



NEWSLETTER



Niobrara County Service Center

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November 2012

NAP Application Deadline

The application signup deadline to obtain Non-Insurance Program (NAP) coverage for the 2013 crop year for fall seeded crops or biennial and perennial crop such as grass hay or range is December 3, 2012. The application fee is \$250 per crop/pay type. Coverage is offered at 50% of the approved yield and 55% of the posted price. The intent of the program is to provide yield protection in the event of catastrophic loss due to natural disaster.

NAP Production Records

All 2012 NAP producers, now is the time to submit production evidence for your 2012 crops. Submitting production evidence for harvested crops, such as bale counts and weights are necessary to maintain accurate yields for coverage. Accurate yields are essential in calculating payments for losses. You can still submit previous year's records if you forgot in the past and those values will be used for your 2013 approved yield.

Emergency Haying & Grazing of CRP

Producers are reminded that Emergency Grazing of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres MUST end not later than November 30, 2012. You must report the acres grazed to this office.

COC Election

COC Election ballots will be mailed to eligible voters in November and must be returned to the county office by the close of business on December 3 or postmarked by midnight December 3, 2012.

Agricultural producers of legal voting age can vote if they participate or cooperate in any FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises and conducts the farming operations on an entire farm can also vote. No one can be denied the right to vote because of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital or family status. For additional clarification about county committee elections, contact the county office.

Farming Operation Changes

If you have bought or sold land, or if you have added or dropped rented land from your operation, make sure you report the changes to the office as soon as possible. You need to provide a copy of your deed or recorded land contract for purchased property. Failure to maintain accurate records with FSA on all land you have an interest in can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. Making the record changes now will save you time in the spring. Update signature authorization when changes in the operation occur. Producers are reminded to contact the office of a change in operations on a farm so that records can be kept current and accurate.

USDA Announces Hispanic and Women Farmer and Rancher Claims Period Now Open

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack has announced that Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who allege discrimination by the USDA in past decades can file claims between September 24, 2012 and March 25, 2013.

The process offers a voluntary alternative to litigation for each Hispanic or female farmer and rancher who can prove that USDA denied their applications for loan or loan servicing assistance for discriminatory reasons for certain time periods between 1981 and 2000.

As announced in February 2011, the voluntary claims process will make available at least \$1.33 billion for cash awards and tax relief payments, plus up to \$160 million in farm debt relief, to eligible Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers. There are no filing fees to participate in the program.

The Department will continue reaching out to potential Hispanic and female claimants, around the country to get the word out to individuals who may be eligible for this program so they have the opportunity to participate.

Call center representatives can be reached at 1-888-508-4429. Claimants must register for a claims package (by calling the number or visiting the website) and the claims package will be mailed to claimants. All those interested in learning more or receiving information about the claims process and claims packages are encouraged to attend meetings in your communities about the claims process and contact the website or claims telephone number.

Website: www.farmerclaims.gov

Phone: 1-888-508-4429

Claims Period: September 24, 2012 - March 25, 2013.

Independent legal services companies will administer the claims process and adjudicate the claims. Although there are no filing fees to participate and a lawyer is not required to participate in the claims process, persons seeking legal advice may contact a lawyer or other legal services provider.

Attention All Buyers of Agricultural Products

It is required that buyers of agricultural products check or register with the Secretary of State's Office to determine if there are liens against the seller of the product. If a lien is found, you are required to place the lien holder's name on the check as well as that of the seller. Ag products include but are not limited to: Livestock (including horses), crops used for feed (hay, silage, oats, etc.), machinery, equipment, and all other crops. **Failure to place the lien holder's name on the check may result in civil legal action being taken against the buyer of the product. Protect yourself as a buyer!** You may contact the Secretary of State's Office at (307) 777-7311.

Livestock Producers Affected by Disasters Urged to Keep Good Records

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator Juan M. Garcia has urged livestock producers affected by natural disasters to keep thorough records of their livestock and feed losses, including additional expenses for such things as feed purchases because of lost supplies.

"There are extraordinary circumstances caused by a variety of disasters from fires in the west, floods in Florida, Hurricane Isaac in the Gulf region, storms in the Mid-Atlantic and drought and heat affecting the heartland," Garcia said. "Each of these events is causing economic consequences for ranchers and producers including cattle, sheep and dairy operations, bee keepers and farm-raised fish, and poultry producers."

FSA recommends that owners and producers record all pertinent information of natural disaster consequences, including:

- Documentation of the number and kind of livestock that have died, supplemented if possible by photographs or video records of ownership and losses
- Dates of death supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts
- Costs of transporting livestock to safer grounds or to move animals to new pastures
- Feed purchases if supplies or grazing pastures are destroyed.

Secretary Vilsack also reminds producers that the department's authority to operate the five disaster assistance programs authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill expired on Sept. 30, 2011. This includes SURE; the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP); the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP); the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP); and the Tree Assistance Program (TAP). Currently, production losses suffered after September 30, 2011 are not eligible for assistance under these programs.

Electronic Services Available

If a producer has Internet access, program participants can access many services from home 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and receive approval and payment by direct deposit within 48 hours.

To participate in these services, you must meet all program eligibility requirements. Online services have stringent security measures to protect your private information.

To utilize electronic services a producer needs an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires an e-mail address and filling out an online registration form at www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/ followed by a visit to the county office for identity verification.

If you would like assistance establishing your account, just contact your local USDA Service Center.

IRS 1099 Changes

Calendar year 2012 has brought changes to the way FSA reports farm program payments to the producer and to the IRS. In past years, IRS Forms 1099-G would be issued to show all program payments received from the Farm Service Agency, regardless of the amount. Starting with calendar year 2012, producers whose total reportable payments from FSA are less than \$600 will not receive IRS Form 1099-G. Also, producers who receive payments from more than one county will only receive one Form 1099-G if the total of all payments from all counties is \$600 or more. The same changes will apply to producers and vendors who normally receive IRS Form 1099-MISC from FSA.

Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation Compliance

Landowners and operators are reminded that in order to receive payments from USDA, compliance with Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions are required. Farmers with HEL determined soils are reminded of tillage, crop residue, and rotation requirements as specified per their conservation plan. Producers are to notify the USDA Farm Service Agency prior to conducting land clearing or drainage projects to insure compliance. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in the loss of eligibility and all Federal payments.

FSA Farm Loans

The Farm Service Agency is committed to providing family farmers with loans to meet their farm credit needs. If you are having trouble getting the credit you need for your farm, direct and guaranteed loans are currently available. Ask your lender about an FSA loan guarantee if you've had a setback and your lender is reluctant to extend or renew your loan.

Farm ownership loans or farm operating loans may be obtained as direct loans for a maximum of up to \$300,000. Guaranteed loans have a maximum limit of \$1,302,000. The one-time loan origination fee charged on FSA guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans is 1.5 percent of the guaranteed portion of the loan. To find out more about FSA loan programs, contact the county office staff.

Beginning and Limited Resource Loans

FSA has a program to assist beginning farmers and or members of socially disadvantaged groups to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these targeted farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. Criteria for these special loans include:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's median size.

Each member of an entity must meet the eligibility requirements. Loan approval is not guaranteed.

Loans for the Socially Disadvantaged

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operating type loans and/or purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided priority funding for members of socially disadvantaged groups.

A socially disadvantaged applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of 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 to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Important Dates to Remember	
November 15	Crop Reporting Deadline for Perennial and Fall Seeded Crops
November 12	Veterans Day Holiday – Office Closed
November 22	Thanksgiving Day Holiday – Office Closed
December 3	Final day to apply for 2013 Non-Insured Assistance Program coverage for perennial (grass for grazing or hay) and biennial forage crops
December 3	Final day to return or postmark COC Election Ballots
Within 15 days of noticing Loss	File CCC - 576 NAP Notice of Loss

NIOBRARA COUNTY FSA OFFICE
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