

January 2009

Platte County News



Platte County FSA
1502 Progress Court
Wheatland, WY 82201
307-322-4050 (phone)
307-322-4109 (FAX)

Hours
Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

County Committee
Larry Cundall
Ruthie Cundall
Dave Hinman
Darrel Vaughn

Staff
Mike Hoffland DD
Dixie Mount FLO
Rick Carroll CED
Celia Herman PT
Mitzi Mudgett PT
Joni Reyes PT



Platte County Has Been Approved For ECP

Platte County has been approved for Emergency Conservation Program for flood damage for the 2008 program year. Platte county FSA office will be taking applications starting Monday January 5th through Tuesday February 3rd 2009. The sign up period will be for 30 days.

Platte County is requesting that you call for an appointment to discuss with the County Office of your loss caused by the flood. The flood occurred May 24th through the 28th. If you had extensive damage because of this flood you may contact the County Office for information on Cost share that you may be eligible for. The majority of losses were on Horseshoe Creek and Cotton Wood Creek.

Noninsured Assistance Program (NAP)

April 1st Last Day to Sign Up Spring Seeded Crops for NAP Coverage.

Producers you may bring into the County Office your production for the 2008 crop year.

Production records are important to maintain your county (APH) yield for you operation. The final date for the turning in production evidence for 2008 is July 1st 2009.

Loans for Socially Disadvantaged Persons

A socially disadvantaged (SDA) farmer, rancher, or agricultural producer is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as a member of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities. SDA groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

FSA reserves direct and guaranteed loan funds for SDA persons. Non-reserved funds also can be used by SDA persons. Direct farm ownership loans (FO) and farm operating loans (OL) are made by FSA to approved applicants.

Secretary Schafer Announces 2009 DCP Signup Begins December 22, 2008
Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program Signup to Begin in the Spring

**USDA ENACTS CHANGES TO PAYMENT LIMITATIONS, INCOME QUALIFICATIONS,
AND IMPLEMENTS DIRECT ATTRIBUTION PROGRAMS**

WASHINGTON, December 19, 2008 - With the publication of an interim final regulation in the Federal Register next week, the United States Department of Agriculture announced changes to both Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) qualifications, program payment limitations, and direct attribution for Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs, which became effective in accordance with the 2008 Farm Bill.

For commodity and disaster programs, the AGI limitation was reduced from \$2.5 million AGI from all sources to a three-year average non-farm AGI of \$500,000 such that a person or entity shall not be eligible for such programs if the non-farm AGI exceeds \$500,000. Also, under the new regulations, an individual or entity must have a 3-year average AGI less than or equal to \$750,000 per year from farm income in order to qualify for direct payments issued under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program.

The definition of income derived from farming, ranching and forestry operations was expanded to include, among other items, such items as the packing, storing and transporting of agricultural commodities; production of livestock products; farm-based production of renewable bio-energy; and in some instances, the providing of operational inputs to farmers, ranchers and foresters.

For conservation programs, the average nonfarm AGI limitation is \$1 million or less for eligibility. However, an individual or entity who has non-farm AGI in excess of \$1 million remains eligible for conservation programs only if 66.66 percent or more of the total AGI is derived from farming, ranching and forestry operations. In addition, the AGI limitation for conservation programs may be waived on a case-by-case basis if it is determined that environmentally sensitive land of special significance would be protected.

Program payments are limited by direct attribution to individuals or entities. A legal entity is defined as an entity created under Federal or State law that owns land or an agricultural commodity, product or livestock. Through direct attribution, payment limitation is based on the total payments received by the individual, both directly and indirectly. Qualifying spouses are eligible to be considered separate persons for payment limitation purposes, rather than being automatically combined under one limitation.

States, local governments, political subdivisions, and other agencies were eligible for payments prior to enactment of the 2008 Act. The 2008 Act and this rule make such jurisdictions ineligible for payments unless such payments are earned on State-owned land and are used to support public schools. Payments under this exception are limited to \$500,000 annually; the limitation is waived for a State that has a population of less than 1.5 million.

Individuals and entities must be "actively engaged in farming" with respect to a farming operation in order to be eligible for specified payments and benefits. To be "actively engaged in farming," the individual or entity must make significant contributions to the farming operation of: (1) capital, equipment, land, or a combination; and (2) personal labor or active personal management, or a

combination.

Under rules in effect since 1988, not every member of an entity had to contribute active personal labor or management. The interim final rule requires each partner, stockholder, or member with an ownership interest to make a contribution of active personal labor or active personal management. The contribution must be regular and substantial, and documented as well as separate and distinct from any other member's contribution. The rule limits the ability of passive stockholders to continue to realize benefits from the entity.

Under the interim final rule, the addition of individuals or entities to an existing operation to qualify for additional payments is more restrictive than under previous regulations. The prior rule in effect since 1988 said the acquisition of new cropland to the farming operation of at least 20 percent qualifies for the increase of an unlimited number of new persons and/or legal entities as eligible for payment. The rule changes the 20-percent increase requirement from cropland to base acres and only allows for the addition of one new person to the operation. However, based on the magnitude and complexity of the change in the farming operation, the State FSA Office may approve additional persons or legal entities for payment in the farming operation. The change eliminates the loophole that previously allowed an unlimited increase in the number of limitations that could accompany a 20 percent increase in eligible land area that meets the definition of cropland.

MILK INCOME LOSS CONTRACT PROGRAM SIGNUP BEGINS DEC 22

WASHINGTON, Dec. 19, 2008 - USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced that signup for the Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC) begins Dec 22 and will continue through the program's expiration date, Sept 30, 2012.

During the signup application period, participating dairy operations must select the month of the fiscal year to start receiving payments for eligible production. Producers submitting a contract application within 30 days of the beginning of the application period can select any preceding month as the start month. Producers submitting contract applications after Jan. 21, 2009, will not have the option of selecting an earlier month as the payment start month for the dairy operation for a fiscal year; and will be limited to applicable start month selection rules. Those general rules are that the start month must either be the month the contract is submitted or some later month. Changes in the month may be made from year to year so long as the designation is made by the fourteenth of the month preceding the new start month. Pound limits run from the start month and all pounds for which payment is received count against the limit for that fiscal year.

Eligible dairy producers are those who commercially produce milk in the United States. To receive program approval, producers must enter into a MILC contract with CCC and provide monthly milk marketing data. Dairy producers can apply for MILC at local FSA offices.

More information on MILC is available at local FSA offices.

**.UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
PLATTE COUNTY FSA OFFICE
1502 PROGRESS COURT
WHEATLAND, WY 82201**

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

January 5, 2009	ECP Signup Begins
January 19, 2009	Office Closed to Observe Martin Luther King Day
February 3 rd Last Day ECP	Last day to enroll in the ECP Program for Cost/Share
Continues	Continuous CRP sign up
Continues	Farm Stored Facility Loan Program
February 16, 2009	Office Closed to Observe Presidents Day
April 1 2009	Last Day to enroll Spring Seeded NAP Crops
March 31,2009	Last day for commodity loan on Barley, Oats and Wheat
May 31, 2009	Last day for commodity loan on Corn

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