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CRP ACREAGE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR RE-ENROLLMENT

Requirements have changed regarding CRP enrollment. If you are considering enrolling or re-enrolling acreage into the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) General Sign-up, the acreage **MUST** be free of trees, ditches and gullies. It must also be capable of being farmed with conventional equipment *prior* to making a bid into the program. Producers are encouraged to take time now to prepare for future CRP sign-ups.

Producers wanting to clear existing trees and brush from CRP contract acreage should request permission from their local COC **prior** to beginning the process. Spot treatment of CRP acreage should not occur during the primary nesting period of May 1 to July 15.

Note: There is **not** a scheduled General CRP Sign-up at this time.

FSA MOVING TO ELECTRONIC INFORMATION

The USDA Farm Service Agency offices are moving toward a paperless operation. Producers are asked to enroll in the new GovDelivery system which will provide notices, newsletters and electronic reminders instead of a hard copy through the mail. FSA, like many other organizations, is trying to work smarter and be more efficient. Moving to electronic notifications via email will help conserve resources and save taxpayer dollars. County Committee ballots will continue to be mailed to all eligible producers. Producers can now subscribe to receive free e-mail updates by contacting your county office.

2012 DCP/ACRE SIGNUP

2012 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) enrollment will begin Jan. 23, 2012, and will end June 1, 2012. Here are some IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

- All producers planting on **DCP base** acres must be identified on the DCP/ACRE contract and receive a proportionate share of DCP/ACRE payment for the farm.
- 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.

SUPPLEMENTAL REVENUE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SURE)

The sign-up for 2010 losses begins **Nov. 14, 2011**, and will end **June 1, 2012**. The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters that incurred in the crop year 2010. SURE is available to eligible producers on:

- Farms in counties with Secretarial disaster declarations, including contiguous counties, that have incurred crop production or quality losses, or both, and includes all crops grown by a producer nationwide, **except** grazed crops.
- Any farm in which, for the crop year, the actual production on the farm because of disaster-related conditions is 50 percent or less than normal production of the farm.



MARKETING ASSISTANCE LOANS A Marketing Assistance Loan (MAL) is available to producers who share in the risk of producing a crop. To be eligible, a producer must maintain continual beneficial interest in the crop from harvest through the earlier of the date the loan is repaid or CCC takes title to the commodity. Beneficial interest means retaining the ability to make decisions about the commodity; responsibility for loss or damage to the commodity; and title to the commodity. Once beneficial interest in a commodity is lost, the commodity is ineligible for loan — even if the producer regains beneficial interest. Commodity loan eligibility also requires compliance with conservation and wetland protection requirements; beneficial interest requirements, acreage reporting and ensuring that the commodity meets Commodity Credit Corporation minimum grade and quality standards. For commodities to be eligible they must have been produced by an eligible producer, be in existence and in a storable condition and be merchantable for food, feed or other uses as determined by CCC. The quality of the commodity in farm storage must be maintained throughout the term of the loan. Producers do not have to participate in the Direct and Counter-Cyclical and/or ACRE Programs to be eligible for commodity loans. Violating provisions of a marketing assistance loan may trigger administrative actions, such as assessing liquidated damages, calling the loan and denial of future farm-stored loans. Section 1291 of the Department of Defense and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act of 2011 does not authorize funding to provide nonrecourse MALs for mohair for the remainder of FY 2011. Effective April 14, 2011, County Offices are no longer authorized to accept requests for mohair marketing assistance loans and loan deficiency payments.

UNAUTHORIZED DISPOSITION OF GRAIN

If loan grain has been disposed of through feeding, selling or any other form of disposal without prior written authorization from the county office staff, it is considered unauthorized disposition. The financial penalties for unauthorized dispositions are

severe and a producers name will be placed on a loan violation list for a two-year period. Always call before you haul any grain under loan.

NEW AGI FORM FOR 2012 On September 28, 2011, FSA started using CCC-931 "Average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) Certification and Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information" for all 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 programs that are subject to AGI compliance. FSA will no longer accept CCC-926, CCC-927, or CCC-928 for any program. The new form is a combination of the Average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) Certification and Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information forms previously used by FSA. Form CCC-931 is available at your local FSA office or online at <http://intranet.fsa.usda.gov>. Producers can print and mail the form to their local FSA office. FSA employees will review the form for accuracy before forwarding it to the IRS. If CCC-931 is incomplete, the producer will be notified and corrections will be completed prior to FSA forwarding it to the IRS. Producers with FSA-211, "Power of Attorney" will not be allowed to use the FSA-211 to complete CCC-931. Producers who failed to file these forms before Sept. 2011 will receive a notice from the National Office stating that the producer is ineligible for 2010 and/or 2011 payments. Without these forms on file, eligible producers will not receive USDA program payments. For more information please contact your local office.

NAP CLOSING DATES The NAP application closing date for 2012 grazing and forage/hay on native and improved grass is March 15, 2012.

FSA SIGNATURE POLICY Using the correct signature when doing business with FSA can save time and prevent a delay in program benefits. The following are FSA signature guidelines:

- Spouses may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and CCC programs in which either has an interest, unless written notification denying a spouse this authority has been provided to the county office
- Spouses shall not sign on behalf of each other as an authorized signatory for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations, or other similar entities.

For additional clarification on proper signatures contact your local FSA office.

ELECTRONIC SERVICES AVAILABLE If a producer has Internet access, program participants can access many services from home 24 hours a day, seven days a week. To participate in these services, you must meet all program eligibility requirements. Online services have stringent security measures to protect your private information. To utilize electronic services a producer needs an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires an e-mail address and filling out an online registration form at <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/> followed by a visit to the county office for identity verification. If you would like assistance establishing your account, just contact your local USDA Service Center.

FARM LOAN PROGRAMS FARM LOAN PROGRAMS MAKE SEVERAL DIFFERENT TYPES OF LOANS, AND THE FOLLOWING ARE THREE OF THEM. FOR INFORMATION ON THESE OR OTHER TYPES OF LOANS, CONTACT YOUR LOCAL COUNTY OFFICE.

RURAL YOUTH LOANS FSA makes loans to rural youths to establish and operate income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5,000.

BEGINNING AND LIMITED RESOURCE FARMER & RANCHERS FSA assists beginning farmers and ranchers 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 any loan assessment and borrower training program in production and/or financial management required by the Agency

- Does not own farm acreage greater than 30 % of the median size farm in the county.

LOANS FOR THE SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FSA has loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operating type loans and/or purchase or improve farms or ranches. While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided targeted funding for members of Socially Disadvantaged groups. A socially disadvantaged applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of a group. FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

FARM RECONSTITUTIONS When changes in farm 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 when doing a farm recon. Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by Aug. 1 for farms enrolled in the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program: **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; **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 DCP direct payments have already been issued on a particular farm, the

reconstitution will be effective for the next year, unless the payments are refunded.

SELLING LAND If you're planning to sell farmland, there may be some program consequences of which you should be aware. For example, if you're planning to sell land that's enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program, the buyer must agree to continue the enrollment. If the buyer doesn't want to continue the CRP contract, you might have to refund all of the payments you've received to date. Reviewing program implications with your local FSA staff before completing a sale of farmland is always a prudent precaution.

FSA eAlerts Provide your e-mail address and/or your cell phone number to your local county FSA office for program reminders via text message* and/or e-mail.

Postcards will no longer be mailed for program deadline reminders.

*Standard text messaging rates apply.

Dates to Remember	
December 5	COC ballots must be returned or date stamped
December 26	Office is closed in Observance of the Christmas Holiday
January 2	Office is closed in Observance of New Year's Day, Elected Committee Members and alternates take office
March 15	NAP application closing date for 2012 grazing and forage/hay
June 1	Last day to apply for the 2010 SURE program
Selected Interest Rates for December 2011	
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	1.375%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	3.75%
Limited Resource Loans	5.00%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Emergency Loans	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility Loans 7-yr.	1.50
Farm Storage Facility Loans 10-yr.	2.125
Farm Storage Facility Loans 12-yr.	2.375
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.125%

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