

April 2009

**Laclede, Camden
& Pulaski County FSA**
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Hours
Monday - Friday
7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

County Committee
Homer Jones Jr.
C. Kent Ledbetter
Warren C. Hoffman
Adv. Berniece Hamilton

County Committee
Meets 2nd Thur. 9:00am

Staff
Darrel McCann, CED
Ava Baker, PT
Pam Akers, PT



The ACRE Program

USDA's Farm Service Agency announced that starting today producers can elect and enroll in the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) program. ACRE is a provision of the 2008 Farm Bill.

"The Average Crop Revenue Election program is an innovative alternative to the traditional farm safety," "This new option presents an opportunity for producers to review both programs and decide which one will work best for their operation."

Producers have until Aug. 14, 2009, to make their decision for the 2009 crop. USDA will not accept any late-filed applications.

Producers who elect the ACRE program for a farm agree to:

- forgo counter-cyclical payments;
- accept a 20-percent reduction of the direct payments; and
- Accept a 30-percent reduction in loan rates for all commodities produced on the farm.

Commodities eligible for ACRE payments are wheat, corn, grain sorghum, barley, oats, upland cotton, long grain rice, medium and short grain rice, peanuts, soybeans, sunflower seed, canola, flaxseed, safflower, mustard seed, rapeseed, sesame seed, crambe, dry peas, lentils, small chickpeas and large chickpeas.

The ACRE program was created in the 2008 Farm Bill to give producers an option in lieu of traditional counter-cyclical payments. Producers may elect and enroll in ACRE for the 2009 crop year even if they have already accepted advance direct payments under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program.

complete Form CCC-509 ACRE, which irrevocably elects ACRE for the farm through crop year 2012. Form CCC-509, the contract to participate in ACRE, must then be completed each year the producer intends to participate and receive benefits.

For more information about the ACRE program please visit your local Farm Service Agency (FSA) county office or visit <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>

USDA Responds To Producer Concerns By Extending Sign-UP Date For DCP & ACRE Programs

USDA has extended the sign-up deadline from June 1 to Aug. 14, 2009, for both the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) and the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program. This action extends sign-up deadline by 10 weeks to give producers ample time to decide whether to participate in ACRE or remain in DCP.

Extending the sign-up deadline for both these programs ensure that America's farmers have enough information and time needed to determine if ACRE is the right program for their operational needs. The DCP and ACRE programs play a critical role in the farm safety net and it is vital that we act to support the hard work of the farmers on which we depend. Sign-up for ACRE is expected to start in late April, with an official sign-up announcement to be made in the coming weeks.

Producers can elect ACRE at their FSA county office after the sign-up period commences. The original June 1 deadline may have forced producers to rush their decision, which is why this extension gives producers more time to make an informed decision about staying with DCP for 2009 or participating in ACRE for crop year 2009 and beyond through 2012.

To elect ACRE for a farm, producers must

Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP)

The 2008 Farm Bill created five new disaster programs, one of which is the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP).

ELAP provides emergency relief to producers of livestock, honey bees, and farm-raised fish to aid in the reduction of losses because of disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires, as determined by the Secretary, during the calendar year, that are not covered by the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE), Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), and Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP).

"Livestock, honey bee, and farm-raised fish producers who have incurred 2008 and/or 2009 calendar year losses not covered by SURE, LIP, and LFP are advised to begin compiling their loss documentation, if interested in ELAP. "Livestock, honey bee, or farm-raised fish producers **must provide FSA with verifiable documentation** for all losses for which compensation is wanted."

Producers shall be advised that loss documentation will **not** be accepted by County Offices until their ELAP applications are filed.

All types of losses for which livestock, honey bee, and farm-raised fish producers may be compensated for under ELAP will not be known until the regulations for ELAP are published in the Federal Register.

Verifiable documentation must include verifiable documentation for purchased feed and or harvested feed documentation.

Honey bee producers who incur physical losses of honey bees and honey bee hives because of colony collapse disorder must provide documentation and/or a certification that the loss of honey bees was because of colony collapse disorder from one or more of the following:

- registered entomologist
- Cooperative Extension specialist
- Land Grant University.

Farm-raised fish producers who incur physical losses of farm-raised fish because of adverse weather or other conditions must provide documentation of beginning inventory on the beginning date of the adverse weather event and the ending inventory.

Acres Reporting

Acres reporting time will soon be here. Filing an accurate acres report for all crops and land uses, including failed acres and prevented planting acres, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs. Failed acres 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. Acres reports are required for many Farm Service Agency programs. For crops other than NAP (Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program) crops, acres reports are to be certified by

the June 30 deadline on small grains and a July 31 deadline on all other crops. Acres 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 acres being reported.

NAP Production Reporting

Production records for individual crops need to be filed with our office to establish an approved NAP yield. If this is the first year you participated in NAP, you can provide production and acres information from prior years to establish your yield. If you participated in NAP in previous years, you must report your production and acres on a yearly basis to keep your yield up-to-date. Records submitted must be reliable or verifiable. Records need to show crop disposition. We recommend producers submit 2009 production records as soon as harvest is complete. **All production records must be submitted by the subsequent crop year's final acres reporting date.**

NAP Information: Producers with NAP insurance may obtain the new basic provisions, CCC-471BP and NAP Fact Sheet from the FSA webpage at www.fsa.gov or from their local county FSA office.

Timely Filing of Loss

The CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acres and prevented planting of program crops and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. For losses on crops covered by the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and crop insurance, you must file a CCC-576 (notice of loss) in the FSA County Office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent. If filing for prevented planting, an acres report and CCC-576 must be filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.

Rural Youth Loans

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA) makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to establish and operate agriculture-related income-producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be initiated, developed, carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organization or with a vocational teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and operated with the assistance of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. Contact your local FSA office for more details.

Beginning and Limited Resource Farmers & Ranchers

FSA has a program 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 average size.

Each member of an entity must meet the eligibility requirements. Loan approval is not guaranteed.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit www.fsa.usda.gov and www.nrcs.usda.gov.

Livestock Indemnity Program

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) is designed to compensate producers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality rates due to adverse weather that occurred on or after January 1, 2008, and before October 1, 2011. Producers who had livestock deaths due to adverse weather conditions should document these losses as to the kind, weight range, number of livestock, and the date the animals were lost. Producers must have proof of death of livestock by the following means:

- Rendering truck receipts or certificates
- Veterinary records
- Dairy herd improvement records
- Third-party verification

The third party must certify in writing their name, address, telephone number, affiliation of the third party to the participant, details of knowledge of livestock deaths, and the number and kinds of livestock. The third party may not be someone who is affiliated with the operator, such as a hired hand, or family member. Producers should also document the loss by taking photos of the animal, keep veterinary records, record disposal costs and secure third-party verification.

At this time, the forms and procedure for taking loss applications are not yet available at your county FSA office. Maintaining records of your losses

Direct and Guaranteed Loans

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 available now. 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. Loan funds can be made available. Producers are encouraged to apply early so that a loan can be processed and funded in a timely manner. Most of our loan programs have special funding available for minority, female and beginning farmers. FSA employees will help you complete the necessary application and other forms, and help you understand what information is required, where to find it or who to contact to get it. To find out more about FSA loan programs, contact the county office staff.

Farm Reconstitutions

In program terminology, farms are *constituted* to group all tracts having the same owner and the same operator under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation take place, a farm *reconstitution* is necessary. The reconstitution — or recon — is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. The following are the different methods used to divide bases when doing a farm recon.

- **Estate Method** — the division of bases, allotments and quotas for a parent farm among heirs in settling an estate;
- **Designation of Landowner Method** — may be used when (1) part of a farm is sold or ownership is transferred; (2) an entire farm is sold to two or more persons; (3) farm ownership is transferred to two or more persons; (4) part of a tract is sold or ownership is transferred; (5) a tract is sold to two or more persons; or (6) tract ownership is transferred to two or more persons. In order to use this method the land sold must have been owned for at least three years, or a waiver granted, and the buyer and seller must sign a Memorandum of Understanding. NOTE: it is highly recommended that an agreement is reached between buyer and seller on how the bases are to be divided before the sale is finalized.
- **DCP Cropland Method** — the division of bases in the same proportion that the DCP cropland for each resulting tract relates to the DCP cropland on the parent tract;

Default Method — the division of bases for a parent farm with each tract maintaining the bases attributed to the tract level when the reconstitution is initiated in the system.

If payments have already been issued on a particular farm, the reconstitution will be effective for the next year, unless the payments are refunded. Request for recons should be filed by June 1.

Banking Changes?

If you have changed banks and not notified FSA, your payment could be delayed. Payments are electronically transferred into your bank account, if we are not aware of changes to your account and routing numbers, there could be problems. In order to make timely payments, you need to notify the office if you close your account or if another financial institution purchases your bank. It is important that any changes in producer's account such as type account, bank mergers, routing number or account numbers, be provided to the county office promptly to avoid possible payment delay.

Darrel's Notes

Celebrate getting your crops planted by reporting planted acreage. CRP, DCP, GRP and NAP producer must report even if they do not plant. Reporting is always a good idea.

The ACRES program is available. It is an alternative to the DCP crop base program. It's complicated with payments based on future production and prices, so I cannot predict the payments. The staff has information on the process and will share it with producers. Call ahead so we can schedule adequate time to provide you information. You can choose DCP or ACRES.

Selected Interest Rates for April 2009	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.25%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	2.25%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	4.125%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Emergency Loans	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility Loans	2.50%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.625%

Dates to Remember	
May 13	Farm Storage Facility Loan comment period ends (http://public.geo-marine.com)
May 18	2008 NAP & Crop Insurance Buy-in Deadline
August 14	ACRE sign-up deadline
August 14	DCP sign-up deadline
Continues	Continuous Conservation Re- serve program

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

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