

**U.S. Department of Agriculture
Montana Farm Service Agency
Ravalli County FSA**
1709 N 1st Street
Hamilton, MT 59840
Phone: (406)363-1444
Fax: (406)363-5011

County Committee Members

Anthony Coller, Chair
Ted Heiland, Member
Julie Schram, Min Advsr

Next County Committee Meeting:
Tuesday, November 9th @
9:30AM

FSA Office Personnel

Coral Maxwell, PT
Mary Jane Mohn, PT
Curt Anderson, CED

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

Dates to Remember:

November 5 – COC Ballots mailed to eligible voters
November 11 – Veterans Day Holiday (Office Closed)
November 25 – Thanksgiving Holiday (Office Closed)
December 1 – NAP Sales Closing Date for Honey
December 6 – Last day to return COC ballots to County Office

Links:

<http://www.usda.gov>
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/MT>
<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt/>
<http://www.mt.nrcs.usda.gov>
<http://www.dnrc.state.mt.us/>
<http://extn.msu.montana.edu>
<http://www.bitterrootrcd.org/>
<http://bitterrootconservationdistrict.net/>



Ravalli County NEWS

2010 DCP Final Payments

Final DCP payments for 2010 participants will be issued sometime after October 1, 2010. Producers who received an advance payment will be paid the balance they are due. Those who did not take an advance will be receiving their full payment amount. These payments will be deposited directly into personal bank accounts.

If there are any unearned payments, Commodity Credit Corporation will automatically subtract those amounts from the final Direct and Counter-cyclical Program payments you are about to receive.

Presidential designations expand eligibility for FSA disaster program

Missoula and Ravalli Counties were declared contiguous natural disaster areas to Idaho's Presidential Major Disaster Declaration due to losses caused by severe storms and flooding from June 2 to June 10, 2010. The Presidential declaration triggers eligibility for the Emergency Loan Program for producers who suffered either a 30 percent production loss or sustained substantial physical losses to livestock, buildings or real estate caused by declared natural disaster(s). Producers in eligible counties have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for emergency loan assistance. Those interested in applying for FSA disaster to visit their local FSA Office or www.fsa.usda.gov/mt. Interested producers in Ravalli County should contact Alan Jenne @ 683-3830 for more information.

2009 and 2010 Average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) Reconciliation Process

In December 2009, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) formed a partnership to ensure that only those participants who comply with AGI limitations receive farm program benefits. The data-sharing process is designed to maintain confidentiality and privacy of tax return information, while providing the FSA with information necessary to verify the validity of the previously filed CCC-926 certification of average AGI.

All direct recipients of payments, as well as all members of entities which receive payments, which had previously filed CCC-926 for the 2009 or 2010 program years were required to file CCC-927 (for an individual) or CCC-928 (for an entity) with the IRS to enable them to provide us with indicators of the individual or entity's compliance with the applicable limitations. The deadline for that submission was June 15, 2010. Individuals and entities who are required to file, but have not filed, an acceptable form with the IRS as of September 10 will receive a letter mailed approximately October 6, 2010 asking them to do so within 30 days. If you receive this mailing, it is important that the form is completed and sent promptly to the IRS address indicated on the forms. **Failure to file these forms in a timely fashion will result in demand for repayment of all FSA and NRCS program payments subject to AGI provisions for 2009 and 2010, including your pro rata share of payment for any entity you have an interest in.** Blank forms may be obtained online at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/cc927> for the individual form, and <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/cc928> for the legal entity form, or from your local FSA or Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office.

2010 County Committee Elections

This year there are two Local Administrative Areas (LAA's) open for election. LAA1 from the Northern boundary of Ravalli County to Bell Crossing and LAA2 from Bell Crossing to Hamilton Heights. Tony Collier is termed out in LAA 1 and Hans McPherson from LAA2 was appointed to the State FSA Committee. Competing to replace Tony in LAA1 are Dan Rasmussen and Roger Mikesell. And competing to replace Hans in LAA2 are Brian Rouse and Henry Tintzman. Eligible voters in their respective LAA will begin receiving ballots in early November. Completed ballots are due back to the county office by December 6th.

Access Montana Farm Service Agency news and program deadlines online @ www.fsa.usda.gov/mt

Montana Farm Service Agency's County Newsletters are available online! You can view and download your county's most recent newsletter on the Montana FSA Website at: www.fsa.usda.gov/mt - just click on Newsletters. Montana's farmers, ranchers and agriculture partners can view important Montana FSA program deadlines and news and sign up to receive email and/or RSS messages as soon as Montana news releases are issued. If you are interested in replacing the hard copy of the county newsletters with the online version, please contact your local county office for arrangements.

Montana FSA announces 2009 ACRE Program payments

Montana Farm Service Agency State Executive Director Bruce Nelson has announced that Montana has met revenue "triggers" for the 2009 Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) program payments for acres of wheat, barley and oats. Congress established ACRE to protect producers from farm market revenue declines. Payments are revenue-based and determined based on crop production and the National Average Market Price for covered commodities planted on the farm.

Farm payments in Montana vary depending on how the farm's benchmark yield compares to the state's benchmark yield. The base amounts per planted acre are the following: Wheat \$23.45 per acre; Barley \$68.01 per irrigated acre and \$31.33 per non-irrigated acre; and Oats \$51.10 per irrigated acre and \$26.66 per non-irrigated acre.

States that meet the revenue triggers for other commodities will be determined after the 2009-2010 marketing year average price is published by the National Agricultural Statistical Service.

CREP & Continuous CRP

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is a program to decrease erosion, restore wildlife habitat and safeguard ground and surface water. CREP is a partnership with federal and state government and for specific geographic areas. Environmentally sensitive acreage qualifying for CREP or Continuous CRP will be eligible for annual rental payments and cost-share of up to 50 percent on approved practices. These programs will remain funded, and continue to provide heightened environmental benefits.

Emergency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP)

ELAP provides compensation to eligible producers of livestock, honey bees, and farm-raised fish for losses due to disease, adverse Weather, or other loss conditions, including losses due to blizzards and wildfires. ELAP is for losses that are not covered by Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), or Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE). Over the next year, the Farm Service Agency and the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) is moving toward an electronic method for processing producers' checks.

Eligible producers under ELAP may receive assistance for losses that occur on or after January 1, 2008, and before October 1, 2011, during the calendar year in which the loss occurs. Eligible losses include feed losses, physical losses and additional costs incurred in providing feed to eligible livestock. *In order for producers to be eligible for assistance under the ELAP program, producers must obtain a plan of insurance for each insurable and non-insurable commodity on the farm, excluding grazing.*

There are two parts to the ELAP application process: A notice of loss and application for payment.

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2011 DCP & ACRE Signup

The enrollment period for the 2011 Average Crop Revenue Election Program (ACRE) and the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) runs from Oct. 1, 2010 – June 01, 2011.

The ACRE program provides eligible producers a state-level revenue guarantee, based on the 5-year state Olympic average yield and the 2-year national average price. ACRE payments are made when both state and farm-level triggers are met. By participating in ACRE, producers elect to forgo counter-cyclical payments, receive a 20-percent reduction in direct payments and a 30-percent reduction in loan rates. The decision to elect ACRE binds the farm to the program through the 2012 crop year.

Foreign Landowner Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) 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 within 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.

NAP Coverage Deadlines for 2011 Crop Year

The Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) was designed to provide financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops when low yields or prevented planting occurs as the result of natural disasters. Statutes limit NAP coverage to each commercial crop or agricultural commodity, except livestock, for which the catastrophic (CAT) level of insurance is not available. Application deadlines for 2011 NAP coverage for a variety of crops are coming up in the next few months. In Montana, the NAP sales closing deadlines are: **Dec. 1, 2010**, for Honey; **March 15, 2011**, for all other NAP crops. Producers who choose to obtain NAP coverage for 2011 must file a CCC-471 application for coverage and pay the applicable service fee by the sales closing deadline. Eligible producers must pay a service fee of \$250 per crop per administrative county or \$750 per producer per county, not to exceed \$1875 for a producer with farming interests in multiple counties. Service fees may be waived for limited-resource producers.

- For the 2011 crop year it is imperative that producers purchase either NAP or a catastrophic (CAT) level of crop insurance for all insurable and non-insurable crops. This is not only for production coverage, but also for eligibility for the new permanent disaster programs created in the 2008 Farm Bill.
- In order for producers to be eligible for assistance under the Supplemental Revenue Assistance (SURE) Program and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP), and the Tree Assistance Program (TAP), producers must obtain a plan of insurance for each insurable and non-insurable commodity on the farm, **excluding grazing**. To be eligible for assistance under the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), producers must obtain either coverage under the Pasture, Rangeland, and Forage Rainfall Index pilot Program offered through crop insurance, or NAP coverage, or both on their grazing. For more information please contact your local Farm Service Agency office.

Paper Check Conversion

Over the next year, the Farm Service Agency and the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) is moving toward an electronic method for processing producers' checks. This will allow FSA/CCC to process collections faster.

- When producers present checks, either in person or through the mail, the checks will be converted into an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). The funds will be debited from the producer's account, usually within 24 hours of receipt.
- Please see the U.S. Department of Treasury legal notices posted in the Service Center or visit the following internet site for detailed information:
<https://www.pccotc.gov/pccotc/pcc/usingpcc/Legal%20Notices/legalnotices.htm>.

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to participate in FSA programs should contact Curt Anderson, CED – 1709 N 1st Street Hamilton, MT 59840 – (406) 363-1444 – curtis.anderson@mt.usda.gov

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ELAP CONTD:

An application for payment cannot be filed without a notice of loss. There are no late filed provisions for ELAP. Producers with eligible losses must timely file an acreage report on grazing land acres, honey bee colonies and farm-raised fish pond acres.

Eligible physical losses of honey bees and honey bee hives, lost due to adverse weather or loss conditions are eligible under ELAP. Producers will be required to provide documentation of beginning and ending inventory of honey bee colonies when claiming a physical loss of honey bees or honey bee hives.

FSA Conservation Loan Program

The Farm Service Agency makes and guarantees conservation loans on farms and ranches to help conserve our natural resources. The Conservation Loan (CL) Program provides farmers with the credit necessary to implement conservation measures on their land.

The direct CLs loan limit is up to \$300,000 and guaranteed CLs up to \$1,119,000 (amount adjusted for inflation), may be available by applying with lenders working with FSA to obtain a guarantee.

Applicants will work with Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS) Staff to develop a conservation plan. Conservation practices must be approved by NRCS before FSA can provide financing. Examples of conservation practices include installation of conservation structures; installation of water conservation measures; establishment or improvement of permanent pastures; transitioning to organic production; manure management, including manure digestion systems; etc.

Banking Changes?

Almost all Farm Service Agency payments are made electronically using Direct Deposit. This innovation has cut down on the number of missing and late payments and reduced the time required to move funds. To keep the system running smoothly, it's critical to keep the county office staff up to date on changes you might make in your financial institutions. If you have changed accounts or institutions that might affect the direct deposit of your FSA payments, contact the FSA county office so we can update our files to insure continued uninterrupted service.

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