



May 2008

Phelps/Crawford County News

Phelps/Crawford County USDA Service Center

FSA

1050 Hwy 72 East
Rolla, MO 65401

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573-364-7936 (fax)
800-364-USDA

www.fsa.usda.gov/MO

Hours

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

County Committee

Jim Parker (Chairperson)
Rod Frees (Vice-Chair)
Tom Strain (Member)
Anna Edgar (Member)
Gary Mullen (Member)

County Committee meets
on the 3rd Thursday of
every month.

Staff

Gregg Barrows
County Director
Londa Mathis
Program Technician
Brenda Braidlow
Program Technician

Sign-Up Continues for USDA FSA Disaster Programs

Eligible farmers and producers who suffered livestock, livestock feed and crop losses that occurred before Dec. 31, 2007, can still apply to receive disaster payments. FSA continues to issue Livestock Compensation Program payments for losses that occurred in designated disaster counties. **No ending date has been announced for LCP.**

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

Gregg's Comments

The Livestock Compensation Program is still the big news. We are scheduling appointments to avoid producers having to wait in line for hours. This has been very effective; by scheduling appointments we have much of the producer's information ready before their appointment and actually serve them in less time. **The deadline to apply has not been announced for LCP.** Sign up has been slower than previous livestock programs. Please schedule now and avoid the rush when a deadline is announced. Pass the word to your friends and neighbors. I don't want anyone to miss the opportunity to apply.

When Weather Prevents or Damages Crops

When bad weather prevents planting or damages crops, Gregg Barrows, Phelps/Crawford County Executive Director for the Farm Service Agency (FSA) would like to remind producers 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.

Producers who have their crops insured through a private crop insurance company should contact the insurance agent immediately and advise them of the damaged crops. Additionally, a CCC-576, *Notice of Loss Application*, must be completed in person at the FSA office, and the prevented and/or failed acres reported.

Crops not covered with a private insurance or 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.

County Committee Elections

The Phelps/Crawford Farm Service Agency is looking for individuals interested in serving on the Phelps/Crawford County Committee. This year LAA-4 will be having an election. LAA-4 is comprised of the following townships: Miller, Arlington, North Dillon and South Dillon. 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 Phelps/Crawford 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 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.

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.

Flood Damage Assistance

Farmers in Phelps and Crawford Counties 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.

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 staff 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.

Foreign Buyers Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA. Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 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 these reporting requirements.

Spousal Signatures

Husbands and wives may sign documents on behalf of each other as individuals for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation programs in which either has an interest. This option is automatically available unless a written request for exclusion is made to the county office staff by either spouse.

Power of Attorney

We have a 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 you to designate another person to conduct your 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>.

Special Accommodations

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the County Executive Director of their local Farm Service Agency office.

Wool Producers

Turn in your wool tickets for Loan Deficiency Payments. Sign up for LDP for 2008.

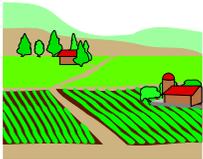
Wheat Producers

And other fall seeded crops you have planted; report now so you don't forget. We need planting date. Deadline to report is June 30.

Continuous CRP

The Continuous Conservation Reserve Program is a private lands environmental improvement program that allows participants the opportunity to enroll environmentally sensitive acreages in conservation practices that will reduce soil erosion, improve water and soil quality, and provide wildlife habitat and food sources.

The Continuous CRP is a voluntary enrollment program. Eligible landowners enter into contracts that range from 10 to 15 years in length. In return, the landowners will receive annual rental



and maintenance payments, incentive payments for certain activities, and cost-share for establishing the practice.

To be eligible for enrollment in the Continuous CRP, participants and acreage must meet certain requirements. Then the FSA will automatically accept enrollments of acreage into Continuous CRP. Landowners may enroll in the program at anytime during the year.

For more information on the Continuous CRP enrollments or local Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) availability, please contact your local FSA office.

Farm Loans for Socially Disadvantaged

Amy Peiter, Farm Loan Manager, reminds interested applicants that 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.

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.

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%

Waiting on a Farm Bill

Authority to hold an annual sign-up for the Direct and Countercyclical Program (DCP) expired with the old farm bill on September 30, 2007. The U.S. House of Representatives passed their version of a new farm bill in July and the U.S. Senate is currently considering their version. The remaining steps to implementation are passage of a farm bill in the Senate, agreement and passage of a conference version between the House and Senate, signature by the President, and publication of new rules in the Federal Register. Looking at that timeline, a sign-up before early spring is unlikely. However, program provisions and sign-up dates will be provided through this newsletter as soon as they become available.



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.

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 31	Final certification date for all crops except small grains.
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loan Program.
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve Program.

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