



# NEWSLETTER



## Beaverhead County FSA Office

**April 2011**

420 Barrett St  
Dillon, MT 59725

(406) 683-3830 Phone  
(406) 683-3840 FAX  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/mt](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt)

### Hours

Monday - Friday  
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

### County Office Staff:

Alan Jenne  
Farm Loan Manager  
Acting CED

Jenny Rose  
Program Technician

### County Committee Members:

Jerry Meine, Chairman  
Todd Tash, Vice-Chairman  
Donna Hildreth, Regular  
Member

### Next County Committee Meeting:

**April 14<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 a.m.**

### Agricultural Lending Opportunities

Questions regarding  
obtaining credit to start or  
enlarge a farming or ranching  
operation; financing  
agricultural operating  
expenses; or livestock,  
machinery purchases call:  
**Alan Jenne, 683-3830**

### Reasonable Accommodations:

Persons with disabilities who  
require accommodations to  
attend or participate in any  
FSA programs should contact  
the County Executive Director  
at the FSA Office or the  
Federal Relay Service at 1-  
800-877-8339.

## 2011 DCP Signup

Enrollment for the 2011 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) has begun and will continue through June 1, 2011. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. Deadline to apply is June 1<sup>st</sup>.

## The ACRE Option

The Average Crop Revenue Election Program (ACRE) provides a safety net based on state revenue losses and acts in place of the price-based safety net of counter-cyclical payments under DCP. A farm's payment is based on a revenue guarantee calculated using a 5-year average state yield and the most recent 2-year national price for each eligible commodity.

The June 1, 2011, deadline is mandatory for all ACRE and DCP participants. FSA will not accept late-filed applications.

An ACRE payment is issued when both the state and the farm have incurred a revenue loss. In exchange for participating in ACRE, a farm's direct payment is reduced by 20 percent, and marketing assistance loan rates are reduced by 30 percent.

The decision to enroll in the ACRE Program is irrevocable. The owner of the farm and all producers on the farm must agree to enroll in ACRE. Once enrolled, the farm shall be enrolled for that initial crop year and will remain in ACRE through the 2012 crop year.

## 2009 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE) Signup Set from Jan. 10 to July 29, 2011

The 2008 Farm Bill created several new disaster programs. One of the programs, the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE), provides financial assistance for crop production and/or quality losses due to a natural disaster. SURE is a total farm revenue disaster program as opposed to the crop disaster programs of previous years, which were primarily production oriented programs. Therefore, all crops that a producer has an interest in are not only evaluated as to the production loss and quality, but revenue as well.

To be eligible for SURE a producer must have at least a 10 percent production loss on a crop of economic significance; a policy or plan of insurance under the Federal Crop Insurance Act or the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for all economically significant crops. Producers that have a farming interest physically located in a county that was declared a primary disaster county by the Agriculture Secretary under a Secretarial Disaster Designation or a contiguous county and meet the above criteria are eligible for SURE. In the absence of the Secretarial Disaster Designation producers may be eligible if they suffer at least a 50% production loss on the entire SURE farm due to a natural disaster. Producers considered socially disadvantaged, a beginning farmer or rancher, or a limited resource farmer may be eligible for SURE without a policy or plan of insurance or NAP coverage.

**PAYMENTS** - SURE will issue payments to an eligible producer in the amount equal to 60% of the difference between the program guarantee and the total farm revenue. SURE will pay up to 90% of the crop's normal production on the farm. If you meet the guidelines of the program in 2009, i.e. a 10% production loss (associated with adverse weather) on one crop of economic significance and crop insurance (CAT/NAP) purchased on all 2009 crops (other than the exceptions previously explained), contact the county FSA office as soon as possible. Signup for 2009 crops begins January 10, 2011 and ends on July 29, 2011.

## **FSA Disaster Assistance Programs available for Livestock Producers Affected by Ice, Cold and Heavy Snowfall**

Bruce Nelson, State Executive Director of USDA's Farm Service Agency in Montana, reminds livestock producers throughout Montana that FSA programs may be available to assist them. Many are dealing with harsh winter weather, which is causing serious harm to livestock and forage due to heavy snow, ice and extremely cold temperatures.

"This is turning out to be a tough winter for many ranchers and farmers in Montana and learning about our FSA programs is an important step for producers to take," Nelson said. "We need producers to document the number and kind of livestock that have died as a direct result of these winter storms and timely notify their local FSA office of these losses. There may be situations where producers are transporting feed to their livestock. Producers should document these additional costs."

FSA administers several programs that help producers recover from livestock deaths that are beyond normal mortality rates, losses of purchased and/or harvested forage, and with the additional costs of providing or transporting feed. Among the key programs are the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP). For livestock death losses to be eligible under LIP, producers must file a notice of loss with their local FSA office within 30 calendar days from when the loss is apparent to the producer.

Fact sheets for these two programs can be found at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov); click on Newsroom, then Fact Sheets.

Nelson also encourages producers to use Hay Net on the FSA website ([www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet)), an online service that allows producers with hay and those who need hay to post ads so they can make connections. Hay Net is a popular site for farmers and ranchers who have an emergency need, such as the one caused by the current wintry conditions. Individual ads can be posted free of charge by producers who complete a simple online registration form the first time they use the site.

"We encourage all who have suffered a disaster due to the recent cold weather and blizzards to read the fact sheets and visit with their local FSA county office staff so they get a quick start in the recovery process," added Nelson.

### **\*\*\*Montana FSA Newsletter Notice \*\*\***

#### ***Non-active agriculture producers must "opt-in" to receive future newsletters***

Effective March 1, 2011, the Montana Farm Service Agency has issued a new newsletter policy geared toward improving FSA newsletter delivery and efficiency to the individual farmers, ranchers and agriculture community. FSA newsletters will continue to be sent to active agriculture producers as determined by the county FSA offices. No action is needed for active producers unless your household or business is receiving duplicate

newsletters in which case you should inform your local county FSA office.

If you are not an "active" producer but are a landowner or are interested in receiving or continuing to receive a FSA newsletter, you must inform your local county office that you'd like to "Opt-in" and be added to the newsletter mailing list. In addition, you can choose to receive your newsletter electronically. Each newsletter not mailed saves the agency and taxpayer \$0.39.

To request the electronic newsletter be emailed to you instead of receiving a newsletter through mail, please contact your county FSA office. The electronic version will be issued in a .pdf format.

### **FSA Payment Record**

During the last week of January, producers who have received payments from FSA should have also received a CCC-1099-G from the Kansas City office. A CCC-1099-G is a report to the Internal Revenue Service about FSA payments made to producers during the previous calendar year. The CCC-1099-G is a service to help participating producers report taxable income. It is not intended to replace the program participant's responsibility to report income to the IRS.

If you received a CCC-1099-G, we recommend you check the amounts shown with those in your records to see that the amounts are correct. Refunds will no longer be reported on the 1099-G, but will be available online from the FSA Financial Inquiries (FSA-FI) web-based database. Program participants with eAuthentication user ID's and passwords can access their refund information at FSA-FI and select "Inquiry Type 1099/Refund Reports". Refund amounts are displayed on the Producer's Year-to-Date Activity web page.

If you have a question concerning the 1099-G refund information, you may contact your nearest FSA office for assistance in locating the correct payment data. If you choose to visit the office, bring your CCC-1099-G with you.

### **CRP General Signup announced for March 14 to April 15, 2011**

General signup for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) will begin on March 14, 2011, and continue through April 15, 2011. During the signup period, Montana farmers and ranchers may offer eligible land for CRP's competitive general signup at their county Farm Service Agency (FSA) office.

Through the 2008 Farm Bill, CRP is authorized for a maximum enrollment of 32 million acres. USDA estimates that contracts on 3.3 million to 6.5 million acres are scheduled to expire annually between now and 2014. Land currently not enrolled in CRP may be offered in this signup provided all eligibility requirements are met. Additionally, current CRP participants with contracts expiring this fall may make new contract offers. Contracts awarded under this signup are scheduled to become effective Oct. 1, 2011. In Montana, 2.9 million acres of the

state's 18,721,501 cropland acres are currently actively enrolled in the CRP program. Of the state's active CRP acres; 498,661 acres are scheduled to expire on Sept. 30, 2011; 696,523 acres on Sept. 30, 2012 and 638,841 acres on Sept. 30, 2013.

As administrator of the Conservation Reserve Program, FSA will evaluate and rank eligible CRP offers using an Environmental Benefits Index (EBI) that assists in calculating the environmental benefits to be gained from the contract. The EBI consists of five environmental factors (wildlife, water, soil, air and enduring benefits). Cost factors are also entered into the equation.

In addition to the general sign-up, FSA's CRP Continuous Sign-up Program is ongoing. Continuous acres represent the most environmentally desirable and sensitive land. For more information, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) and view *Conservation Programs*.

### **Crop Certification**

2011 crop certification packets will begin going out in April. If you participate (or intend to participate) in any of the following programs, you are required to certify your crops by the deadline of **July 15<sup>th</sup>**. Those programs are:

- CRP
- DCP/ACRE
- LDP's and/or MAL's
- LIP/ELAP/LFP
- NAP
- SURE
- Or if you are producing Fruits and/or Vegetables

Please be reminded that information reported to FSA should be the same information reported to other Federal agencies such as crop insurance.

Acreage reports not filed by the deadline will be subject to a late-filing fee. Physical evidence of the crop must exist and be verified by a paid for field visit.

If you wish to certify your acres, but did not receive a map packet, please contact our office.

### **Actively Engaged**

USDA has amended the requirements of being 'actively engaged' in farming. These rules apply to eligibility for payments under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) or Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE).

Normally the stockholder or a member of a legal entity must make contributions of active personal labor and/or active personal management for the farming operation. The contributions are to be performed on regular basis, must be identifiable, and separate from the contributions of others.

The exception to this rule for a stockholder or member of a legal entity only occurs when both of the following apply:

1. At least half of the interest in the legal entity is held by stockholders or members who are

providing active personal labor or active personal management; and

2. The total direct payments received by the legal entity and each of the members can't exceed \$40,000.

### **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.

### **COC Election Approaching**

Beginning June 15, 2011, nominations are being accepted for candidates for County Committee (COC) positions. A county or area served by the COC is divided into local administrative areas (LAA). Each LAA is represented by one member on the county committee. Only one LAA holds an election each year. This year the LAA open in Beaverhead County is LAA 3 currently represented by Donna Hildreth. Nomination forms are available at the office or online at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections>.

### **Conservation Loan Program**

Conservation Loan Program funds can be used to implement a conservation practice approved by the Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS), such as to reducing soil erosion, improving water quality and promoting sustainable and organic agricultural practices. This would include installation of conservation structures; establishment of forest cover; installation of water conservation measures; establishment or improvement of permanent pastures; transitioning to organic production; manure management, including manure digestion systems; adaptation of other emerging or existing conservation practices, techniques or technologies.

Interested applicants who do not already have NRCS-approved conservation plans should work with the local NRCS staff to develop a conservation plan, including all applicable conservation practices. New or existing conservation plans must be NRCS approved before FSA can provide financing.

For eligibility requirements, and information on rates and terms, please contact our office.

Beaverhead County FSA  
 420 Barrett St  
 Dillon, MT 59725



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<b>Selected Interest Rates -April 2011</b>	
Farm Operating - Direct	2.75%
Farm Ownership - Direct	5.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Conservation Loan	5.00%
Emergency - Actual Loss	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility - 7-year	2.750%
Farm Storage Facility - 10-year	3.375%
Farm Storage Facility - 12-year	3.625%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.250%

**Upcoming Important Dates to Remember:**

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**April 15:** CRP General Signup Ends  
**June 1:** 2011 DCP & 2011 ACRE Programs Filing Deadline  
**June 15:** Nominations for COC Election open  
**July 15:** 2011 Crop Certification Deadline  
 2010 Crop Production Deadline (NAP & ACRE)  
**July 29:** SURE Sign-up Deadline for 2009 Crop Year  
**Continues:** Contiguous Conservation Reserve Program

**NAP Notice of Loss must be filed within 15 days of the disaster or date damage to specific crop acreage is apparent.**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.