



NEWSLETTER



IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL HILL COUNTY PRODUCERS:

DCP and ACRE Sign-up Deadline is June 1

Sign-up for the 2011 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment (DCP) Program and Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program will continue until June 1, 2011. **As of April 28th, only 60 percent of Hill County producers have signed contracts for the 2011 crop year.** For DCP Enrollment, FSA urges producers to contact the County FSA office ASAP to complete their 2011 DCP contract or make use of the eDCP automated website. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2011, eligible producers may request to receive advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment. The Average Crop Revenue Election Program (ACRE) Option 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. 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. Visit www.fsa.usda.gov/dcp or contact this office for more information on the ACRE program.

2009 SURE Sign-Up Deadline is July 29

Signup for the SURE program for the 2009 Crop Year began on Jan. 10, 2011 and will end on **July 29, 2011.** To be eligible for SURE a producer must have at least a 10 percent production loss on a crop of economic significance and 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 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. 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. **Hill County was designated as a contiguous disaster county in 2009. There are about 700 Hill County producers potentially eligible for SURE who need to contact the FSA County Office ASAP.** Last fiscal year, Montana administered more than \$36 million in SURE funds for the 2008 crop year.

2011 Prevented Planting final report date

If you intended to plant crops/acres this spring and were prevented from planting due to a natural disaster, you must file a CCC-576, Notice of Loss, within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crops/acres with FSA. Final planting dates vary by crop. If you were prevented from planting insurable crops then please check with your crop insurance agent for the applicable final planting date or if you have NAP crops that are prevented planted then please contact FSA. If a request for prevented planting is not filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date, it is considered late filed and will require a minimum of \$46 to have an on-site inspection completed to determine that the natural disaster condition was evident. If the disaster condition that prevented the crop from being planted is no longer apparent, then the FSA-576 will be denied and no benefits will be applicable. If you have insured crops that were prevented planted then you may be required to provide proof that you filed for prevented planting credit with crop insurance. The COC may also request that you provide receipts or invoices showing you had inputs (seed, chemical, fertilizer, etc.) available to plant the acres claimed as prevented to establish your intent of planting. It is important that the FSA-576 be timely filed and approved for a possible 2011 crop disaster program (SURE) or for acreage history credit. Approved preventive planted acreage may also be eligible for ACRE payments.

Hill County FSA Office

May 2011

Address:
206 25th Ave W Suite 2
Havre MT 59501

Office:
(406) 265-6792 ext. 2
Fax: 406/265-3077
www.fsa.usda.gov/mt

Hours: 8:30 to 4:30 p.m.
Monday to Friday

FSA Office Personnel:
Barbara Brown, ext. 112
Liane Albus, ext. 100
Clint Greytak, ext. 107
Linell Pegar, ext. 101
Rosalie Sather, ext. 105
Lisa Toth, ext. 102
Mike Zook, ext. 111

County Committee Members
Clarence "Fritz" Keller, Chair
Dave Stevenson, Vice
Mary Ruth St. Pierre, Member
Les Kaercher, Member

Agricultural Lending Opportunities:

*Questions regarding obtaining credit to start or enlarge a farming or ranching operation; financing agricultural operating expenses; or livestock, machinery purchases may call the following at (406)357-2320, ext 2: Miranda Skoyen, FLO
Richard Nicholson, FLO
Denise Reynolds, FLPT*

Reasonable Accommodations:

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

Nomination Form for County FSA Committee Election: Below is a nomination form for the 2011 County Committee Election that will be held in early November to Dec. 5, 2011. Persons nominated should actively participate in the operation of a farm or ranch and be well qualified for committee work. **This year, a producer is eligible to be a County FSA committee member if the producer resides in the Local Administrative Area (LAA) 1-1, which is located in the western part of the county.** Duties of county committee members include administering farm program activities conducted by the County FSA Office, informing farmers of the purpose and provisions of the FSA programs, keeping the State FSA Committee informed of LAA conditions, monitoring changes in farm programs, participating in county meetings as necessary and performing other duties as assigned by the State FSA Committee. Completed and signed form(s) must be delivered to the FSA County Office or postmarked no later than **Aug. 1**. Questions: call or visit the county office.

FSA-669A
(03-31-11)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Farm Service Agency

NOMINATION FORM FOR COUNTY FSA COMMITTEE ELECTION

1. NAME OF NOMINEE (Type or Print Nominee's Full Name)		TO BE COMPLETED BY COUNTY FSA OFFICE	
2. ADDRESS OF NOMINEE		4. INITIALS OF EMPLOYEE RECEIVING FORM AND DATE RECEIVED	
		5. COUNTY	
3. NOMINEE'S CERTIFICATION: <i>I hereby agree to have my name placed on the ballot, that I will serve if elected, and if there is a conflict of interest, I will resign such position.</i>		6. LAA	7. STATE
		8. NOMINATOR'S CERTIFICATION: <i>If this nomination is by other than self, the following eligible voter or representative of a community based organization hereby nominates the afore-named person to be a candidate in the next County FSA Committee election for the county.</i>	
3A. SIGNATURE OF NOMINEE	3B. DATE	8A. SIGNATURE OF NOMINATOR	8B. DATE
<input type="checkbox"/> Check here if nominee is a write-in candidate.		<i>(If the individual is self nominating, no signature is required).</i>	

9. TO BE COMPLETED BY NOMINEE

VOLUNTARY INFORMATION FOR MONITORING PURPOSES: The following information is requested by the Federal Government in order to monitor FSA's compliance with federal laws prohibiting discrimination against program participants on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, marital status, handicapped condition, or age. You are not required to furnish this information, but are encouraged to do so. This information will not be used in evaluating your nomination or to discriminate against you in any way.

<u>ETHNICITY</u>	<u>RACE (Choose as many boxes as applicable)</u>	<u>GENDER</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino	<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native	<input type="checkbox"/> Male
<input type="checkbox"/> Not Hispanic or Latino	<input type="checkbox"/> Asian	<input type="checkbox"/> Female
	<input type="checkbox"/> Black or African-American	
	<input type="checkbox"/> White	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THIS FORM

Complete the form as follows:

- ITEM 1** Type or Print the nominee's full name. The nominee must be:
 - A. Eligible to vote in the designated County FSA Committee election.
 - B. Eligible to hold the office of County FSA Committee member.
 - C. Willing to serve if elected.
- ITEM 2** Enter the nominee's current address.
- ITEM 3** The nominee must check one of the boxes to indicate a preference regarding the settling of tied votes.
- ITEMS 3A & 3B** The nominee must sign and date.
- ITEMS 8A & 8B** The nominator must sign and date. *(If the individual is self nominating, no signature is required.)*
- ITEM 9** Completing this item is voluntary.

ALL FORMS MUST BE RECEIVED IN THE COUNTY OFFICE OR POSTMARKED BY AUGUST 1, 2011.

NOTE: The following statement is made in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a - as amended). The authority for requesting the information identified on this form is the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Pub. L. 110-246). The information will be used to obtain nominees for election to the County FSA Committee. The information collected on this form may be disclosed to other Federal, State, Local government agencies, Tribal agencies, and nongovernmental entities that have been authorized access to the information by statute or regulation and/or as described in applicable Routine Uses identified in the System of Records Notice for County Personnel Records, USDA/FSA-6. Providing the requested information is voluntary. However, failure to furnish the requested information will result in a determination of ineligibility for nomination for election to the County FSA Committee.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0560-0229. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 10 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The provisions of appropriate criminal and civil fraud, privacy, and other statutes may be applicable to the information provided. **RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO YOUR COUNTY FSA OFFICE.**

Hill County Producers approved for extension to May 15th on CRP seeding

Hill County Producers recently were approved for the extension on the original May 1st deadline to complete initial seeding on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) land. The FSA State Director approved the extension deadline to May 15th at the request of the Hill County Office on behalf of all county producers with CRP land. The annual May 1st CRP seeding deadline is established by the FSA State Committee but due to excessive moisture and cool temperatures this spring farmers county offices have been requesting extensions on behalf of their county producers.

Hill County Loan Rates for 2011 Crops:

Wheat - Hard Red Winter: \$2.92/bu.

Wheat - Hard Red Spring: \$3.19/bu.

Barley: \$1.87/bu.

Wheat - Durum: \$4.04/bu.

Oats: \$1.32/bu.

Canola: \$9.23/cwt.

Small Chickpeas: \$7.43/cwt.

Dry Peas: \$5.13/cwt.

Lentils: 11.06/cwt.

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. Please notify the County Office as soon as possible upon the death of a participant, landowner, or member of a participating entity, as it may be necessary to modify contracts for the current year or complete updated eligibility forms. Producers are reminded to contact the office of a change in operations on a farm so that records can be kept current and accurate.

FSA Cooperation with Risk Management Agency

Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Risk Management Agency (RMA) are required to work together to improve program compliance and integrity of the Federal Crop Insurance Program. They are required to coordinate a plan to identify, address and reconcile discrepancies of all relevant producer-derived information, and to coordinate a monitoring program to include fact finding relative to allegations of program fraud, waste, and abuse. FSA will assist RMA and insurance providers in monitoring conditions throughout the growing season and conduct growing season inspections. All suspected cases of fraud, waste, and abuse concerning the Federal Crop Insurance Program will be referred to RMA. FSA will also assist RMA with auditing claims. Producers may also report suspected cases of fraud, waste, and abuse to their local FSA County Office, the RMA Office or OIG.

2011 Acreage Reports Filing Deadline: July 15

County offices are in the process of getting the 2011 compliance map packets together for acreage reporting purposes. The compliance maps will be mailed or made available at the FSA county office for producers. Please follow the instructions closely for completing the maps to ensure that all the cropland and rangeland is reported if required for program eligibility. The deadline to file 2011 acreage reports is **July 15, 2011.**

Soil or Gravel Removal and Other Land Changes - Caution

If you wish to plant an agricultural commodity on any land where any soil or gravel has been removed, please work with the local NRCS and FSA offices in advance to avoid the possibility of any non-compliance and loss of benefits. To be eligible for USDA benefits, all producers planting agricultural commodities on predominantly highly erodible fields are required to do so according to the provisions of an acceptable conservation system/plan to ensure adequate residue exists. The NRCS can assist you in developing an approved conservation system/plan, if applicable, for the farm.

Farm Divisions/Combinations Must Be Requested By August 1

If you have sold, purchased, or leased a farm or part of a farm, please notify this office immediately. If you need to request a farm division or a farm combination for 2011, the deadline to submit the request is August 1, 2011 for those farms participating in DCP/ACRE. If requests are not filed timely, it may be difficult to complete 2011 contracts with all required signatures for the farm. Requests received after August 1, 2011, will be processed for 2012.

Current USDA Settlements and Non-Judicial Claims Process:

Native American Farmers & Ranchers Settlement Agreement

If you are a Native American who was denied a Farm Loan or Loan Servicing by the USDA between Jan. 1, 1981 and Nov. 24, 1999, you may be eligible for benefits from a Class Action Settlement. To request a Claims Package or for more information, call 1-888-233-5506 or visit www.IndianFarmClass.com.

Non-Judicial Claims Process for Hispanic & Women Farmers & Ranchers

If you believe that USDA improperly denied farm loan benefits to you between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic, or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation. To register your name to receive a claims packet, call the Farmer and Rancher Call Center at 1-888-508-4429 or visit: www.farmerclaims.gov.

African American Farmers Settlement Agreement (Pigford II)

If you are an African-American farmer who (a) submitted a request to file a late claim on or between Oct. 13, 1999 and June 18, 2008, under the 1999 USDA settlement in the earlier class action known as Pigford v. Glickman ("Pigford"), and (b) who did not receive a merits determination of their discrimination claim, you may be eligible for benefits from a Class Action Settlement. For more information, call 1-866-950-5547 or 1-866-472-7826 or visit www.blackfarmerscase.com.

Selected Interest Rates - May 2011	
Farm Operating - Direct	2.625%
Farm Ownership - Direct	5.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Emergency - Actual Loss	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility - 7-year	2.875%
Farm Storage Facility - 10-year	3.5%
Farm Storage Facility - 12-year	3.75%

VISIT FSA ONLINE: Information on FSA programs, the 2011 Montana FSA Farmer & Rancher Program Handbook, state news releases and e-newsletters and individual county office newsletters & more are available at:
www.fsa.usda.gov/mt

FSA: Upcoming Important Dates to Remember:

- May 14:** Spring grazing on CRP acres ends
- May 15:** Beginning date of Primary Nesting Season
- May 27:** Deadline to submit BCAP Project Proposals
- May 31:** Final Date to Request 2010 Marketing Assistance Loans/LDPs on Corn, Dry Peas, Grain Sorghum, Lentils, Mustard Seed, Safflower Seed, Chickpeas, Soybeans, and Sunflower Seed
- May 30:** *CLOSED for Memorial Day*
- June 1:** 2011 DCP & 2011 ACRE Programs Signup Deadline
- July 15:** Acreage Reporting Deadline
- July 15:** 2010 ACRE Production Reporting Deadline
- July 15:** Final NAP Production Reports Due for 2010
- July 15:** Final date to file 2010 crop application for NAP Payment
- July 4:** *CLOSED for Independence Day*
- July 29:** SURE Sign-up Deadline for 2009 Crop Year
- Continues:** Continuous Conservation Reserve Program

Hill County Producers are invited to a FSA public meeting

6:30 p.m. | Thursday, May 5th
North Star High School | Ruddyard

Topics: FSA Disaster Programs, Managed Haying and Grazing, early land preparation procedures, payment eligibility issues & more. For more information, call the FSA office at 265-6792 ext. 2.

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