



June 2008

Buchanan County News

**Buchanan County
USDA Service Center**
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Office Hours
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Crop Disaster Program Sign-up Continues and Quality Sign-up to Begin Soon

Eligible farmers and producers who suffered crop loss damage between Jan. 1, 2005, and Dec. 31, 2007, can still apply to receive disaster assistance. FSA continues to accept applications and make payments for quantity losses under the Crop Disaster Program (CDP), for losses that occurred before the end of the 2007 calendar year. Also, sign-up for quality losses under the CDP will begin soon at the county office. For quality losses, producers must apply for quantity loss to be eligible to apply for a quality loss. However, producers do not need to qualify for a quantity loss. In addition, the requirement for Crop Insurance or NAP coverage still applies. Quality loss participants **will be required to provide actual production evidence. The actual production evidence will need to show the quantity, price AND quality factors.**

Stored and fed production must have a quality test indicating quality and quantity by January 1 of the year following harvest. For stored production, the price is determined using the local market conditions in effect on the date the production evidence is submitted. The commodity must have suffered at least a 25% reduction in value to meet the Economic Loss Minimum. The National FSA office is developing a software program to determine whether the producer meets the Economic Loss Minimum.

For more disaster program information go online at: <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov> .

Final Acreage Reporting Dates Quickly Approaching

Farm Service Agency (FSA), would like to remind producers of the acreage reporting requirements that must be met prior to receiving program benefits. If producers miss the acreage reporting deadline dates, a late filing fee will be charged.

Producers are required to file an FSA-578, *Report of Acreage*, certification for the farm by the **June 30 deadline for small grains** and by **July 31 for all other crops (including CRP) except small grains.** To be considered timely, acreage reports on crops are due in the county office by the earlier of June 30 for small grains and July 31 for all other crops, or 15 calendar days before the onset of harvest or grazing of the specific crop acreage being reported.

It is also very important that producers report crop losses, including those insured under Federal Crop Insurance (FCIC) and Non-insured Assistance Program (NAP) within 15 days of the date damage occurred or 15 days from the date damage is apparent. Losses and or damages to crops must be reported after each disaster occurrence and in a timely manner to insure continued eligibility for benefits.

Producers are encouraged to visit their local FSA county office to file the required FSA-578 certification report before the deadline dates expire. Filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs.

USDA Announces CRP Permitted Use for Livestock Feed Needs

Recently, USDA authorized certain acreage enrolled under the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) to be available for hay and forage after the primary nesting season ends for grass-nesting birds, which is after July 15, 2008. This is available for CRP participants until November 10, 2008. This modification for critical feed use is only available in 2008.

CRP participants with certain established vegetative cover may voluntarily have their CRP contract modified by CCC to utilize certain land enrolled in CRP for critical feed use, including haying or grazing. Acreage eligible for critical feed use includes acreage that is fully established and devoted to the following CRP practices in Missouri:

- CP1, Establishment of Permanent Introduced Grasses and Legumes,
- CP2, Establishment of Permanent Native Grasses,
- CP4B, Permanent Wildlife Habitat – Corridors,
- CP4D, Permanent Wildlife Habitat,
- CP10, Vegetative Cover – Grass – Already Established,

The most environmentally sensitive land enrolled in CRP is ineligible for critical feed use. These lands include wetlands, buffers, filter strips and other practices not listed as eligible. In addition, acreage ineligible for critical feed use includes acreage devoted to useful life easements, as determined by CCC, and land within 120 feet of a stream or other permanent water body.

Haying is limited to 50 percent of each eligible field. If grazing, 25 percent of each field must remain ungrazed or all of the eligible CRP acreage may be grazed at no more than 75 percent of the stocking rate, as determined by NRCS.

No payment reduction will be assessed on contracts being utilized for this critical feed use. However, producers will be required to pay a fee of \$75, per contract for the haying or grazing.

Beginning Farmers and Ranchers

FSA has funding to assist beginning farmers and or members of socially disadvantaged groups to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years;
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm;
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA;
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's median farm size.

Note: All applicants for direct farm ownership loans must have participated in business operation of a farm for at least three years.

To find out more about loans for Beginning Farmer and Ranchers and more basic qualifications required, contact your local FSA county office to setup an appointment with a loan approval official.

2008 Farm Bill Credit Program Facts:

The Beginning Farmer and Rancher Down Payment Loan Program has been changed to better serve producers as follows:

- Fixes the interest rate at 1.5%, or at 4% below the regular direct farm ownership loan interest rates, whichever is greater
- Increases the maximum allowable sales price from \$250,000 to \$500,000
- Reduces the borrower down payment requirement to not less than 5%
- Changes the term of the loan from 15 years to 20 years

County Committee Elections “FSA Counts on You”

From **June 15 through Aug. 1**, farmers and ranchers can nominate eligible peers as candidates for election to the Buchanan County Farm Service Agency County Committee. Since COC elections happen only once a year, here is an election refresher. For election purposes, counties are divided into *local administrative areas*, or LAAs. Each LAA selects one producer to serve a three-year term on the Farm Service Agency county committee.

Each year, an election is held in an LAA to replace the committee member whose three-year term is expiring. In counties with three LAAs, one seat is up for election. This year LAA 2 seat is up for election. The LAA 2 area is south of 36 Highway and west of 371 Highway.

Remember, the nomination period runs **June 15 through Aug. 1**. The completed nomination form must be returned to the county office by the close of business on Aug. 1, or postmarked by midnight Aug. 1, 2008. Voting takes place in the fall. Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters by Nov. 3. Dec. 1 is the last day to return voted ballots to the county office. Newly elected committee members and alternates take office Jan.1, 2008.

Sign-up Deadline for LCP

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) has announced that livestock producers have until **July 18, 2008**, to enroll in the 2005-2007 Livestock Compensation Program (LCP) . Sign-up began on Sept. 10, 2007, for the program that provides aid to livestock producers who suffered eligible livestock or livestock feed losses between Jan. 1, 2005, and Dec. 31, 2007, because of a natural disaster

Power of Attorney

FSA has a required power of attorney form available for those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., that enables the participant to designate another person to conduct his or her business at the office. This can be done by completing an FSA-211, Power of Attorney. The form is available at your local USDA Service Center or online at: <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov>.

The FSA-211 form obtained and completed outside the USDA Service Centers offices must be notarized. To find out more, call the office.

Record Changes

If you have bought, sold or are renting different land, make sure you report the changes to the Farm Service Agency office as soon as possible after they occur. For farm ownership changes you will need to provide a recorded deed or recorded land contract. Failure to maintain accurate records with FSA on all land you have an interest in can lead to possible program ineligibility and fines if you are participating in our program.

2008 Farm Bill

The 2008 Farm Bill was passed at the end of May. So far we do not have the capabilities to enroll anyone in the annual program. It is known however, that the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program is going to be very similar to past years. Signup will probably begin in July, 2008. Watch for upcoming newsletters and news releases.

Banking Changes?

Almost all Farm Service Agency payments are made electronically using Direct Deposit. This innovation has cut down on the number of missing and late payments and reduced the time required to move funds. Another benefit is that Direct Deposit to your account can be made within 48 hours. If you have changed accounts or institutions that might affect the direct deposit of your FSA payments, contact the FSA county office so we can update our files to insure continued uninterrupted service

Conservation Compliance

All participants in USDA programs are required to have a conservation system in place on all the highly erodible land (HEL) that they operate. Several areas where problems can arise with complying with a conservation system are; renting new cropland, purchasing new land, breaking out additional cropland, planting different crops such as soybeans, and changing or removing existing conservation practices.

It is very important that you contact the FSA office before doing any of the above. Also, it is very important that you contact our office before modifying - tiling, draining, dredging, filling, or leveling - any wetland or drainage ditch. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in loss of all Federal payments and eligibility

Dates to Remember	
June 15	County Committee Nomination period begins.
June 30	Final certification date for small grains.
July 4	Independence Day Holiday. FSA Offices Closed.
July 18	Deadline to sign-up for LCP and LIP.
July 31	Final certification date for all crops except small grains.
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loan program.

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