, soils information and selected conservation practice) and determines the EBI for the land offered. Each eligible offer is ranked in comparison to all other offers across the nation. After the sign-up ends, the Secretary will decide where to make the EBI cutoff. Producers may consult with local FSA and NRCS staff on how to maximize EBI points and increase the likelihood that your offer will be accepted.

During the last two general sign-up periods, we have found many expiring CRP contract acreages with tree and gully issues. For CRP acreage to be eligible to be re-offered, it must meet all CRP eligibility criteria at the time of the signup period. **Acreage that is covered by trees or that is part of a gully is not eligible for re-enrollment.** CRP regulations state that for land to be considered eligible to be offered into CRP it must “be physically capable of being planted in a normal manner to an agricultural commodity.” CRP acreages with trees or gullies are not considered to be physically capable of being planted in a normal manner and those acres are ineligible to be re-offered.

If you are interested in re-offering a contract or making a CRP offer on new land, please contact the office to set up an appointment. If you are choosing to not re-offer an existing contract, we ask that you notify the office as well.

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, such as hay and pasture or fruit and vegetable crops. Application for coverage must be filed by the applicable crop's application closing date. Most NAP crops in this area have a March 15th application closing date. Production records for all crops must be reported to FSA no later than the acreage reporting date for the crop for the following year. FSA requires that any production reported in a loss year be verifiable according to Agency specifications. *NAP Losses must be reported within 15 days of loss.*

FSA Adopting Electronic Notifications

The USDA Farm Service Agency offices are moving toward a more efficient and cost effective way of notifying producers of changes to farm programs, approaching deadlines and other important information. Producers are asked to contact their local office about options for electronic delivery of notices, newsletters and reminders instead of a hard copy through the mail. At some point, in the not too distant future, mailed newsletters may be a thing of the past. FSA, like many other organizations, is trying to work smarter and be more efficient. Moving to electronic notifications via email and text messages will help conserve resources and save taxpayer dollars and can actually speed up the process of putting information and paperwork in your hands. **Ask the office staff about e-alerts the next time you are in the office.** You may find that it is a great help in keeping you timely informed about changes affecting your farming operation.

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.*

1099-G

Producers who have received payments from FSA should have received a CCC-1099-G. A CCC-1099-G is a report to the Internal Revenue Service about FSA payments made to producers during the previous calendar year. The CCC-1099-G is a service to help participating producers report taxable income. It is not intended to replace the program participant's responsibility to report income to the IRS. When the CCC-1099-G is received, it should be checked with your records to see that the amounts are correct. Refunds will no longer be reported on the 1099-G, but will be available online from the FSA Financial Inquiries (FSA-FI) web-based database. Program participants with an eAuthentication user ID and password may access their refund information at FSA-FI and select "Inquiry Type 1099/Refund Reports". Refund amounts are displayed on the Producer's Year-to-Date Activity web page. If you have a question concerning the 1099-G refund information, you may contact your local FSA office for assistance locating the correct payment data.

Farm Loan Programs

The Farm Service Agency 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 loan guarantee 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 have a maximum limit of \$1,214,000. This makes the maximum combination of direct and guaranteed loan indebtedness \$1,514,000. The one-time loan origination fee charged on FSA guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans is 1.5 percent of the guaranteed portion of the loan. To find out more about FSA loan programs, contact the county office staff.

Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Risk Management Agency (RMA)

To prevent fraud, waste, and abuse FSA supports the RMA in the prevention of fraud, waste and abuse of the Federal Crop Insurance Program. FSA has been, and will continue to, assist RMA and insurance providers by monitoring crop conditions throughout the growing season. FSA will continue to refer all suspected cases of fraud, waste and abuse directly to RMA. Producers can report suspected cases to the county office staff, the RMA office, or the Office of the Inspector General.

Highly Erodible Land 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.

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 your local office or any Farm Service Agency office near you for more information.

Bank Account Changes

Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into your bank account. In order for timely payments to be made, producers need to notify the FSA county office if your account has been changed or if another financial institution purchases your bank. Payments can be delayed if the FSA office is not aware of updates to your account and routing numbers.

Dates to Remember	
March 12	CRP General Signup 43 Begins
March 15	NAP Purchase Date Deadline for Most Crops
April 6	CRP Signup 43 Ends
May 28	Memorial Day – USDA Service Center Closed
June 1	DCP / ACRE Signup Deadline
June 1	2010 SURE Signup Deadline
July 4	Independence Day – USDA Service Center Closed
July 15	Spring Seeded Crop Reporting Deadline

Visit our website at: www.fsa.usda.gov/mo

March 2012 Interest Rates	
Farm Operating Loans - Direct	1.375%
Farm Ownership Loans - Direct	3.375%
Farm Ownership Loans – Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer	1.5%
Emergency Loans	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility Loans – 7yr	1.375%
Farm Storage Facility Loans – 10yr	2%
Farm Storage Facility Loans- 12 yr	2.25%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.125%

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. 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).