



NEWSLETTER



Laramie County FSA Office

November 2011

Gary Gompert, CED
11221 US Hwy 30
Cheyenne, WY 82009
/s/ Gary Gompert

(307) 772-2314 phone
(307) 772-2120 fax
www.fsa.usda.gov/WY

Hours

Monday - Friday
7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Laramie County Staff

Doris Scheel
Denise Hunt
Krista Macy

Farm Loan Officer

Dixie Mount- In the office on
Tuesday. Located out of
the Wheatland FSA Office.
(307) 322-4050 phone

County Committee

Mike Peterson
Mark Child
Dale Martin

Advisor

Louise Jacobsen



Farm Program Information

2012 DCP/ACRE Signup

2012 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) enrollment begins Jan. 23, 2012 and ends June 1, 2012. Advance payments are not authorized.

Here are IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

- 1) All producers planting on **DCP base** acres must be identified on the DCP/ACRE contract and receive a proportionate share of DCP/ACRE payment for the farm.
- 2) Changes on the farm after enrolling June 1st in DCP/ACRE **must** be reported to your local FSA office such as:
 - Ownership changes
 - Producer changes (Individuals and Entities)
 - Change in crop shares arrangements
- 3) Changes cannot be made after Sept. 30, 2012.

Reporting of Acreage Planted

Crop reports will be taken by appointment. Please file a crop report for wheat planted.

Disaster Programs

Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE)

The sign-up for 2010 losses begins Nov. 14, 2011 and will end June 1, 2012. SURE provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters that occurred in the crop year 2010. There are two basic qualification methods for a SURE payment. In the first method, the producer's operation must be located in a county that was declared a 2010 disaster county by the USDA Secretary or in a contiguous county and the natural disaster must have caused at least a 10 percent production loss on a crop of economic significance in the operation. In the second method, all producers in all counties are eligible for SURE benefits if they had a production loss equal to or greater than 50 percent of the normal production on the farm due to any qualifying natural disaster.

The following counties received a disaster designation or were contiguous during 2010: Albany, Carbon, Converse, Fremont, Hot Springs, Laramie, Natrona, Park, Sweetwater, Sublette, Teton, and Washakie.

Further eligibility requirements include the stipulation that producers must have obtained a policy or plan of insurance for all insurable crops through the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation. For crops without insurance programs, Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage must have been obtained from FSA. Eligible farmers and ranchers who meet the definition of a socially disadvantaged, limited resource or beginning farmer or rancher do not have to meet this risk-management requirement. Forage crops intended for grazing are not eligible for SURE benefits.

NAP Deadline

Noninsured Crop Disaster applications are due at different times according to the crop being insured. Producers should apply for Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage using form CCC-471 (Application for Coverage). Related service fees are due when the application is filed. The application and service fee **MUST** be filed by the crop sales closing date. FSA now has two closing dates for 2012. December 1 for biennial and perennial forage crops, regardless of the intended use and April 1, 2012 for all other crops.

Payment Eligibility

Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) Verification Process

This provides an overview of the average adjusted gross income (AGI) certification and compliance review process. A key component is the data-sharing process with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). IRS tax information will be used to identify program participants that may not have complied with statutory AGI requirements, or whether further review is required to make an accurate determination.

Beginning in October 2011, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will provide producers with an average AGI certification and consent form (CCC-931) to complete. The form authorizes the IRS to disclose USDA 2009 through 2012 tax-related information for AGI compliance purposes. Producers may obtain the CCC-931 at their local USDA Service Center or online at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=pmel&topic=agi>.

Producers should mail or return the completed CCC-931 directly to the appropriate USDA Service Center. It is recommended that producers submit the completed CCC-931 at the time that payments and benefits are requested under USDA programs which are subject to the average AGI limitations. As required by law, producers must sign the CCC-931 to grant the IRS the authority to provide tax information data to USDA.

An annual reconciliation process will be initiated to identify producers who did not file the CCC-931 with USDA. Producers identified through that process will receive written notice of the requirement to submit the completed CCC-931 to USDA to avoid interruption, delay, or refund of program payments.

The IRS will check each participant's AGI compliance by performing computerized calculations that indicate whether or not a producer may exceed average AGI limitations. Average AGI calculations for 2012 are based on the 2008, 2009 and 2010 tax years, and the average AGI calculations for 2011 are computed based on the 2007, 2008 and 2009 tax years.

Producers whose average AGI appear to be in excess of the statutory AGI limitations will be notified in writing of the results, and provided an opportunity to make available within 30 days to the applicable FSA Office, a third-party verification from a certified public accountant or attorney of their AGI that demonstrates the limits have not been exceeded.

Producers determined not to be in compliance with AGI limitation will be offered appeal rights to either FSA or the National Appeals Division.

Producers who fail to respond to written notices of AGI non-compliance or determined non-compliant will be notified of the requirement to refund the applicable program payments. Actions required by the Debt Collection Improvement Act (DCIA) will be followed by NRCS and FSA.

NRCS Accepting Applications for Farm Bill Programs

CASPER - Agricultural producers may submit applications for seven Farm Bill conservation programs, administered by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Applications received at Wyoming NRCS field offices, through December 1, 2011, will be compiled and ranked for 2012 funding. Private landowners are encouraged to sign-up for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), the Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) Program, the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), the Grassland Reserve Program (GRP), and the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP). Applications on file that were not selected for contracts in 2011 may be carried-over. However, applicants should contact the local office if they wish to maintain or change their application.

The conservation programs offer financial incentives and technical assistance for a variety of conservation practices available to private landowners who wish to voluntarily participate.

EQIP promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible national goals. It provides financial assistance to install or implement structural and management conservation practices on eligible agricultural land. Examples include installing water quality improvements, such as livestock waste management systems; enhancing grazing lands management through fencing and water developments; and increasing water conservation by improving irrigation systems. Approximately half of Wyoming's EQIP funds are allocated to the county level to support priority resource needs identified by Local Work Groups. In addition, several national and state initiatives are available through EQIP, including the following:

- The Organic Agriculture Initiative assists farmers and ranchers who wish to transition to organic agriculture, as well as current organic producers to broaden their use of organic methods.
- The Energy Initiative assists producers with expiring Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contracts who wish to keep the acres in grass to install fencing, water developments, and other practices needed for proper grazing management.
- The Sage-grouse Initiative assists producers to implement practices that will improve sage-grouse habitat.
- The Livestock Waste Initiative assists producers who want to make changes to their livestock waste management systems to improve water quality and comply with environmental regulations.
- The High Tunnel Pilot assists agricultural producers to install Seasonal High Tunnels or Hoop Houses to explore the resource benefits of raising vegetable crops in these systems.
- The Ogallala Aquifer Initiative assists agricultural producers in Southeast Wyoming to conserve water through irrigation water management and conversion to dryland uses.
- WHIP offers financial incentives to create high quality wildlife habitat that supports state and local priorities. Examples include aspen regeneration, stream restoration, riparian area improvements, and restoring fish passage.
- The AMA program focuses on reducing risk to agricultural producers. In recent years, the funds have been directed to, and have assisted, producers in restoring vegetation along water courses by removing invasive species, especially Russian Olive and Salt Cedar.
- The Conservation Stewardship Program encourages land stewards to increase their conservation performance by installing or adopting new conservation activities on their operation and continuing their past efforts.
- WRP offers landowners assistance to restore and protect wetlands and associated uplands through permanent easements, 30-year easements, and cost-share only restoration agreements. The program is designed to achieve maximum wetland functions and values while obtaining optimum wildlife habitat.
- GRP emphasizes support for working grazing operations, enhancement of plant and animal biodiversity, and protection of grassland under threat of conversion to other uses. Participants voluntarily limit future development and cropping uses of the land while retaining the right to conduct common grazing practices and operations related to the production of forage and seeding.
- FRPP provides matching funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farm and ranchland in agricultural uses. Working through existing programs, USDA partners with State, tribal or local governments and non-governmental organizations to acquire conservation easements or other interests in land from landowners. USDA provides up to 50% of the fair market easement value of the conservation easement.

Applications are available at your local USDA Service Center or NRCS Field Office listed under United States Government in your community phone directory. For more information, go to <http://www.wy.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/index.html>.

Farm Loan Information

Farm Loan Year End Reviews

Producers that have a farm loan with FSA are reminded they must provide data for their Year-End Analysis to their loan officer each year. Borrowers are urged to provide this information timely so that their files can be maintained.

Applications for FSA Farm Loan Assistance

Farmers and ranchers that intend to apply to the Farm Service Agency for loan assistance for the upcoming crop year are encouraged to file their applications as early as possible. Failure to apply early may result in a delay in processing loans due to the volume of applications. Contact your local FSA Farm Loan representative for more details and assistance in applying.

Operating Loan Applications

Farmers that plan to apply for annual operating loan assistance are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. Farmers should contact their local FSA office for information.

Laramie County FSA Office
11221 US Hwy 30
Cheyenne, WY 82009



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Administrative Information

Hispanic and Women Farmers

A process to resolve the claims of Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who believe they were discriminated against when seeking USDA farm loans has been established. If you believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (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. For additional information on this and other settlement issues contact:

Hispanic and Women Farmer Claims Process: www.farmerclaims.gov or call 1-888-508-4429

Pigford – The Black Farmers Discrimination Litigation: www.blackfarmercase.com or call 1-866-950-5547

Keepseagle - The Native American Farmers Class Action Settlement: www.IndianFarmClass.com or call 1-888-233-5506

Committee Election Nominations

Laramie County will be holding an election for a person to represent LAA 3. That position is currently held by Mark Child, who has hit his term limit, so he is not eligible to run for election. LAA 3 includes all of Laramie County west of County Road 136. Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters by November 4 and must be returned to the FSA county office or postmarked by Dec. 5, 2011.

Changing Banks?

Almost all Farm Service Agency payments are made electronically using Direct Deposit. To maintain efficient payment processing, it is critical to keep the county office staff up to date on changes you might make with your financial institutions. If you have made changes to accounts or have changed banking institutions, these changes might affect the direct deposit of your FSA payments. When changes like these are made, be sure to contact the FSA county office so we can update our records to ensure efficient and uninterrupted service.

Dates To Remember

November 4	Committee Election Ballots Mailed
November 11	Veteran's Day Holiday – Office Closed
November 14	SURE Signup Starts – Please call for an appointment
November 24	Thanksgiving Holiday – Office Closed
December 1	NAP Application Deadline
December 5	Deadline to Return Election Ballots
December 26	Christmas Day Holiday (Observed) – Office Closed

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