

Carter County FSA Phone: (406) 775-6355
PO Box 5 Fax: (406) 775-6671
Ekalaka, MT 59324

County Committee Members

Gail Brence, Regular Member
Troy Harrington, Chairman
Gary Jardee, Vice-Chairman

The next Carter County Committee meeting
is scheduled for Tues, August 17 @ 10:00

FSA Office Personnel

Jo Kittelmann, Program Technician
Karen Kreitel, Program Technician
Jitt Schneider, Program Technician
Georgia Bruski, Temporary PT
Robin Markuson, Farm Loan Officer
Ronelia Parry, Co. Executive Director

Agricultural Lending Opportunities

For questions regarding obtaining credit to
start or enlarge a farm or ranch operation,
financing agricultural operating expenses;
livestock, or machinery purchases, call:

Farm Loan Program Technician:

Karen Kreitel 775-6355 ext 107

Farm Loan Officer:

Robin Markuson 775-6355 ext 110

Or Farm Loan Manager:

Jeff Janshen 232-7905 ext 123

Dates to Remember:

August 2 – Farm Reconstitution
Request Deadline

August 2 – Last Day for FSA to
Accept COC Election Nominations

August 16 – potential beginning date
for 2010 General CRP signup

Sept 10 – Extended Deadline to
Report ACRE Production

**15 days from date of disaster or loss
being apparent** – deadline to file Notice of
Loss on covered NAP crops

**30 days from date of disaster or loss
being apparent** – deadline to file Notice of
Loss for ELAP & LIP

October 2010 – 2010 DCP and ACRE
direct payments issued. 2009 additional
ACRE payments, if applicable, will also be
issued at that time.



Carter County

July 2010

CRP Managed Hay and Grazing starts July 16, 2010

The 2010 Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) managed haying and grazing start date is July 16, 2010, for all participants who have acres that are eligible to be hayed or grazed this year. Managed haying and grazing **cannot begin until an application is completed at the local FSA County Office and written approval is received** from the FSA.

CRP participants with conservation plans that included the managed haying and grazing provisions that applied after the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) Settlement Agreement in 2006, are limited to grazing 1 in 5 years and haying 1 in 10 years. Haying or grazing was not allowed until August 2. CRP participants with the NWF rules will have the opportunity to modify their contracts to switch to the old Montana Rules, which allow managed grazing 1 in 3 years and managed haying 1 in 5 years. Under the Montana rules, haying and grazing could begin July 16th. All CRP contract participants must sign the conservation plan modification and receive written approval from the FSA County Office before any haying or grazing can begin.

To determine if acres are eligible to be hayed or grazed the county office will determine when the acres were last hayed or grazed. Grazing can only occur 1 in 3 years on the same acres. Haying can only occur 1 in 5 years on the same acres. The 50% that has to be set aside for wildlife may be hayed the following year. The 2010 **Managed Grazing Period** is limited to 60 days - July 16th through September 13th. The **Managed Haying Period** is July 16th through September 30th. Participants who want to modify their conservation plans should contact their local county FSA office.

Filing a Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) Notice-of-Loss

To qualify for assistance under NAP, production losses or prevented planting must have occurred as a result of an eligible cause of loss. An eligible cause of loss is any of the following: damaging weather, such as drought, freeze, hail, excessive moisture, or excessive wind; or adverse natural occurrences, such as earthquake or flood; or a condition related to damaging weather or an adverse natural occurrence, such as excessive heat, disease or insect infestation. Wildlife damage and weeds are **not** considered eligible causes of loss under NAP.

A notice of loss must be provided within 15 calendar days after the: disaster occurrence or date damage to the specific crop acreage is apparent to the producer for yield losses; or final planting date for prevented planting.

If a Notice-of-Loss is filed after the established final planting date and the intent is to reseed to another crop intended for harvest, such as barley for grain, which is covered under crop insurance, a NAP payment cannot be received on the original failed crop.

Montana is not a double cropping state. If the intent is to destroy the crop, summer fallow it, or reseed to another crop **not** intended for harvest, representative strips must be left in the field so that a loss adjuster can be sent out closer to normal harvest time to appraise the original seeded crop. In this situation, the original seeded crop would still be eligible for a payment.

"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."

Farm Service Agency (FSA) Loans

FSA makes loans for land, livestock and other agricultural purposes throughout Montana.

The agency's loans offer low interest rates and terms designed to help beginning farmers and ranchers start out in agriculture with payments they can afford.

FSA can assist smaller operations get started by providing financing to purchase a tractor, grain truck or 50 cows as an example. Every operator has to get started some place and FSA has a variety of loans and loan programs to assist in that endeavor.

FSA can finance applicants who are currently in college if their goal is to return to the farm or ranch following graduation. For a student to be eligible while still in college they must be substantially responsible for the management of the security, this would include carrying out labor needs during critical periods of the year.

Farm Loan Program

As Montana Farmers and Ranchers gear up for the 2010 production season, the FSA is here to help. A number of loan programs are available to assist your Farming/Ranching operation.

- Direct Operating Loans can go up to \$300,000 with a repayment of 1 to 7 years. You may purchase livestock, equipment, feed, seed and chemicals. Current interest rate 3%.
- Direct Farm Ownership Loans have a maximum amount of \$300,000 with a maximum term of 40 years. Loan funds can be used for the purchase of land, Construction of Farm Buildings or Other Improvements can be made. Current interest rate 5.125%.
- Beginning Farmer Down Payment for the purchase of Real Estate. Maximum loan amounts of 45% of the purchase price with a 20 year term. Maximum amounts of loans up to \$225,000 with an interest rate as low as 1.5%.
- Youth loans are available to youths ranging from 10 to 21 years of age with \$5,000 dollars available. Repayment is from 1 to 7 years. Interest rate can go as low as 3%. Must be for an agricultural related project. An advisor for a 4-H, FFA or similar organization will be needed.
- Emergency loans also available to producers in the event of a designated disaster. Limits of 100% of actual loss or maximum amount \$500,000. Repayment terms vary depending on use of loan proceeds.

As both commodity prices and agricultural inputs continue to be volatile, Farm Service Agency is here to help the American Farmer/Rancher in being successful to continue to produce high quality products. Please contact your local county FSA office to learn more about the many loan programs we have available.

Farm Storage & Facility Loan Program

FSA's Farm Storage and Facility Loan (FSFL) Program provides low-interest financing for producers of eligible commodities to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities. The new maximum principal amount of a loan through FSFL is \$500,000. Participants are required to provide a down payment of 15 percent, with Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) providing a loan for the remaining 85 percent of the net cost of the eligible storage facility and permanent drying and handling equipment. New loan terms of seven, ten, or twelve years are available depending on the amount of the loan.

Interest rates for each term rate may be different and are based on the rate which CCC borrows from the Treasury Department. Payments are available in the form of a partial disbursement and the remaining final disbursement. A partial disbursement of up to 50 percent of the total loan amount will be available, if desired, after a portion of the construction has been completed. The final disbursement will be made when all construction is completed.

An FSFL generally must be approved before any site preparation or construction can begin. The following commodities are eligible for farm storage facility loans: corn, grain sorghum, soybeans, oats, wheat, barley, or minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain; corn, grain sorghum, wheat, oats, or barley harvested as other than whole grain; hay; renewable biomass; fruits (including nuts) and vegetables—cold storage facilities. Contact us for more information.

| Selected Interest Rates for July 2010 | |
|---|--------|
| 90-Day Treasury Bill | 0.125% |
| Farm Operating - Direct | 2.875% |
| Farm Ownership - Direct | 4.875% |
| Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher | 1.50% |
| Emergency | 3.75% |

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. It has been calculated that having a problem with a payment is 20 times greater with checks than with Direct Deposit. Another benefit is that Direct Deposit to your account can be made within 48 hours. 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.

FSA-669A (03-24-10) 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 | |
| 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> | | 5. COUNTY | |
| | | 6. LAA | 7. STATE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I DO want to witness the settling of tied votes with another nominee. <input type="checkbox"/> I DO NOT want to witness the settling of tied votes with another nominee. | | 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.

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

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 2, 2010.

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**

Farm Reconstitutions

For FSA program purposes, tracts having the same owner and the same operator are grouped under one farm serial number. When changes in 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. Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by **August 2** for farms enrolled in specific programs.

The following are the different methods used when doing a farm recon:

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

Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)

LIP provides assistance to eligible livestock owners and contract growers for eligible livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather including losses due to floods, blizzards, disease, wildfires, extreme heat, and extreme cold. For 2010 losses, producers must file a notice of loss no later than 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is apparent. A notice of loss can be reported to the office by phone, fax, or e-mail. Eligible livestock deaths must have occurred in the calendar year for which benefits are being requested. An Application for payment may be filed at any time in 2010, but must be filed no later than 30 calendar days after the end of the calendar year in which the loss of livestock occurred.

Please contact the office for additional eligibility requirements. A list of eligible livestock is available at www.fsa.usda.gov/mt.

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.

Help Available to Stressed Farmers

Recently, the economy, inclement weather, and other factors have hurt some farming operations around the country. These events can push a producer to the emotional breaking point. Watching your livelihood being threatened is difficult for farmers and ranchers, especially for those whose income is solely dependent on agriculture.

The National Suicide Prevention Hotline is available to help. If you know a farmer or rancher who is under stress and is reluctant to ask for help, or if you just need to talk to someone, call 1-800-273-TALK (8255). Your call will be routed to the crisis center nearest you, where trained staffers are available 24/7. This nationwide service is free and confidential. Help is just a phone call away.

For more information, go to <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>.

USDA Helps Retiring Farmers Transition Land to Beginning Farmers in New Farm Bill Program

The Transition Incentives Program (TIP) is a new program to encourage retired or retiring owners or operators to transition their land to beginning or socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers.

TIP signup began May 17, 2010. If all program requirements are met, TIP provides annual rental payments to the retiring farmer for up to two additional years after the date of the expiration of the CRP contract, provided the transition is not to a family member. To learn more about program, producers interested in applying and participating in TIP should visit their USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) county office or www.fsa.usda.gov.

To be eligible, TIP requires that the retired or retiring farmer or rancher:

- Have land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) that is in the last year of the contract
- Agree to allow the beginning or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher make conservation and land improvements
- Agree to sell, or have a contract to sell, or agree to long-term lease (a minimum of 5 years) the land under CRP contract to a beginning or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher by Oct. 1 of the year the CRP contract expires.

Supporting local economies and providing opportunities for beginning or socially disadvantaged Americans with a desire to farm or ranch is one of the many ways USDA are working to rebuild and revitalize rural America.

FWP Pilot Project seeks CRP Enrollments to improve Upland Game Bird Hunting

Some private landowners awarded a new 10-year Conservation Reserve Program contract with the federal Farm Service Agency can also enroll in a Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) pilot program that provides add-on rental payments. New and re-enrolled acres qualify, as do private and School Trust lands. Enrollment into this add-on rental payment program is based on competitive scoring. **Eligible counties are:** Cascade, Chouteau, Daniels, Dawson, **Fallon**, Glacier, McCone, Pondera, Richland, Roosevelt, Sheridan, Teton, Toole and Wibaux. FWP will contact applicants by mid-September to inform them of program acceptance. Applications deadline is **July 23, 2010**. Applications will be accepted through July 23 through mail to FWP – Wildlife Division; P.O. Box 200701; Helena, MT 59620. For more info, please go to FWP's website at fwp.mt.gov and Click "CRP Add-on Program" or contact Debbie Hohler at (406) 444-5674.

General CRP Signup Coming in August

It is expected that a general signup to enroll land into CRP (Conservation Reserve Program) will begin mid-August. Carter County Office employees will be attending training at the end of July. More information will be distributed when the official signup period is announced as well as when more details of the program are received.

Conservation Compliance

Federal regulations discourage the production of crops on highly erodible cropland unless the land is protected from erosion by an approved conservation system. Status reviews are conducted to ensure producers follow a conservation plan on highly erodible land.

In addition to the highly erodible land, a person may not plant an agricultural commodity on wetlands converted after Dec. 23, 1985, or convert a wetland to make agricultural production possible after Nov. 28, 1990.

Failure to comply with these provisions will cause a person to be ineligible for USDA benefits. County Committees may review noncompliance situations for good faith and provide relief in approved cases.

FSA Cooperation with Risk Management Agency

The Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000 requires the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Risk Management Agency (RMA) to work together to improve program compliance and integrity of the Federal Crop Insurance Program. As a result of the passage of the 2000 Act, RMA and FSA 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.

Montana Farm Service Agency - ONLINE

Information on programs administered by FSA in MT and individual county office newsletters are available at: www.fsa.usda.gov/mt

US Department of Agriculture
Carter County FSA Office
PO Box 5
Ekalaka, MT 59324-0005

Inside this Issue

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FSA Cooperation with RMA

Important Dates to Remember

August 2 – Farm Reconstitution Request Deadline
August 2 – Last Day to Submit Nominations for
2011 County Committee – Please Nominate!

**15 days from disaster date or loss being
apparent** – deadline to file Notice of Loss on NAP
covered crops

**30 days from disaster date or loss being
apparent** – deadline to file Notice of Loss for LIP
(Livestock Indemnity Program) or ELAP
(Emergency Livestock Assistance Program)

The County Office Newsletter is an Official Agency record and may be used to establish legal notice of program requirements.

COC Nominations Needed – Nominations Close August 2

Nominations for candidates to run for the County Committee Election representing producers in Local Administrative Area (LAA) 3 (currently served by Gary Jardee) close **August 2, 2010**. **A nomination form is included within this newsletter.** For more information about FSA COC elections, please contact us or access www.fsa.usda.gov online; select *News & Events* then *County Committee Elections*. Eligible voters may nominate as many candidates as they wish. **To be valid**, the nomination form (FFA-669A) must be signed by the person being nominated indicating agreement to serve if elected, and returned to the FSA office by close of business August 2nd or postmarked by August 2, 2010. Nominee must participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA, be eligible to vote in a county committee election and reside in the LAA in which the person is a candidate.

It is desired that there be a minimum of 3 candidates on the ballot so voting results allow one elected member and two alternates. COC members receive an hourly pay for travel and meeting time plus mileage.

FSA county committee members serve three-year terms and make decisions on disaster and conservation programs, emergency programs, commodity price support loan programs and other important agricultural issues. Committees consist of three to five members elected by eligible local producers. Ballots will be mailed to producers beginning November 5, 2010. Completed ballots must be dropped off or received via mail at the county office by December 6, 2010.