



NEWSLETTER



February 2012

Gentry County FSA Office

512 E Highway 136
Albany, MO 64402
660-726-5525 phone
660-726-3254 fax

Hours

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

County Office Staff

Mary Ann Gibson, PT
Kathy Ward, PT
Brenda Walker, PT
Barbara Ratliff, PT

County Committee

Mike Sager
David Waltemath
Donnie Stevens
Nancy Findley

Worth County FSA Office

19 West 3rd
Grant City, MO 64456
660-564-3341 phone
660-564-3443 fax

Hours

Monday – Friday
8:00a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

County Office Staff

Veronica Craven, PT
Ann Gilland, PT

County Committee

Mary Ewing
Bernard Runde
Helen Foster

County Executive Director

Mark Cadle

Farm Loan Manager
Charles Meissen,

Fieldman
Bill Grabb

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www.fsa.usda.gov/mo

Gentry and Worth County Producers,

It's hard to believe that it is the middle of February already! I'm sure we would all agree that this winter has been almost unbelievable! I have never seen a time when we were able to do field work for a large period of time in January. Certainly a lot of the fertilizer for corn has already been applied and a large amount of tillage work has been completed. Hopefully all this will mean that corn planting will go smoothly and rapidly for most of you.

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 begins on your farm. The sign-up period ends June 1, 2012. See the article "**2012 DCP/ACRE Sign-Up**" for complete details. Now is also a great time to complete acreage reports on CRP acreage and hay and pasture ground.

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. Some producers may be interested in CRP-TIP. See the article entitled "**CRP Signup Announced**" for information on CRP-TIP and more details 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 are through electronic notification using emails and texts. See the article entitled "**FSA Adopting Electronic Notifications**" for more details. These budget restraints are also changing the way we are able to notify you of your program responsibilities such as completion of CRP Mid-Contract Management Practices and planting of required food plots. You are still responsible for completing these items but you will not be receiving mailed reminders from our office. See the article on CRP Mid-Contract Management Practices and Food Plots for more information on your responsibilities on completing these items.

As always if you have any questions about any USDA or FSA programs feel free to contact me or any of the office staff for more information. Here's hoping the 2012 crop year is safe, productive and profitable!

Sincerely, Mark Cadle, CED

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Mike Sager and Mary Ewing! Mary was re-elected to the FSA Committee in Worth County and Mike was re-elected in Gentry County to represent local farmers and ranchers from their respective county. Mike and Mary will both be serving their 3rd consecutive 3-year term.

Committee members are limited to serving no more than 10 consecutive years on the Committee so they will be unable to file for another term when their current terms expire. Tim Shupe was elected as an alternate to the County Committee in Gentry County.



At the County Committee organizational meetings David Waltemath was elected Chairperson of the Gentry County Committee and Bernard Runde was elected Chairperson of the Worth County Committee. Vice-Chairpersons are: Helen Foster in Worth County and Donnie Stevens in Gentry County. Nancy Findley serves as an advisor to the Gentry County Committee.

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!

CRP Signup Announced

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 and the land must have been enrolled in CRP or planted to an agricultural commodity four of the six crop years from 2002 to 2007 and be physically and legally capable of being planted in a normal manner to an agricultural commodity. Alfalfa or other multiyear grasses and legumes grown in a rotation not to exceed 12 years may be eligible for CRP.

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. Most rental rates in the last year's signup in Worth and Gentry counties averaged from \$115 to \$125 per acre. Producers may offer land below the maximum rate to increase the likelihood that FSA will accept the offer. Cost-share assistance will be provided to producers to help establish the approved cover that they agree to during the sign-up process.

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 sign-up 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.

Tree and gully issues need to be corrected or those acres must be eliminated from your offer. Now is the time to work on addressing these problems. Think to yourself what corn or soybean fields in the area look like, then determine if your CRP acreage could be planted to a crop and would it look like other crop fields in the area or do you have trees and gullies that would not allow the acreage to be planted or to resemble other crop fields. If your land with trees or gullies is offered, if regulations are like last year, the cleanup and gully damage must be completed by May 1st or those acres will be terminated from your offer and liquidated damages will apply on the acres found not eligible.

The Gentry and Worth County offices are currently making appointments to help serve you more efficiently throughout the signup period. If your offer will require field boundary changes or you want to compare different offers using different combinations of acreages on your farm we can begin map work now. Also, if you have an expiring contract that you don't

wish to renew please let us know.

Another option that some landowners may wish to consider is the CRP Transition Incentives Program or CRP-TIP. CRP-TIP allows for the transition of expiring CRP acreage from a retired or retiring owner to a beginning or socially disadvantaged farmer to return the land to grazing or crop production. The TIP program provides annual rental payments to the owner for up to 2 additional years after the date of the expiration of the CRP contract if the retired owner agrees to sell or agrees to a long-term lease (at least 5 years) for the land expiring from CRP. The transition cannot be to a family member. If you are interested in this program contact the office for more details.

REQUIRED CRP Mid-Contract Management Practices and Required Food Plots

Producers who enrolled acreage in CRP in 2003 or after are required to complete a round of Mid-Contract Management Practices (MCM) following the guidelines of the Conservation Plan of Operations that was developed by NRCS and agreed to by the CRP participant at the time the acreage was enrolled in CRP. These practices are generally completed in years 3 through 6 of the contract period. Types of MCM include: strip disking, chemical application or burning. Cost-shares are available once the practice has been completed and bills are submitted to your local FSA Office. Many producers also agreed to plant food plots on their acreage according to the guidelines developed in your conservation plans.

In the past we have tried to contact producers by letter to inform them that they have MCM practices or food plots to complete. Due to budgetary constraints we can no longer notify producers of these contract requirements. Producers with CRP acreage must still complete these Mid-Contract Management Practices and/or plant their food plots on their CRP acreage according to their conservation plans. Producers must take the initiative to follow their conservation plan without reminders or notifications from our offices. Failure to complete MCM Practices or planting food plots can result in contract terminations or penalties as high as the annual rental rate on the acreage involved. Food plots will need to be reported when you make your annual acreage report on your CRP acreage. This will include the location in the field as well as what the food plot is planted to. If you have any questions contact your local FSA office for details.

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 after enrolling June 1st in DCP/ACRE must be reported to your local FSA office such as:
 - Ownership changes
 - Producer changes (Individuals and Entities)
 - Change in crop shares arrangements

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

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.*

Farming Operation Changes

If you have bought or sold land, or if you have added 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.

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.

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.

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).