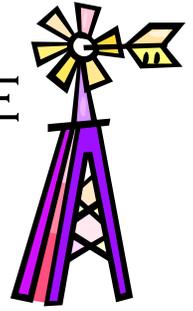




NATRONA/CONVERSE COUNTY WINDMILL



January 2010

Natrona/Converse
County FSA
5880 Enterprise Dr Ste 100
Casper, WY 82609
(307) 261-5436
or
Toll Free 1-866-596-4478

Office Hours:
Monday - Friday
8:00 am – 4:30 pm
www.fsa.usda.gov

County Committee

Jared Vollman – Chair
Leslie Hendry – Member
Jim Price – Member
Neil Forgey – Member
John Bentley - Member

Staff

Jim Neill – CED
Wanda McLean – PT
Deena McDaniels – PT
Dave Lengle – FLM

Douglas USDA Service
Center
911 S. Windriver Dr.
Douglas, WY 82633
(307) 358-3050

County Committee Elections

Congratulations to Leslie Hendry of Clear Creek Cattle Company on being elected to the County Committee for Local Administrative Area 2. Leslie will be replacing Mary Owens and will serve on the Committee for a term of three years.

I would like to thank everyone who participated in this year's election. I was very pleased with the turnout. Leslie has the difficult job of representing the farmers and ranchers of north Natrona County. As anyone who has served on the County Committee will say, the job is both difficult and rewarding. I look forward to working with Leslie.

The County Committee will be meeting for the first time in 2010 on January 7th, 2010. The committee will be electing the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson for 2010. The County Committee usually meets on the first Thursday of every month; however, 2010 meeting dates have not been official set. These meetings are open to the public and if anyone would like to attend the meetings, please call the office for the next meeting date.

//signed// James R. Neill, CED

Livestock Disaster Programs

As 2009 comes to a close, I would like to remind everyone that submitted an application under any of the Livestock Disaster Programs that they have until **January 30th** to complete their application for payment for losses incurred during 2009. In order to file an application, you must first have a Notice of Loss on file within 15 days of the loss being apparent.

There are three different Livestock Disaster Programs: Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), Livestock Forage Disaster Assistance Program (LFP) and the Emergency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP). These programs were authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill and will be in effect throughout the life of the farm bill. A notice of loss is required to be filed for LIP and ELAP. This needs to be completed within 15 days of the loss being apparent. Once your loss has been filed, you have until 30 days after the end of the calendar year to provide all documentation and complete your application.

The Natrona/Converse FSA has currently filed a request through the Deputy Assistant of Farm Programs in Washington D.C. for approval of grasshoppers as an eligible cause of loss through the Emergency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP). ELAP

provides financial compensation for losses not covered under LIP or LFP. However, approval for the cause of loss must first be obtained through the Deputy Assistant of Farm Programs.

We are no longer accepting Notices of Loss for ELAP for 2009; however you may file losses within 15 days of the loss being apparent for 2010. If you have any questions about any of the Livestock Disaster Programs, please contact any of the FSA office staff.

Loan Deficiency Payments

We have recently mailed out CCC-633EZ page 1's to all of our Loan Deficiency Program (LDP) participants from 2009. This form is required to be on file at the county office prior to payments being requested. LDP's may be requested after the CCC-633 EZ page 1 is on file, the commodity has been harvested, and the producer maintains beneficial interest. LDP rates are based on the difference between the loan rate and the Price Control Point established by FSA. These rates fluctuate daily. To check the most current LDP rates, please visit the following website

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/displayLDPRates?area=home&subject=prsu&topic=ldp-ldp>
or contact any one of the county office staff.

The majority of the LDP's processed in the office have been for wool. However, LDP's are available for most commodities. If you are interested in participating in LDP for 2010, please stop by the office and complete a CCC-633EZ form or call us and we can mail a form out to you.

Annual FSA Notifications

FSA is required to annually notify producers of many program requirements, policies, and reminders. The following are some of those notifications

Foreign Buyers Notification: The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of United States agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. FSA administers this program for USDA. Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land 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 up to 25% 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.

Foreign Person Rule: A foreign individual is someone who is not a citizen of the United States or a lawful alien possessing a valid Alien Registration Receipt Card (Form I-551 or I-151). A foreign entity is a corporation, trust, estate, limited partnership, limited liability company, or other similar organization that has more than 10 percent of its beneficial interest held by individuals who are not citizens of the United States or lawful aliens possessing a valid Alien Registration Receipt Card (Form I-551 or I-151). In addition to the requirements for "person" and "actively engaged in farming," the following significant contributions must be provided by an individual or entity considered to be a "foreign person." An individual determined to be a "foreign person" must provide a significant contribution of land, capital, and active personal labor. Each foreign individual who is a member of an entity determined to be a "foreign person" must provide active personal labor to enable the entity to provide a significant contribution of active personal labor.

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 county FSA office staff directly or by phone.

Under-Represented Groups: FSA solicits and accepts nominations of under-represented groups such as females and minority (American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander) producers for county committee representation.

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.

Change in Farming Operation or Address: Producers are reminded to notify this office to report change in address or ownership. This is vital to assist this office in keeping records.

Change in Direct Deposit Account: The Debt Collection Act of 1996 mandates that payments from FSA be directly deposited into a producer's checking or savings bank account. It is important that any change in the producer's account such as type of account, bank mergers, routing number or account numbers be provided to the county office promptly to avoid possible payment delay.

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

Spousal Signature: A husband and wife may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) programs in which either has an individual interest. This option is automatically available unless a written request for exclusion is made to the county office from either spouse. Exceptions include claim settlements, power of attorney forms and signatory authority for an entity.

FSA Appeal Process: After an FSA official makes a decision on your request for USDA services or application, you will be sent a letter informing you of the decision and options you can pursue if you disagree. Generally, program participants have three choices — an informal review with the original agency decision-maker, an opportunity for mediation and appeal to the USDA National Appeal Division.

Cash-rent Tenant: A cash-rent tenant rule applies to any producer that rents land from another producer for cash or a crop share guaranteed as the amount of the commodity to be paid in rent. The rule also applies to any producer who rents land for zero dollars or who farms the land in exchange for compensation other than cash, such as controlling weeds on land not owned, or barter arrangements. Any cash-rent tenant shall be ineligible to receive payment unless the cash-rent tenant makes a significant contribution of active personal labor to the farming operation; or a significant contribution of active personal management and a significant contribution of equipment. A cash-rent tenant must also meet all applicable requirements to be considered "actively engaged in farming."

Submission of Applications via E-Government: As required by the Freedom to E-File Act, USDA provides customers with the option to electronically access, fill out, and print paper forms and transmit those forms and other documents to their local Service Center.

Customers may also obtain secure payment summary information. A secure website is offered. Log on to:

<http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov>

if you wish to register for a Customer ID and password.

Farm Loan Programs: The Farm Service Agency (FSA) 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.

FSA Farm Loans Available To Beginning Farmers or Ranchers: Beginning farmers or ranchers may obtain a farm ownership loan by using funds set aside especially for them by the Farm Service Agency. These loans can be financed up to the \$300,000 loan limit, and the term of the loan can be up to 40 years.

Farm ownership loan funds may also be used in joint financing where FSA lends up to 50 percent of the amount financed and another lender provides 50 percent or more.

Loans for 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. Socially disadvantaged groups include women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, and Asians and Pacific Islanders. Contact your local FSA Farm Loan Manager for more details and assistance in applying.

Honey Loans: Marketing assistance loans and loan deficiency payments for 2009 crop year honey are available until **March 31, 2010**. Market prices currently exceed the loan rate; so LDPs are not available right now.

To be eligible for a loan, the producer must have produced honey in the United States during the calendar year for which the loan is requested, and extracted the honey on or before Dec. 31 of the applicable crop year; have continuous beneficial interest in the honey through date of repayment of the loan; and been responsible for the financial risk of keeping the honey. Producers are responsible for maintaining the quality of farm-stored honey during the term of the loan. Contact your county FSA office for more information.

Applications for FSA Loans: 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. Filing early will help ensure that your loan is processed and approved as early as possible so that planting decisions can be made. Failure to apply early can result in a delay in processing loans due to the volume of applications that must be processed in date order. Contact your local FSA farm loan manager or officer for more details and assistance in applying.

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.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
 Natrona/Converse CO FSA
 5880 Enterprise Dr. Ste 100
 Casper, WY 82609

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

January 4, 2010	Signup for SURE Program begins
January 18, 2010	Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday – Office Closed
February 1, 2010	Application for Payment Deadline for LIP and ELAP
February 1, 2010	Final Loan/LDP availability for 2009 Wool/Mohair
February 1, 2010	Final loan/LDP availability for 2009 unshorn pelts
February 15, 2010	George Washington’s Birthday – Office Closed
March 15, 2010	Federal Crop Insurance deadline for Spring crops.
April 1, 2010	Deadline to purchase NAP coverage

Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) Program

Signup for the SURE Program for **2008 crop losses will begin January 4, 2010.**

SURE is available to eligible producers on:

- Farms in counties with Secretarial disaster declarations, including contiguous counties that have incurred crop production losses and/or crop quality losses during the crop year.
- Any farm in which, for the crop year, the actual production on the farm because of disaster-related conditions is 50 percent or less than the normal production of the farm.

At a minimum, to be eligible for the SURE Program, the producer must have purchased or be enrolled in the following for the 2008 crop year:

- A plan of crop insurance of at least catastrophic (CAT) level for all insurable crops
- And/or Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for all non-insurable crops.

Note: RMA crop Insurance or NAP coverage on grazing land does not have to be purchased in order to be eligible for SURE. SURE does not pay for losses on crops intended for grazing.