
CROOK COUNTY FARM SERVICE AGENCY NEWS

JUNE 2008

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ATTENTION PRODUCERS! Signup Still Underway for Disaster Assistance Programs

July 18, 2008 is the deadline to file application for the Livestock Compensation Program (LCP) for pasture losses incurred in calendar years 2005 and 2006 and for the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) for livestock death losses suffered from the April 2006 blizzard. By the time many of you receive this newsletter this date will be past but – this date was also published in the May 2008 newsletter as well, so those producers that wanted to participate in the program have probably already filed application. Signup is still underway for the Crop Disaster Program (CDP) for quantity and quality crop losses for calendar years 2005, 06 and 07. Crops covered by either a NAP policy with our office or by crop insurance are eligible.

2008 CROP REPORTS

Normally, crop reports are due by July 1st of each year. This year, because of the delay in announcing the provisions of the 2008 Farm Bill and due to extreme weather conditions, some producers have not filed a 2008 acreage report. As a result the 2008 crop report deadline has been extended to **August 15, 2008**. Late fees will not be applied if acreage reports are filed by **August 15th** and all other crop reporting requirements are met.

Prevented Planted or Failed Acreage: if you were prevented from planting or your acreage has failed from a natural disaster, you should report the acreage to our office for proper documentation of the loss and for planting history.

NAP PROGRAM

Forage crop provisions in the NAP program have changed! Previously, if a forage hay crop, such as mixed grass hay, that was intended to be hayed but due to a disaster condition the crop was either destroyed or the yield was so low that the crop was grazed by livestock, - the policy was that we would not appraise the crop and NAP payment would be based on a “grazing” value instead of a “yield” value.

The “grazing” value requires the committee to establish a maximum percent of loss for the area where the crop is located. The loss has to be established at greater than 50 percent in order to trigger a payment. Payments are calculated using the crops carrying capacity and Animal Unit Days (AUD's) calculations. The “yield” value allows for payment to be calculated using the producers individual Actual Production History (APH) yield from actual or assigned tonnage values.

Current procedure now in place allows for a forage crop intended for hay and affected by a disaster condition to be paid on the “yield” basis in most situations and, it allows for an appraisal to be done, even if the crop will be grazed later in the year. The appraisal should be done before grazing occurs. If the crop is grazed before the appraisal is performed then representative sample areas must be established in the field(s) per instruction from FSA adjuster personnel. Failure to establish representative sample areas when the crop is grazed prior to appraisal will result in the loss payment being made using the AUD grazing method. Additionally, losses on forage crops that were intended to be harvested for hay, but were grazed only, shall be determined based on production records. If a

producer provides the office with acceptable production records for 3 out of 5 years and, the acreage can be verified as having been planted to the crop for which the loss is being claimed, for at least 3 out of 5 years before the year in which the loss occurred, then the crop is eligible for NAP loss benefits. Basically, this means that if you have reported the subject crop to our office on a FSA-578 crop report by July 1 and, have submitted your production records for harvested production by July 1 and have done so as described above then crop existence and evidence of production can be verified.

A Notice of Loss should be filed within 15 days of the earlier: 1) date of the disaster event that caused the loss or, 2) when the loss is apparent. A notice of loss must be filed for each weather-related event or adverse natural occurrence that causes damage to or loss of the specific crop. Failure to report crop damage or loss in a timely manner may result in ineligibility for NAP payments.

FARM PROGRAM INFORMATION

Preliminary Information About Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) for 2008 – 2012: Signup is underway for the 2008 program. Advance payments may be requested and will be issued as soon as practical. Final payments will be issued after October 1st. The contract form must be completed, with all necessary signatures by **September 30th**. Applications filed after this date will not be approved. Adjusted Gross Income provisions have changed that may require some producers to visit the office to enroll. Watch future newsletters for full details of the new farm program. Additional 2008 program requirements: the 2008 Act prohibits direct payments, counter-cyclical payments, or average crop revenue election payments to a producer on a farm, if the sum of the base acres on the farm is 10 acres or less. Exceptions to this rule: payments allowed if the producer is a socially disadvantaged farmer/rancher or if the producer is a limited resource farmer/rancher. The Act directed that crop acreage bases for covered commodities and peanuts be reduced for land that has been subdivided and developed for multiple residential units or other non-farming uses if the size of the tracts and the density of the subdivision is such that the land is unlikely to return to the previous agricultural use. Policy is being developed to carry out this provision.

FARM DIVISIONS and DIVISION OF ACREAGE BASES

When a portion of a farm is sold or otherwise becomes owned by 2 or more persons, we are required to divide the crop acreage bases among the resulting farms using one of several options. The designation by landowner method is the method of dividing the parent farm's crop acreage bases in a manner agreed to by the resulting owners. This method may be used when any of the following apply:

- Part of a farm is sold or ownership transferred
- An entire farm is sold to 2 or more persons
- Farm ownership is transferred to 2 or more persons
- Part of a tract is sold or ownership is transferred
- A tract is sold to 2 or more persons
- Tract ownership is transferred to 2 or more persons

If you have sold or bought a part of a farm, please notify this office so we can begin the process of dividing the farm and crop acreage bases. You may use the designation by landowner method of distributing the crop acreage bases among the resulting farms if all owners agree in writing.

COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

Nominations of candidates for FSA's county committee election representing producers in Local Administrative Area (LAA) number 2 will be accepted through **August 1, 2008**. Producers who are eligible to vote in LAA 2 and who participate or cooperate in an FSA program and are of legal voting age may be nominated to serve on the county committee. Individuals may nominate themselves or others as candidates. Organizations representing socially disadvantaged minorities and women farmers or ranchers and beginning farmers may also nominate candidates.

LAA 2 is the middle third of the county as outlined in the May Newsletter. Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters by Nov. 3rd and must be returned to our office or postmarked by December 1, 2008.

NEW DISASTER PROGRAMS ANNOUNCED IN THE 2008 FARM BILL Programs available are: Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE); Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP); Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP); Tree Assistance Program (TAP); Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (EALHF).

SURE: Eligibility - Farms in disaster counties, including contiguous counties that have incurred crop production losses and/or quality losses during the crop year and, those farms in which the total loss of production of the farm, because of an eligible condition, is greater than 50 percent of the total farm revenue of the farm. At a minimum, eligibility for SURE requires purchase of coverage for each: **Insurable crop** - a policy or plan of insurance under the Federal Crop Insurance Act; **Non-insurable crop** - NAP policy from FSA. Crop insurance and NAP policy purchase deadlines are past - (For 2008, producers who did not meet this requirement may have this provision waived if the applicable fee for "Catastrophic" (CAT) level of protection and the NAP fees are paid no later than **September 16, 2008** in order to be eligible for the SURE program. (Fees for both types, crop insurance and NAP, will be collected by the FSA office).

LFP: Will be available to eligible livestock producers who suffered grazing losses for eligible livestock due to various natural disaster events. Eligibility requirements: the producer must have purchased or obtained either a policy or plan of insurance under Federal Crop Insurance or, purchased a NAP policy from their local FSA office on the applicable grazing crops (including pasture). An eligible livestock producer that suffered losses in 2008 and did not meet this requirement may still pay the applicable fees for either a NAP policy or crop insurance by **September 16, 2008** and be eligible for LFP. (Pay fees to FSA Office).

LIP: will be available for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather, as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture. Payments based on 75 percent of a fair market value and on individual producer's eligible losses.

TAP: is reauthorized for assistance to orchardists and nursery tree growers for losses associated with a natural disaster.

EALHF: will provide emergency relief to producers of livestock (including horses) because of losses from adverse weather or other conditions as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture.

Specific details about this new disaster program are still being developed and will be forthcoming and issued in a future newsletter. If you have concerns or questions please call or visit the office.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

IMMEDIATELY...FILE notification of NAP loss forms within 15 days of loss

...Notify county office of direct deposit changes, farm record changes or management changes

August 1...Committee Election nomination form deadline

August 15... Crop Report Deadline

September 30...DCP signup Deadline

ANYTIME...Continuous CRP enrollment

Call FSA prior to breaking up sod (new land) and before planting a crop on sod

For more information on any Farm Service Agency program, visit or call our office, or visit the FSA Homepage at www.fsa.usda.gov

Have a Nice Day, /s/ Mike Idler, CED

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