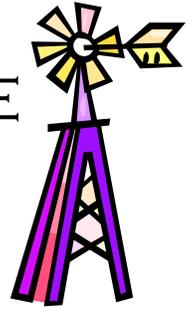




NATRONA/CONVERSE COUNTY WINDMILL



APRIL 2010

Emergency Livestock Disaster Assistance Program

The Emergency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP) has been finalized and approved for livestock producers who suffered grazing losses or additional expenses. The deadline for sign-up has been reopened with a deadline of **May 5th, 2010**.

The finalization has brought some changes and clarification to the program. The finalization clarified eligibility of grazing losses and additional feed costs. Eligible grazing losses must have occurred between May 1st and October 15th. Additional expenses and additional feed costs must have been incurred during the same time frame.

Another change to the program includes the eligibility of livestock death losses due to wolf depredation. Documentation is required. If you have livestock death losses due to wolf depredation, please contact the FSA office for information about the documentation required.

If you suffered grazing losses or additional feed costs due to any event other than drought, please contact the FSA office and complete and application. Remember, the deadline for the initial sign up is **May 5th, 2010**. Losses incurred this year and in the future will need to be initiated no later than 30 days after the loss is apparent.

Acreage Reporting

The acreage reporting deadline is fast approaching. Filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs.

Failed acreage must be reported within 15 days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date.

Acreage reports are required for many FSA programs. Some programs that require a crop report for benefits are: DCP/ACRE, NAP, LFP, ELAP, LDP/MAL and CRP. If you are participating or plan on participating in any of these programs, acreage reports are to be certified by **July 1st**. Even if you are not currently participating in any USDA programs, it is good idea to complete a crop report. We would love to meet you.

2010 DCP Signup

Enrollment for the 2010 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) will continue through June 1, 2010. USDA urges producers to make use of the eDCP automated website to sign up, or producers can visit any USDA Service Center to complete their 2010 DCP contract.

USDA computes DCP Program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2010, eligible producers may request advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment.

The ACRE Program

The Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) began in crop year 2009. Through ACRE, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers producers an alternative to Direct and Counter-cyclical (DCP) payments. The ACRE alternative provides eligible producers a state-level revenue guarantee, based on the 5-year state Olympic average yield and the 2-year national average price.

The enrollment date for 2010 ACRE is June 1, 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 – V. Chair
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

ACRE payments are made when both state- and farm-level triggers are met. By participating in ACRE, producers elect to forgo counter-cyclical payments. When electing ACRE, producers agree to a 20-percent reduction in direct payments and a 30-percent reduction in loan rates.

A decision to elect ACRE binds the producer to the program through the 2012 crop year, the last crop year covered by the 2008 Farm Bill. If you are currently enrolled in ACRE, you must provide the FSA office with last year's crop production evidence.

NAP Records

If you have purchase NAP for any yield based crops, you are required to provide production evidence for the past years production. Production records for individual crops need to be filed with your FSA office to establish an approved NAP yield. If this is the first year you participated in NAP, you can provide production and acreage information from prior years to establish your yield. If you participated in NAP in previous years, you must report your production and acreage on a yearly basis to keep your yield up-to-date. Records submitted must be reliable or verifiable and need to show crop disposition. We recommend producers submit 2009 production records as soon as harvest is complete. However, if you have not provided your production evidence, you need to do so by July 1st, 2010.

Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (Crop Disaster)

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters that incurred in the crop years 2008 through September 30, 2011. To be eligible for SURE payments, producers are required to obtain crop insurance on all crops in all counties or, for crops for which insurance is not available, producers must participate in the Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) except for grazed acreage. However, crop insurance or NAP coverage is no longer required for crops that are not of economic significance or those where the administrative fee required to buy NAP coverage exceeds 10% of the value of the coverage.

Eligible farmers and ranchers who meet the definition of Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, or Beginning Farmer or Rancher are exempt from the risk management purchase requirement.

The following are the conditions that trigger SURE payments:

- at least one crop of economic significance must suffer a 10% production loss due to an eligible disaster condition
- crop of economic significance is a crop that has contributed or would have contributed at least 5% or more of the total expected revenue from all crops on the farm
- producers in counties declared disaster counties by the Secretary of Agriculture, or in contiguous counties, or those who show proof of an individual loss of at least 50% are eligible to receive SURE payments for crop producer or crop quality losses. Note also that losses are measured with consideration to the whole-farm revenue, which includes crop insurance indemnities and commodity program payments, so that producers are not paid more than once for the same loss.

A SURE calculator is available at: www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/sure_calculator_2008.xls. The calculator is not official, but is intended for educational use. A fact sheet and backgrounder are also available online.

IMPACTS OF RUSSIAN OLIVE TREES IN RIPARIAN AREAS AND ASSISTANCE FOR REMOVAL

Russian olive trees are highly invasive and are considered a noxious weed in the state of Wyoming. These trees have been encroaching upon the Platte River and other waterways in the area and are a concern for many landowners as well as federal, state, and county agencies. Currently, there are efforts underway to try to control the spread of this tree.

Although only a low number of these trees may exist, Russian olives proliferate quickly and have the potential to turn an area with just a few trees into a monotypic stand. Russian olives displace native vegetation, such as cottonwoods which are important for many wildlife species. Research supports that the overall health of a waterway deteriorates when Russian olive trees are able to supersede native vegetation. Plant and wildlife diversity decreases when these trees take over and access to waterways decreases for humans, livestock and wildlife.

Removal of these trees is beneficial for numerous reasons. When Russian olives are removed, the overall health of the riparian ecosystem increases. Native vegetation can grow back and both plant and wildlife population numbers and diversity will increase. Often, once Russian olives have been removed they are able to naturally re-vegetate with grasses and other native vegetation.

There are various programs and assistance available for those who wish to remove or thin Russian olives on their property. The NRCS office in Casper can be reached at 307-261-5436 ext. 3 and the NRCS office in Douglas can be reached at 307-358-3050 ext. 3 for more information. For those interested in assistance with removing Russian olives on your property, please contact us this summer.

Submitted by Kaitlin Farbotnik, Casper NRCS Field Office

NRCS OFFERS ADDITIONAL FARM BILL PROGRAM SIGNUP FOR FY2010

Sage Grouse Initiative Signup offered through May 14, 2010

Agricultural producers may submit applications for a new USDA initiative that offers financial assistance to enhance sage grouse population and habitat in Wyoming using two conservation programs: Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP). The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) administers these programs.

This sign-up provides landowners the opportunity to utilize EQIP and WHIP funding to improve sage grouse habitat. The primary emphasis in Wyoming will be to improve and maintain existing sage grouse habitat through the design and implementation of grazing management plans that will enable ranchers to sustain their operations. In addition to practicing good grazing management, NRCS has selected a variety of conservation technical practices such as spring development, wildlife friendly fence and invasive weed control for landowners to consider to further enhance sage grouse habitat.

This signup provides NRCS and private landowners an avenue to work in cooperation to improve existing habitat especially nesting and brood rearing areas. In many cases, this may involve only a slight change in grazing use of these critical habitat areas. Please call to set up an appointment to discuss this sign-up further.

Wetland Reserve Program Signup offered through May 14, 2010

The Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) provides technical and financial assistance to landowners to restore, protect and enhance wetlands. Wetlands provide habitat for fish and wildlife including threatened and endangered species; improve water quality; reduce flooding; recharge groundwater and protect biological diversity.

This program offers three enrollment options. The first is a permanent easement. This is a conservation easement in perpetuity. USDA pays 100% of the easement value and up to 100% of restoration cost. The second option is a 30-Year easement which pays up to 75% of the easement value and up to 75% of restoration cost. Under the first two options, USDA pays all costs associated with recording the easement. The third option is a restoration cost-share agreement. This is an agreement to restore or enhance the wetland function and value without placing an easement on the enrolled acres. Up to 75% of the restoration cost is covered.

If you have an area of this nature that you would like to enhance, please contact your local NRCS office. A field visit can be arranged to determine if the site meets program requirements and options for restoration can be discussed.

Please contact the NRCS office in Casper at (307) 261-5436 x 3 or the NRCS office in Douglas at (307) 358-3050 x. 3 for more information on these programs. Don't delay as time is short.

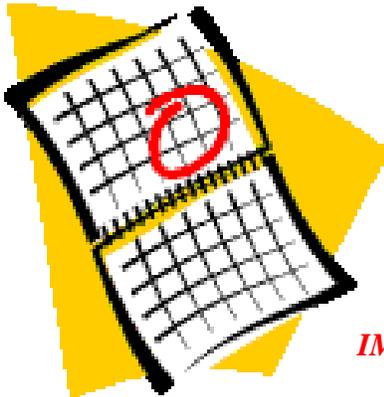
Submitted by Mary Schrader, District Conservationist, Casper NRCS office

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

I can never stress enough, you need to purchase at least a catastrophic level of insurance on insurable crops or NAP coverage on noninsurable crops in order to be eligible for certain disaster programs.

The next County Committee Meeting is April 22nd, 2010 at 1:00 PM at the County Office in Casper. The meeting is open to the public.

//Signed// James R. Neill
 County Executive Director



IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

May 5, 2010	Deadline to submit ELAP application
May 31, 2010	Memorial Day – Office Closed
June 1, 2010	Deadline to complete DCP Contract
June 1, 2010	Deadline to sign-up for ACRE
June 1, 2010	Deadline to provide production evidence for ACRE
July 1, 2010	Deadline to file Crop Report
July 1, 2010	Deadline to provide production evidence for NAP
30 Days after loss is apparent	Deadline to submit a Notice of Loss for ELAP or LIP

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Special Accommodations will be made for the physically handicapped, vision- or hearing-impaired person upon request. If accommodations are required, please call James Neill, CED at (307)261-5436.