



NEWSLETTER



Sheridan – Johnson County FSA Office
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Sheridan, WY 82801

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Toll Free Number:
1-866-262-4396

Johnson County Office Day: First
Wednesday of each month.

Buffalo USDA Service Center
621 Fetterman Street
Buffalo, WY 82834
(307) 684-2526 Ext. 104

FSA Office Personnel:
Linda Benzel, CED
Janice Wheeler, PT

County Committee Members:
William White, Chairperson
Juaquin Michelena, Vice
Chairperson
Susan Moyes, Regular Member
Raymon Turk, Regular Member
Steve Schuette; Regular Member

Dates to Remember:

January 19th thru June 2nd –
DCP/ACRE Signup
February 18th – President's Day
Holiday, Office Closed
March 25, 2013 – Last day to file
discrimination claims for Hispanic
and women farmers and ranchers.
April 1st– NAP Sales Deadline for
spring crops.
June 7th – 2011 SURE
Application Deadline
July 15th – 2013 Crop Report
Deadline
July 15th – NAP Production
Records Deadline

Attention Sheridan-Johnson County Producers •••••

Due to budget constraints our county FSA office will no longer be mailing newsletters to producers. In order to keep you timely informed of upcoming events, producers are being asked to provide their email address to receive newsletters and other reminders by mail. The emails that you provide will be added to our electronic news system, GovDelivery.

Copies of Newsletters will also be available at our county FSA office, the Johnson County NRCS building in Buffalo, and at the Powder River Conservation District office at Kaycee.

Congress Extends the Farm Bill

The 2008 Farm Bill was extended through September 30, 2013. Most major programs were extended including DCP/ACRE, MILC, commodity loans and CRP.

► 2013 DCP/ACRE signup

On February 19, 2013 FSA will begin signup for the Direct and Counter Cyclical Payment Program (DCP) and Average Crop Revenue Election Program (ACRE) for 2013 crops. The DCP signup period will end on **August 2, 2013**; the ACRE sign-up will end on **June 3, 2013**. The 2013 DCP/ACRE program provisions are unchanged from 2012.

► 2013 MILC Dairy Program

All dairy producers' Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC) contracts are automatically extended to September 30, 2013. There is no need for producers to re-enroll. MILC participants will have an opportunity to change the starting month designated for payment under the MILC program for 2013. During the period between February 1 and February 28, 2013, designation may be modified to any month in the Fiscal Year to date.

► Marketing Assistance Loans

The 2013 marketing assistance loan program provisions are unchanged from 2012. Marketing assistance loans provide short-term financing that allows producers to store production and delay the sale of their commodity when market prices are low.

► Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

FSA administers a variety of programs under the Conservation Reserve Program. These conservation programs allow producers to enter into long-term contracts to receive annual rental payments in exchange for planting permanent vegetation and/or installing specific conservation practices on eligible farmland. Authority to enroll new acres in these programs ended on September 30, 2012. The continuation of existing FSA conservation programs will continue through fiscal year 2013.

► Disaster Programs NOT Funded

Four FSA disaster programs were extended through September 30, 2013 however at this time there are no funds available. Disaster programs include the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), Livestock Forage Program (LFP), Emergency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP), and the Tree Assistance Program (TAP). The SURE program was not extended for 2012 and 2013 crop losses.

Our FSA staff would like to encourage producers to keep good records and receipts involving their livestock and crop losses.

“The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)”

► County Committee Election Results ◀

Congratulations to Steve Schuette and Susan Moyes for their election by voters to serve on the Sheridan-Johnson FSA County Committee. Steve was re-elected to represent LAA 2 farmers and ranchers in Sheridan County and Susan was re-elected to represent LAA 4 farmers and ranchers in Johnson County.

Our FSA office staff would like to thank all the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The election of FSA County Committee members is important to all farmers and ranchers in our agricultural communities. *It is your involvement that makes the county committee system work.*

► FSA County Committee Organizational Meeting

The organizational meeting for Sheridan-Johnson county COC members was held on December 6, 2012 to determine the chairperson, vice chairperson and regular members on the county committee for the 2013 calendar year. By unanimous vote, the Sheridan-Johnson County FSA Committee for 2013 will be as follows:

- William White, Chairperson LAA1
- Juaquin Michelena, Vice Chairperson LAA3
- Raymon Turk, Regular Member LAA5
- Steve Schuette, Regular Member LAA2
- Susan Moyes, Regular Member LAA4

► 2011 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program Applications

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) will continue to accept SURE applications for 2011 crop losses through June 7, 2013. The SURE Program provides payments to producers when crop revenues are less than the crop guarantee. The SURE Program payment is equal to 60 percent of the difference between the crop guarantee and revenue. To be eligible, the producer must have at least one crop with a 10 percent production loss.

To determine the guarantee and revenue for the SURE Program, all crops on all farms for a producer are included in the calculation. Payments under the SURE Program are limited to \$100,000.

To be eligible for the 2011 SURE Program, producers must have crop insurance on all insurable crops. For crops that are not covered by crop insurance, producers must have purchased Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage from FSA. The Crop Insurance and NAP purchase requirement is waived for crops that are not economically significant to the farming operation.

For more information concerning the 2011 SURE program or other Farm Service Agency programs, contact your local FSA office or visit the Farm Service Agency website at www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

The noninsured crop disaster assistance program (NAP) is a federally funded program that helps producers reduce their risk when growing food and fiber crops, specialty crops and crops for livestock feed. These benefits are only available for crops for which the catastrophic level of crop insurance is not available. Application for coverage must be filed by the applicable closing date.

► April 1st deadline to purchase 2013 Nap policy for Spring Seeded crops

April 1 2013 is the signup deadline for producers to apply for Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program, (NAP) coverage. The application and service fee must be filed by the applicable closing date for each of the 2013 spring seeded NAP crops. Eligible crops include annual spring seeded crops for forage or grazing that are not insurable under traditional crop insurance and, also, uninsurable spring seeded crops for grain or seed. Eligible producers must pay a service fee of \$250 per crop per administrative county or \$750 per producer per county, not to exceed \$1875 for a producer with farming interests in multiple counties. For additional information on NAP or other FSA programs, contact your local FSA Office.

►► ATTENTION NAP PRODUCERS ◀◀

Deadline for producers filing production reports and filing application for payment.

Production Records and Application For Payment Deadline Examples Except Honey			
2012 NAP Production Records Deadline		2013 NAP Application for Payment Deadlines	
All Crops	July 15, 2013	Fall Seeded Grain & Perennial Forage	November 15, 2013
		Established and Fall Alfalfa Seed	January 15, 2013
		All Others	July 15, 2013

► **Actively Engaged**

USDA has amended the rules that govern the requirements to be 'actively engaged' in farming. These rules apply to eligibility for payments under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) or Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) program administered by FSA.

Normally the stockholder or a member of a legal entity **must** make contributions of active personal labor and/or active personal management for the farming operation. The contributions are to be performed on regular basis, must be identifiable, and separate from the contributions of others.

The exception to this rule for a stockholder or member of a legal entity only occurs when both of the following apply:

- At least half of the interest in the legal entity is held by stockholders or members who are providing active personal labor or active personal management; and
- The total direct payments received by the legal entity and each of the members can't exceed \$40,000.

► **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 finally an appeal to the next level of authority within the agency.

► *Before you expand a field, till a new field, or clear land*

Remember Conservation Compliance

Please remember in order to receive benefits from USDA, compliance with Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions are required. It is important that you understand the status of land if you plan to participate in any USDA programs. Producers should notify FSA prior to conducting land clearing or drainage projects to insure compliance.

To be eligible for USDA benefits, all producers planting agricultural commodities on predominantly highly erodible land are required to do so according to the provisions of an approved conservation system.

Be sure to follow tillage, crop residue, and rotation requirements. Status reviews are conducted by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to ensure producers follow an approved conservation system on highly erodible land. Violations can lead to possible ineligibility for USDA program benefits.

Landowners and operators can complete form AD-1026 Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification to determine whether a referral to NRCS is necessary.

► **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.

► **Foreign Buyers Notification**

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. *agricultural* land to report new holdings or their changes in holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA.

All individuals who are not U.S. citizens, and have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA within 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form (FSA-153) could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, real estate agents, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

► **Hispanic and Women Farmer and Rancher Claim Period**

Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who allege discrimination by the USDA in past decades can file claims until 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.

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.

Website: www.farmerclaims.gov

Phone: 1-888-508-4429

Deadline for Claims: March 25, 2013

Claimants can obtain a claims package in the mail by calling 1-888-509-4429 or by visiting the website www.farmerclaims.gov.

► **Special Accommodations**

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should notify the county FSA office staff in person or by phone. This service is provided for office visits and any special event sponsored by FSA.

Important Dates to Remember

- **January 19, 2013 thru June 2, 2013** – DCP/ACRE signup
- **February 18, 2013** – President’s Day Holiday – Office Closed
- **April 1, 2013** – NAP Sales Deadline for Spring Crops
- **March 25, 2013** – **Last** day to file discrimination claims for Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers.
- **June 7, 2013** – 2011 SURE application deadline
- **July 15, 2013** – Crop Report Deadline for Crop Year 2012
- **July 15, 2013** – NAP production deadline

▶▶▶ 2013 CROP REPORT DEADLINES ◀◀◀

All producers are reminded that the acreage reporting dates for 2013 crops have changed. The change in deadlines will hopefully streamline the acreage reporting process in the future for producers between FSA and Crop Insurance.

Apiculture, Perennial Forage, PRF, Fall Wheat and all other Fall Seeded Small Grains	November 15, 2012
Honey	January 2, 2013
Established Stand Alfalfa Seed, Fall Alfalfa Seed	January 15, 2013
Spring Alfalfa Seed, Spring Barley, Corn, Dry Beans, Forage Seeding, Millet, Spring Oats, Potatoes, Sugar Beets, Sunflowers, Spring Wheat, and all other crops	July 15, 2013

Please note: For crop year 2013 only, the November 15th deadline has been extended and there will be no late filed fees charged for crop reports filed after the November 15, 2012 deadline.