



May 2008

Howell County News

Howell County USDA Service Center

Howell County FSA
3210 Hoover Drive
West Plains, MO 65775
417-256-7117 (phone)
417-256-5564 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/MO

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

County Committee
Steve Gleghorn
Pat Chapin
Don Nielsen

Staff
Dennis Johnson, CED
Susie Williams
LeAnn Barnard

FLOOD DAMAGE ASSISTANCE FOR FARMS

Farmers in Howell County may apply for cost share assistance under the Emergency Conservation Program for flood damage which occurred in March.

Although no funds are currently available, a signup period for the Emergency Conservation Program will run through June 12, 2008. Funding for ECP is appropriated by Congress.

ECP program participants may receive cost-share assistance of up to 75 percent of the cost to remove gravel, sand deposits and debris from farmland caused by the flooding to return the land to agricultural use and to replace fences which have been destroyed or seriously damaged.

On site inspections are required prior to approval. Applications are subject to availability of funds and may be made at the local FSA Office.

When Weather Prevents or Damages Crops

When bad weather prevents planting or damages crops, producers are reminded to report the acreage to the FSA office within 15 days of the final planting date of the crop. This applies to all crops, whether covered by crop insurance, not covered by insurance, or covered by FSA's Non-insured Assistance Program (NAP). Final planting dates vary among counties and crop types.

For those crops covered under FSA's NAP, producers should immediately contact the FSA office to report the acres and file a *CCC-576, Notice of Loss Application*. "Producers with NAP coverage should report their losses within 15 calendar days of crop damage from natural disaster, so the loss can be appraised and production counted before the crop is

put into another use, abandoned or destroyed.

Crops not covered with NAP policy should still be reported to the local FSA office, and producers should file a Notice of Loss Application. This will provide FSA with a historical record of your crop should disaster assistance become available.

For more information about reporting prevented planting or failed acres, contact or stop in the FSA office.

Sign-Up Continues for USDA FSA Disaster Programs

Eligible farmers and producers who suffered livestock feed and crop losses that occurred before Dec. 31, 2007, can still apply to receive disaster payments.

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) continues to accept applications and make payments for quantity losses under Crop Disaster Program (CDP) that occurred before Dec. 31, 2007. FSA continues to issue Livestock Compensation Program (LCP) and Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) payments for losses that occurred in designated disaster counties. **No ending date has been announced for LIP, LCP and CDP.**

More information about CDP, LCP and LIP is available online at: <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov>.

Maintaining CRP Cover

Participants are required to maintain Conservation Reserve Program acres according to the Conservation Plan agreed to with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Participants must:

- Have adequate approved vegetative cover to control erosion for the contract period;
- Control weeds and other types of undesirable vegetation; and
- Take control measures outside of the primary nesting season which is **May 1-July 15.**
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Please keep in mind mowing for cosmetic purposes are prohibited at all times. That is why it is important to review your Conservation Plan and talk to FSA for the best control method(s), if you think noxious weeds or undesirable plant species are invading your CRP land.



Contact your local FSA office **if cover maintenance is required before July 15**, to control weeds or erosion problems.

County Committee Elections

The Howell County Farm Service Agency is looking for individuals interested in serving on the Howell County Committee. This year LAA-2 will be having an election. LAA-2 is comprised of the following townships: Benton, Spring Creek and South Fork-Myatt. Any eligible person residing in one of these townships who is interested in running for County Committee, or would like to nominate an individual to run for County Committee, must complete a nomination form. The Nomination Form for County FSA Committee Election (FSA-669A) is available at the Howell County FSA office. You may also go online and download the form from our Missouri FSA website at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/mo>. The document is located under the "I Want To" section on the right side of the screen.

Members of socially disadvantaged groups (a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities) are strongly encouraged to complete the Nomination Form for County FSA Committee Election (FSA-669A) and nominate themselves or another eligible candidate.

Committee members make decisions on applications for federal farm program and disaster payments. Committee members play a vital role by helping local farmers manage tough financial times and natural disasters. County committee members make many other important decisions that affect local farmers such as whether haying and grazing should be allowed on Conservation Reserve Program land.

For more information regarding the County Committee Elections, talk to the Howell County Committee, Dennis Johnson, County Executive Director at 417-256-7117 or stop in the office located at 3210 Hoover Drive, West Plains, Missouri for details on the types of decisions county committee members make. Or visit the County Committee Elections website to learn more about the County Committee Election process and read over the fact sheets at:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=newsroom&subject=landing&topic=cce>.

The nomination period begins June 15th and runs until August 1, 2008. Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters November 3rd and must be returned by December 1, 2008. The elected Committee Member and Alternates will take office January 1, 2009.

Selected Interest Rates for May 2008	
90-Day Treasury Bill	1.500%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	3.125%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	5.000%
Farm Ownership Loans Beginning Farmer Down Payment	4.000%
Emergency Loans	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility Loans	3.000%
Sugar Storage Facility Loans	4.250%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	2.625%

Farm Loans for Socially Disadvantaged

FSA offers loans for farmers 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, applicants might have suffered setbacks from natural disasters or might be persons with limited resources.

FSA makes two different types of loans, direct and guaranteed. Farm ownership loans or farm operating loans may be obtained as direct loans for a maximum of up to \$200,000. Guaranteed loans (loans made by a commercial lender where FSA acts as guarantor) can reach a maximum indebtedness of \$949,000. Emergency loans are a type of direct loan 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 other types of direct loans also available through FSA.

Socially Disadvantaged Applicants (SDA) are one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of their identity as a member of the group without regard to their individual qualities. SDA groups are Women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Certain FSA loan funds are targeted to beginning farmers and SDA.

For detailed information on loan eligibility or the different loan programs available, contact your local FSA office to setup an appointment with a Loan Approval Official.

Reporting Acreage Crop

Please remember that 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. Failed acreage must be reported within 15 days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date.

Acreage reports are required for many Farm Service Agency programs. For crops other than Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) crops, acreage reports are to be certified by the June 30 deadline on small grains and a July 31 deadline on all other crops.

Acreage reports on crops for which NAP assistance may be paid 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.

Interest Assistance Program – Can Help When Cash Flow is Short

FSA guaranteed loans are available to farmers who receive financing from conventional lenders. This allows them to obtain the agricultural financing they need to continue or expand their farming operations.

One way the guaranteed program can really help farmers facing cash flow shortages due to the rising farm expenses is through the Interest Assistance Program. This interest rate subsidy is paid by FSA to the lender and allows the farmer to reduce the interest rate charged on a short or intermediate Operating Loan by 4%.

As an example, if the actual interest rate being charged on your loan is 8.5%, and you qualify for a guaranteed loan with Interest Assistance, the rate you would pay would be 4.5%.

The usual guaranteed fee charged for a guaranteed loan is waived for loans that qualify for Interest Assistance. The interest subsidy can be received for up to 5 years if you qualify.

New purchases or refinancing of existing debt can be done using this program. The maximum loan allowed with interest assistance is \$400,000.

Contact your area Farm Loan Manager or your current agricultural lender for more information on the Interest Assistance program and the various ways the FSA guaranteed program can be a useful financing tool. More information can be found on the FSA website.

Sodbuster Regulations

The term “sodbusting” is used to identify the plowing up of erosion-prone grasslands for use as cropland. Sodbuster violations are unauthorized tillage 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 programs.

Before producers clear, plow or otherwise prepare areas not presently under crop production for planting, they are required to file an AD-1026, indicating the area to be brought into production.

If Natural Resources Conservation Service 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.

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.

HOWELL COUNTY SWCD
Customer Appreciation Day

June 10, 2008

Lunch Served 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

(Or until the food is gone)

Come vote and enjoy a complimentary lunch!!!

At the USDA Service Center on Hoover Drive off of Highway 63 North, behind Circle C Western Store.

The Howell County Soil and Water Conservation District will be holding elections for its Board of Supervisors. The voting will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



Nominees for Northeast section: Bill Ledgerwood and Todd Wilbanks
 Nominees for South section: Al Vance and George Kramer

Contact Amber at 417-256-7117 Ext. 3 with any questions.

Dates to Remember

May 26	Memorial Day Holiday. FSA Offices Closed.
May 31	Deadline to apply for 2007 commodity loans and LDP's on feed grains, soybeans, pulse crops.
May 31	Last day to plant or seed CRP cover this spring.
June 15	County Committee Nomination period begins.
June 30	Final certification date for small grains.
July 4	Independence Day Holiday. FSA Offices Closed.
July 15	Final certification date for all crops except small grains.
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loan Program.
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve Program.

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

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