



NEWSLETTER



OCTOBER 2012

Washakie-Hot Springs FSA Office
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Staff:
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County Committee:
Steven Snyder, Chairperson
Kathy Propp, Vice-Chairperson
Matt Brown, Member
Dan Rice, Member
Bruce Thurgood, Member

County Committee Elections: The County Committee Election for this year will be held in Local Administrative Area #1 (LAA #1), which is in Washakie County – everything west of the Big Horn River; and Local Administrative Area #5 (LAA #5), which is in Hot Springs County – everything east of the Big Horn River, plus those west of the river that get their irrigation water from the river. One committee position is open in LAA#1 & one position is open in LAA#5. The producers who have agreed to serve a 3-year term beginning 1/1/2013 if elected are as follows:

- **David Slover is nominated in LAA #1**, Washakie County. Mr. Slover has produced livestock for 18 years. He is an active member of Farm Bureau, Guardians of the Range and the Wyoming Stock Growers Assoc.
- **John Baird is nominated in LAA #5**, Hot Springs County. Mr. Baird has produced livestock for 60 years. He is an active member of Farm Bureau, the Wyoming Stock Growers Assoc., and NCBA.
- **Everett Jones is nominated in LAA #5**, Hot Springs County. Mr. Jones has produced livestock for 30 years. He is an active member of Wyoming Stock Growers Assoc., Kirby Creek Watershed & Resource Management Committee.

As in years past, any eligible voter may write in an eligible candidate on the ballot. If you did not receive a ballot, and your farming operation is headquartered in either of the above described areas, please come by the office to cast your vote.

Deadline for voting is December 3, 2012.

Discrimination Prohibited – No person shall 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.

Prospective Voter Requirements: Anyone who meets the requirements in 1 or 2, plus 3, below is eligible to vote:

1. Is of legal voting age and have an interest in a farm or ranch as either of the following:
 - a. An individual
 - b. The authorized representative of an entity
 - c. Both spouses when property is owned jointly
 - d. Spouses in community property States.
2. Is not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations on an entire farm; and
3. Participates or cooperates in any FSA program that is provided for by law.

Cooperates means information has been provided about a farming or ranching operation by an individual, but the individual may not be currently receiving benefits or may not have applied for benefits.

Crop Certification Deadline: The annual requirement of reporting to the FSA office can be referred to as crop reporting, acreage reporting, or crop certification. Form FSA-578, Report of Acreage, must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. **The producer certification deadline for perennial forage, winter wheat and range by November 15th, 2012 and spring/summer seeded crops & CRP by July 15th, 2013.** Filing an accurate and timely report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent loss of benefits for a variety of Farm Service Agency programs. All cropland on the farm must be reported to receive benefits from the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program, Marketing Assistance Loans and Loan Deficiency Payments.

Purchasing NAP Coverage for the 2013 Crop Year: The closing Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP application deadline for biennial and perennial forage crops, regardless of intended use, is **Dec. 1, 2012**. This includes crops such as wheat hay, grass hay, irrigated meadow pastures and range. The application fee is \$250 per crop/pay type. Covered crops are those crops for which RMA crop insurance is not offered. This coverage is only for losses in excess of 50% of the normal yield.

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 Wyoming Secretary of State's Office at (307) 777-7311.

ECP Drought Assistance: As part of USDA's continuing effort to assist livestock producers in response to the historic drought, Secretary Vilsack has authorized the use of nearly \$16 million to immediately help crop and livestock producers in 19 states cope with the adverse impacts of this natural disaster. In addition, USDA will initiate a transfer of \$14 million in unobligated program funds into the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP.)

These ECP funds can be used to assist in moving water to livestock in need, providing emergency forage for livestock, and rehabilitating lands severely impacted by the drought. For more information about this drought assistance and other federal programs, just contact your local FSA office located at the nearest USDA Service Center.

USDA Makes Changes To Help With Drought Crisis: The Risk Management Agency (RMA) has announced another helpful change that livestock producers will appreciate. For the 2012 crop year, RMA will allow haying and grazing of cover crops without affecting the insurability of planted 2013 spring crops. This means farmers and ranchers can plant a cover crop without foregoing crop insurance coverage in 2013, thus giving producers another opportunity to grow needed forage and feed for this fall and winter. However, before making any plans to plant crop cover, producers should consult with their insurance agent.

Another change was the commitment from the Farm Service Agency (FSA) to change the emergency loan program so that farmers and ranchers are eligible to apply earlier in the disaster recovery process. With this change, producers are no longer required to wait until the end of the production cycle to obtain a loan. That means livestock producers needing assistance today to offset increased feed costs don't have to wait.

For more information on this program or other issues, contact the FSA office located in your local USDA Service Center.

Emergency Farm Loans: USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides emergency loans to help producers recover from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding, other natural disasters or quarantine.

Emergency loan funds may be used to:

- Restore or replace essential property
- Pay all or part of production costs associated with the disaster year
- Pay essential family living expense
- Reorganize the farming operation
- Refinance certain debts

Further information and applications for the loan programs described are available at local FSA county offices. Contact your nearest office for an appointment.

Farm Safety: Flowing grain in a storage bin or gravity-flow wagon is like quicksand, it can kill quickly. It takes less than five seconds for a person caught in flowing grain to be trapped. The mechanical aspects of grain handling equipment, also presents a real danger. Augers, power take offs, and other moving parts can grab people or clothing. These hazards, along with pinch points and missing shields can be dangerous and fatal for both adults and children. It is always advisable to keep children a safe distance from operating farm equipment. Always use extra caution when backing up or moving farm machinery. Ensure everyone is visibly clear and accounted for before machinery is engaged. FSA wants all farmers to have a productive crop year, and that begins with putting safety first.

Farm Storage Facility Loan Program: The Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program allows producers of eligible commodities to obtain low-interest financing to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities. The new maximum principal amount of a loan through FSFL is \$500,000. Participants are now required to provide a down payment of 15 percent, with CCC providing a loan for the remaining 85 percent of the net cost of the eligible storage facility and permanent drying and handling equipment. New loan terms of 7, 10 or 12 years are available depending on the amount of the loan. Interest rates for each term rate may be different and are based on the rate which CCC borrows from the Treasury Department. Payments are available in the form of a partial disbursement and the remaining final disbursement. The partial disbursement will be available after a portion of the construction has been completed. The final fund disbursement will be made when all construction is completed. The maximum amount of the partial disbursement will be 50 percent of the projected and approved total loan amount.

Applications for FSFL must be submitted to the FSA county office that maintains the farm's records. An FSFL must be approved before any site preparation or construction can begin.

The following commodities are eligible for farm storage facility loans:

- Corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley or minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain
- Corn, grain sorghum, wheat, oats or barley harvested as other-than-whole grain
- Pulse crops - lentils, small chickpeas and dry peas
- Hay
- Renewable biomass
- Fruits (including nuts) and vegetables - cold storage facilities

For more information about FSFL please visit your FSA county office or www.fsa.usda.gov.

Succession in Interest: If you have made any changes that affect your interest in base acres since you signed your last Direct and Counter-cyclical Program contract, you must report these successions-in-interest to the county committee by Sept. 30, so that a final determination can be made on who is eligible for the program on the farm.

Changes that qualify as a succession-in-interest include:

- A sale of land
- A change of operator or producer, including an increase or decrease in the number of partners
- A foreclosure, bankruptcy or involuntary loss of the farm
- Changes in the producer's share of the crop(s) that were originally approved on the contract.

If a succession-in-interest has taken place, you, as the "predecessor," are required to refund any advance DCP payments you received for the affected base acres before a payment can be made to the "successor." Not reporting a succession-in-interest can result in contract termination and a loss of program benefits for all producers involved.

Marketing Assistance Loans: A Marketing Assistance Loan (MAL) is available for producers who share in the risk of producing the crop. To be eligible, a producer must maintain continual beneficial interest in the crop from harvest through the earlier of the date the loan is repaid or CCC takes title to the commodity. Beneficial interest means retaining the ability to make decisions about the commodity; responsibility for loss or damage to the commodity; and title to the commodity. Once beneficial interest in a commodity is lost, the commodity is ineligible for loan — even if the producer regains beneficial interest. Commodity loan eligibility also requires compliance with the following: 1) conservation and wetland protection requirements, 2) beneficial interest requirements, 3) acreage reporting requirements and 4) ensuring that the commodity meets Commodity Credit Corporation minimum grade and quality standards. For commodities to be eligible they must have been produced by an eligible producer, be in existence and in a storable condition and be merchantable for food, feed or other uses as determined by CCC. The quality of the commodity in farm storage must be maintained throughout the term of the loan. Producers do not have to participate in the Direct and Counter-Cyclical and/or ACRE programs to be eligible for commodity loans. Violating provisions of a marketing assistance loan may trigger administrative actions, such as assessing liquidated damages, calling the loan and denial of future farm-stored loans. The most common violations are removing or disposing of a commodity being used as loan collateral without prior authorization and providing an incorrect quantity certification.

CREP & Continuous CRP Available: The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) allows farmers and ranchers to voluntarily enroll environmentally sensitive land into a program that decreases erosion, restores wildlife habitat and safeguards ground and surface water. CREP is a partnership with federal and state government and is limited to specific geographic areas. Environmentally sensitive acreage qualifying for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) or Continuous CRP will be eligible for annual rental payments and cost-share of up to 50 percent on approved practices. These programs will remain funded, and continue to provide heightened environmental benefits on select areas.

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. Additional program information, loan applications and other materials are available at the local USDA Service Center or visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

AFIDA – Foreign Investor Disclosure: Any foreign person who acquires, transfers or holds any interest, other than a security interest, in agricultural land in the United States is required by law to report the transaction no later than 90 days after the date of the transaction. They must file Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) reports with the FSA county office that maintains reports for the county where the land is located. For AFIDA purposes, agricultural land is defined as any land used for farming, ranching or timber production, if the tracts total 10 acres or more. For more information regarding AFIDA and FSA programs, contact the FSA office near you or visit the USDA Web site at <http://www.usda.gov>.

Hispanic and Women Discrimination Claims: The process to resolve claims of discrimination by USDA asserted by some Hispanic and women farmers is nearing the phase when a claims packet will be made available for potential claimants. A court supervised third-party administrative process is available for claimants to submit claims and receive compensation for losses they may have incurred as a result of discrimination in loan making and loan services. If you believe you have been discriminated against by USDA between 1981 and 200 because you are Hispanic or female, call the toll-free number or visit the website to receive a claims packet or get further information. You can call 1- 888-508-4429 or visit www.farmerclaims.gov. Once the claims period is announced claimants will have 180 days (6 months) to complete the claim form and submit the claims.

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Dates to Remember

September 30, 2012 – Succession in Interest Notification

NOTICE: This is a new deadline - November 15, 2012 – Acreage Reporting Perennial Forage, Fall Wheat, Fall Seeded Small Grains & Range – (examples of perennial forage are hay, grass, fall seeded hay crops).

December 1, 2012 – NAP Purchase Deadline

December 3, 2012 – Last day to vote in the County Committee Election

December 6, 2012 – County Committee Election votes counted for LAA #1 & LAA #5

July 15, 2013 – Acreage Report for Spring/Summer Seeded Crops

Loans for 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. For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. If producers or their spouses believe they would qualify as socially disadvantaged, they should contact their local FSA office for details. FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed agricultural credit elsewhere.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT: The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs 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 programs. (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 USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800)795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Special accommodations will be made upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, please call Sherri Foust, Washakie-Hot Springs, County CED, at 307-347-2456, ext. 2.

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