



# NEWSLETTER



## Niobrara County Service Center

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**March 2011**

### **CRP Signup Opens**

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) general signup is underway and continues through April 15, 2011. During the signup period, farmers and ranchers may offer eligible land for CRP's competitive general signup at their nearest FSA office. Land currently not enrolled in CRP may be offered in this signup provided all eligibility requirements are met. Additionally, current CRP participants with contracts expiring this fall may make new contract offers. Contracts awarded under this signup are scheduled to become effective Oct. 1, 2011.

FSA will evaluate and rank eligible CRP offers using an Environmental Benefits Index (EBI) and cost factors. The EBI consists of the five specific environmental factors of 1) wildlife, 2) water, 3) soil, 4) air and 5) enduring benefits. Decisions on the EBI cutoff will be made after the sign-up ends and after analyzing the EBI data of all the offers. In addition to the general sign-up, CRP's continuous sign-up program will be ongoing. Continuous acres represent the most environmentally desirable and sensitive land. More information can be found online at: [www.fsa.usda.gov/crp](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/crp)

### **NAP Enrollment**

The deadline to purchase Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for spring seeded crops is April 1<sup>st</sup>. To maintain eligibility for several FSA disaster assistance programs, producers must obtain crop insurance or NAP coverage before a disaster strikes. Producers must obtain NAP or crop insurance coverage on all crops in order to remain eligible for the agency's Disaster Assistance Programs such as SURE, TAP, and ELAP. Producers must purchase at least catastrophic (CAT) level of insurance for all insurable crops. LFP requires coverage only on grazed acres. NAP provides coverage to producers for non-insurable crops when low yields or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters. More information about NAP may be found on the FSA web site located at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)

### **CRP Reminder**

Producers with Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contracts are reminded that it is your responsibility to establish cover and control the weeds and insects on your CRP acreage. Grasshopper infestations have been increasing in recent years and CRP participants may contact the Niobrara Weed and Pest if you have concerns or questions about insect control on CRP.

**ANY UNAPPROVED GRAZING OF CRP ACREAGE IS A VIOLATION THAT IS SUBJECT TO A PENALTY AND CAN RESULT IN TERMINATION OF THE CONTRACT.**

### **Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)**

LIP provides financial assistance to producers that have sustained livestock deaths due to a natural disaster. LIP compensates livestock owners and contract growers for death losses in excess of normal mortality. This program runs through calendar year 2011. Losses must be from the direct result of an adverse weather event, such as a hurricane, flood, blizzard, wildfire, extreme heat or cold, tornado, lightning, or earthquake. Livestock losses must be reported to FSA within 30 days of when the loss becomes apparent.

### **Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation**

If you will be breaking up new land or old cropland that has gone back to permanent grass cover, you must contact this office prior to planting a crop. To remain in compliance with sodbuster provisions you must file a revised form AD-1026. We will then delineate the "field" boundary and refer the new land to NRCS for a determination. If the land is determined to be highly erodible you must comply with the conservation plan developed by NRCS. Producers who violate sodbuster provisions risk becoming ineligible for program benefits through USDA. If you will be breaking out new land you must contact FSA first to start the compliance paperwork.

Swampbuster provisions state that converting a wetland to make possible the planting of a crop will result in the loss of all USDA benefits. To avoid this possibility it is strongly recommended that producers check with NRCS before starting to work.

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<b>Important Dates to Remember</b>	
April 1	Final day to purchase NAP on Spring Seeded Crops
April 15	General CRP Signup Ends
June 1	Final day to apply for 2010 DCP & ACRE
Continues	Continuous CRP Signup

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