
CROOK COUNTY FSA NEWS

MARCH 2009



TOWER OUTLOOK

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
CROOK COUNTY FARM SERVICE AGENCY
P.O. BOX 1070, 117 S. 21st ST.
SUNDANCE, WYOMING, 82729

OFFICE STAFF:

DANICE CONZELMAN - PROGRAM TECH

SUSAN RASMUSSEN - PROGRAM TECH.

MIKE IDLER – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

OFFICE HOURS: 8:00 – 4:30 (Mon. - Fri.)

PHONE: (307) 283-2870 (Ext. 2) FAX: 283-2170

COUNTY COMMITTEE:

MERVIN PETERSON

LARRY FOWLKES

ROSS GARMAN

ROXIE DACAR

ANNUAL NOTIFICATIONS

Foreign Buyers Notification: The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act 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 with 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. County government offices, realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

Controlled Substance: Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium, poppies and other drug producing plants.

Special Accommodations: Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the Crook County FSA office staff directly or by phone at (307) 283-2870 ext. 2.

Bank Account Changes: Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into your bank account. In order for timely payments to be made, producers need to notify the FSA County office staff if your account has been changed or if another financial institution purchases your bank. Payments can be delayed if the FSA office is not aware of updates to your account and routing numbers.

Power of Attorney: For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., we have a power of attorney form available that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. If you are interested, please contact our office or any Farm Service Agency office near you for more information. If you want a crop loan, a power of attorney form will need to be completed for husband and wife, if both do not come into the office to sign the forms on the day the loan is disbursed.

Spousal Signatures: Husbands and wives may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation programs in which either has an interest. This option is automatically available unless a written request for exclusion is made to the county office staff by either spouse.

Loans for the Socially Disadvantaged: The Farm Service Agency (FSA) can make and guarantee loans to socially disadvantaged applicants to buy and operate family size farms and ranches. Funds specifically for these loans are reserved each year. A socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of the group without regard to their individual qualities. For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asians and Pacific Islanders. Contact your local FSA Farm Loan Manager or Officer for more details and assistance in applying.

Applications for FSA Loans: The Farm Service Agency offers loans for farmers and ranchers to purchase farmland and finance agricultural operations. FSA loan programs are designed to help producers who are temporarily unable to obtain private or commercial credit. The agency also offers loans to BEGINNING FARMERS OR RANCHERS in the form of a farm ownership loan. Contact your local FSA farm loan manager or officer for more details and assistance in applying. The contact person for Crook County is Rob Weppner in the Gillette office: number is 682-8843.

Youth Loans: Remember FSA makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to establish and operate income producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be initiated, developed, carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organization or with a vocational teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and operated with the assistance of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. Contact your local FSA farm loan manager for more details.

Reconstitution of Farms: Producers have until June 1st to request a combination or division of farms. Farms with the same owner/operator are a required combination. Land that is sold, in most cases, should be split from the parent farm. FSA requires a Warranty Deed or Land Sales Agreement for proof of ownership before a reconstitution of farms can be completed.

Farm Record Changes: If you have bought, sold or are renting different land, make sure you report the changes to the staff at your local FSA office as soon as possible so farm records can be updated. For farm ownership changes you will need to provide a recorded deed or recorded land contract. All landowners must furnish their tax ID numbers. Remember, failure to maintain accurate records with FSA on all land you have an interest in can lead to possible program ineligibility and fines if you are participating in farm programs.

Faxed Signatures: Certain faxed signatures shall be accepted for all applicable program forms or other documents approved for faxed signatures, if all other requirements are met.

Breaking up new Sod: If you will be breaking up new land, sod or very old cropland that has gone back to pasture, you need to contact this office prior to planting a crop. To be in compliance with sodbuster provisions you must notify this office, Farm Service Agency, of the area to be broken out and must file a revised form AD-1026. We will then delineate the "field" boundary and refer the new land to NRCS for a determination of highly erodible. If the land to be broken up and farmed is highly erodible you must comply with the conservation plan developed by NRCS. Contacting NRCS and getting their concurrence to break up this land without first contacting this office to complete the necessary paperwork does not constitute compliance with sodbuster provisions. Producers who violate sodbuster provisions risk becoming ineligible for program benefits through USDA.

Acreage Reports / DCP / Production Reports: Acreage reports are a requirement for most FSA programs. Filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, will assist in timely processing of program applications and payments. **July 1st** is the deadline to file an acreage report. Late-filed acreage reports will be assessed a fee of \$46. We are taking acreage reports by appointment again this year. Watch for a card in the mail. Our scheduling of appointments for acreage reports, or other programs, in no way overrides your

responsibility to file an acreage report by July 1st or meet other program deadlines – meaning, if we fail to send you a card, or it gets lost in the mail, and you miss the deadline to file, we are not responsible. Appointments are meant so we may better assist producers when they visit the office, not to ensure that they sign up for program benefits or to comply with agency regulations.

In addition, when you visit the office to report your acres and you have a field or two that you are not sure what you are going to do with it but think you will plant some spring crop yet, we will load the acres as summer fallow or leave them as they were reported last year, and give you a note to call and inform us what was done with the field(s). We will then update the acreage report and send you a revised form to sign/date and return.

During this appointment we will also be taking contract enrollments for the Direct/Counter Cyclical Program (DCP). The deadline to file a DCP contract is **June 1st**. No late filed provisions apply to DCP. Those contracts not having all required signatures on or before June 1st will not be considered “filed” and will not be approved. An advance payment of 22% can be requested for any month from April to September. If no advance payment is requested the full payment will be issued in October 2009.

Additionally, we will be accepting 2008 crop production reports. The deadline to file this report is **July 1st**. Production reports are required for crops enrolled in the NAP program. Failure to timely file will result in a reduced Actual Production History (APH) for at least the current year APH yield. When reporting production please bring your records that support the production totals.

Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE): The recently approved bill under the 2009 Act allows producers to become eligible for 2008 disaster assistance authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill even if they did not previously obtain otherwise statutorily required crop insurance or NAP coverage for 2008. To become eligible producers need to pay a “buy-in” fee by May 18, 2009. This announcement reopens the option to purchase “buy-in” coverage. Paying such buy-in fees does not provide the producer with crop insurance or NAP coverage on the specific crop; it merely permits the producer to become eligible for the 2008-crop disaster assistance programs. Producers who have not already taken the necessary steps to become eligible for the SURE, ELAP or TAP may now become eligible for such programs. Call our office for details.

To date, it is our understanding that most, if not all, of the Crook County producers have met the provisions set forth above by either already having crop insurance or NAP on their 2008 crops or they paid the necessary buy-in fees. If you had losses in 2008 and wish to apply for the SURE program you should check with our office to ensure full compliance.

The SURE program provides assistance to producers who suffered crop losses in a specific year. Basic eligibility requires that all crops, excluding pasture and intended grazed crops, be either covered by crop insurance or NAP and those crops meet specific loss thresholds.

Wool / Mohair / Unshorn Pelts Producers: You are reminded to call our office prior to shearing and/or selling your wool to ensure your “page 1” of form CCC-633-EZ is filed. This form has to be signed, dated and filed in our office prior to loss of beneficial interest (selling on contracting) the commodity. A quick phone call to our office and we can mail you the form to complete and return, or you can stop by the office and sign one. The little time it takes to file this form will ensure your eligibility for an LDP payment on your wool, mohair or unshorn pelts.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

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

...Notify county office of direct deposit changes

...Notify county office of farm record changes or management changes

March 31...Last day to file LDP applications for 2008 small grain crops for grain and hay and Honey loans.

April 1...Deadline to Purchase policy of spring seeded NAP crops

May 25...Office closed – Memorial Day Holiday

June 1...DCP signup deadline

July 1...Crop Report deadline

July 1...2008 Production report deadline (required for NAP participants)

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 Home page at www.fsa.usda.gov

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

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication or 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 USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964 (voice and TDD).