



NEWSLETTER



February 2011

Weston County
FSA Office

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Hours
Monday – Friday
8:00am – 4:30 pm

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION!

Additional Land in SAFE Program Will Protect Endangered or Threatened Species

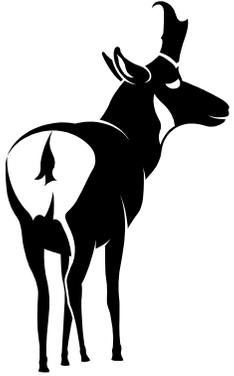
Casper, WY, February 10, 2011 – WY State Executive Director Gregor Goertz today announced that USDA has approved the addition of 10,000 acres for conservation projects in northeastern Wyoming. The acreage will be added through a portion of the Conservation Reserve Program called “State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement,” or SAFE. Eligible cropland in Campbell, Converse, Crook, Johnson, Natrona, Niobrara, Sheridan and Weston can be bid into the program. A signup period of February 28 through March 18th, 2011 has been established and producers with interest in the program should contact their local County FSA Office. Annual payments and signing incentives are made to producers who are accepted into the program. Offers made during the signup period will be ranked according to the amount of wildlife benefits received and the best offers will be accepted into the program.

“Through cooperative efforts like the SAFE initiative, farmers and ranchers can play a key role in protecting wildlife that may be threatened or endangered,” said Goertz. “These additional ‘SAFE acres’ will provide new opportunities for state and regional agencies, non-profit organizations, farm groups and other conservation partners to work with farmers and ranchers to restore wildlife habitats and conserve rare species before they have to be listed under the Endangered Species Act.”

Gary Butler, terrestrial habitat supervisor for the WY Game and Fish said, “Private land provides important habitat for Wyoming's wildlife. We look forward to working with the landowners in northeast WY and our FSA and NRCS partners to make this program a success.”

“The SAFE program will help sage grouse and many other species of wildlife that rely upon mixed sagebrush and grassland communities in northeastern WY” according to Erika Peckham, Gillette WY Game and Fish habitat extension biologist who was instrumental in helping develop the program.

SAFE is a voluntary program administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA). To date, USDA has approved 89 SAFE projects in 34 states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. There are 384,942 acres enrolled in SAFE. SAFE is a cooperative conservation effort that helps state and regional agencies, non-profit organizations, farm groups and other conservation partner’s work with farmers and



ranchers to restore wildlife habitats. Landowners who are interested in enrolling land in SAFE should visit their local FSA service center.

Under the Conservation Reserve Program, farmers and ranchers enroll eligible land in 10- to 15-year contracts with USDA. Participants plant appropriate cover such as grasses and trees in crop fields and along streams to help prevent soil and nutrients from running into waterways and affecting water quality. The long-term vegetative cover also improves wildlife habitat and soil quality.

For more information about SAFE and other conservation programs, visit your FSA county or state office or go on line at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/crp>.

Adjusted Gross Income

It is once again that time of year when certain information is required from all producers or entities participating in the commodity and conservation programs administered by the FSA and the NRCS.

This information is needed to determine whether or not the participant's income exceeds certain limits set by law. For entities, both the entity and its individual members cannot exceed the income limitations. If individual members do exceed the income limitation, payment to the entity will be reduced commensurately according to that member's direct or indirect ownership share in the entity. In addition to providing the Farm Service Agency with average adjusted gross income information, producers need to file consent form(s) CCC-927 and/or CCC-928 and forward them to the Internal Revenue Service. The IRS requires written consent from the individual or entity to release income verification to the Farm Service Agency. FSA has partnered with the IRS to verify average adjusted gross income on all participating producers receiving payments.

IRS will only use this information and data for this specified purpose. Please note that the NRCS and FSA are the only

USDA agencies that will have knowledge of this information. The data and information utilized for average adjusted gross income compliance and verification purposes is not subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act. No actual tax data will be shared by the IRS. USDA county office personnel will not view tax return information at any time during this process. Failure to provide the written consent may require refund of applicable payments received from FSA and NRCS

Participants in CCC programs must submit form CCC-927 (Individual) and/or CCC-928 (Legal Entity) to the Internal Revenue Service by June 15. These forms may be obtained from local FSA and NRCS offices or online at:

<http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainse rvlet>.

SURE – 2009 and Later

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters. **SURE sign up for crop year 2009 losses runs from Jan. 10 to July 29, 2011. Deadlines for 2010 and 2011 crop years will be announced later.**

To be eligible for SURE payments, a producer is required to obtain crop insurance on all crops in all counties or, if crop insurance is not available, to participate in the Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) except for grazed acreage. This requirement does not apply for crops that are not of economic significance or where the administrative fee required to buy NAP coverage exceeds 10% of the value of the crop coverage.

Eligible farmers and ranchers who meet the definition of Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, or Beginning Farmer or Rancher are exempt from the risk management purchase requirement.

The following conditions are required to trigger SURE payments:

- at least one crop of economic significance must suffer a 10% production loss due to an eligible disaster condition
- a crop of economic significance is a crop that has contributed or would have contributed at least 5% or more of the total expected revenue from all crops on the farm

- producers in counties declared disaster counties by the Secretary of Agriculture, or in contiguous counties, or those who show proof of an individual loss of at least 50% are eligible to receive SURE payments for crop producer or crop quality losses. Losses are measured with consideration to the whole-farm revenue, which includes crop insurance indemnities and commodity program payments, so that producers are not paid more than once for the same loss.

Note that due to the need to wait for end of year market price data to make SURE final calculations, SURE assistance payments lag the crop year's end by one full year.

If you would like additional clarification call or stop by your local FSA office.

2011 DCP/ACRE Signup

Enrollment for the 2011 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) and the optional ACRE program has begun and will continue through June 1, 2011. USDA urges producers to make use of the eDCP automated website to sign up, or producers can visit any USDA Service Center to complete their 2011 DCP contract.

USDA computes DCP Program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2011, eligible producers may request partial direct payments as an advance on the total amount.

A farm's ACRE payment is based on a revenue guarantee calculated using a 5-year average state yield and the most recent 2-year national price for each eligible commodity. An ACRE payment is issued when both the state and the farm have incurred a revenue loss. Producers have **30 days** from when the losses are apparent to timely file an application with the county office. Office staff may accept a Notice of Loss by phone, fax, email or in person. Multiple qualifying events that occur during Calendar Year 2011 will need to be reported to the County Office separately. CED Livingston encourages anyone that feels they may have a qualifying loss to contact the Weston County FSA Office as soon as the loss is realized.

1099-G is in the Mail

Producers who have received payments from FSA are also receiving a CCC-1099-G in the mail. This is a report to the Internal Revenue Service regarding FSA payments made to producers during the previous calendar year.

Check the CCC-1099-G with your records to see that the amounts are correct.

ATTENTION: Refunds are no longer reported on the 1099-G, but will be available online from the FSA Financial Inquiries (FSA-FI) web-based database.

Program participants with an eAuthentication user ID and password may access their refund information at FSA-FI and select "Inquiry Type 1099/Refund Reports".

Sorghum Checkoff Referendum Scheduled

USDA will conduct a referendum on the Sorghum Checkoff Program Feb. 1-28, 2011, at local Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices. Ballots may be obtained in person, by mail or facsimile at county FSA offices, or via the Internet at www.ams.usda.gov/sorghumpage.

Any eligible person engaged in the production or importation of sorghum from July 1, 2008, to December 31, 2010, is eligible to participate. Individuals are required to provide documentation such as a sales receipt or remittance form that shows they engaged in the production or importation of sorghum.

Sorghum Checkoff is a national, coordinated, self-help marketing program designed to strengthen the position of sorghum in the market place, maintain and expand existing domestic and foreign markets and uses for sorghum, and develop new markets and uses for sorghum.

Weston County FSA Office
 1225 Washington Blvd., Suite 2
 Newcastle, WY 82701



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Selected Interest Rates for February 2011	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating - Direct	2.250%
Farm Ownership – Direct and Conservation Loan	4.750%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.500%
Emergency	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility	%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	%

Dates to Remember	
Feb 2 – March 18	SAFE Signup dates
March 14 – April 15	CRP Signup dates
March 15	Fed Crop Insurance deadline for spring crops
March 31	Loan/LDP Deadline for Small Grains
April 1	Application Deadline for NAP Spring Crops
May 30	Memorial Day – Office closed
May 31	Loan/LDP Deadline for Feed Grains
June 1	DCP Signup Deadline