

May 2014



NEWSLETTER



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Weston County FSA Updates

Name County FSA Office **Save Time - Make An Appointment**

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County Executive Director:
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Next County Committee Meeting: May 13, 2014

As we roll out the Farm Bill programs administered by FSA, there will be related signups and in some cases multiple management decisions that need to be made by you, the producer, in consult with FSA staff. To insure maximum use of your time and to insure that you are afforded our full attention to your important business needs, please call our office ahead of your visit to set an appointment and to discuss any records or documentation that you may need to have with you when you arrive for your appointment.

FSA Program Notification

With the budget restraints FSA has been dealing with for the past three or four years we have been very restricted in our abilities to notify our producers of program availability and deadlines through our paper newsletter service. Our main avenue of informing you now is through an email notification system known as GovDelivery. Through GovDelivery we can send out our newsletter and other program information through email. The system has worked quite well over the past few years and I would encourage those of you that are not signed up for this service to please do so. It is a great way to keep yourself informed of FSA program information and deadlines. You can sign yourself up for this service through the GovDelivery website system or come to our office and give us an email address. Many of you will be in the office over the next few months. During your visit if we don't mention this service to you please ask about it.

2014 Acreage Reporting Dates

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit their local County FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline.

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for Wyoming:

July 15, 2014: (Spring session) annually planted crops such as spring wheat, barley, oats, corn, millet etc.

November 15, 2014: (Fall session) for perennial crops to be harvested in calendar year 2015. For FSA definitions perennial crops includes: forage crops for hay (alfalfa/grass mix, mixed grasses, single variety grasses), native grass pasture, improved (introduced) grass pasture, and Hard Red Winter Wheat for grain. Also included in this deadline is Hard Red Winter Wheat for forage (hay) if the

producer wants winter kill coverage in their FSA NAP policy for forage.

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.
- If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of "cover only," "green manure," "left standing," or "seed," then the acreage must be reported by July 15th.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

New Farm Bill Provides Permanent Livestock Disaster Assistance Programs

The 2014 Farm Bill, formally known as the Agricultural Act of 2014, makes the Livestock Forage Program (LFP) and Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) permanent programs and provides retroactive authority to cover eligible losses back to Oct. 1, 2011.

Sign-up started April 15, 2014. Producers can call the office at 746-2701 to make an appointment. Producers who walk-in the office without an appointment will be assisted as time allows. Between the crop reports, sign up for two years in LFP and possibly the same for LIP your time here at the office will be very busy. Also, Producers should call prior to visiting the office to receive more information of program requirements so as to minimize or prevent return trips to complete an application. The sign up deadline is January 30, 2015 and since there are no late-filed provisions applicable to either LFP or LIP any applications received after the January 30, 2015 deadline will not be approved.

All supporting documentation and required forms must be submitted before payment can be issued so, payment in these programs is dependent on the individual producer's timeliness in submitting all required program documents. Remember, both calendar years 2012 and 2013 are eligible for payments under the LFP program so gather documentation accordingly. If you wish to sign up for these programs please make the appointment matter a priority. Call us soon, get the appointment scheduled, gather your documentation and we'll see you in the office.

LFP Program Requirements:

Provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who suffer grazing losses for covered livestock due to drought conditions, or fire on federally managed land. Losses due to drought must occur during the normal grazing period for the specific type of grazing land. LFP applications can only be accepted after a county reaches an allowable disaster designation (D rating) from the Drought Monitor.

Eligible producer:

Own, cash or share rent covered livestock during a qualifying drought or fire.

Provide pastureland or grazing land for covered livestock, including cash leased land.

Meets all other eligibility requirements

Not Eligible: Owner or cash/share lessee who rents/leases land owned by/to another producer on a basis of weight gain, cost per head, per day or month or on an AUM basis when the lessee incurs no additional expense for pasture maintenance.

Covered Livestock:

Maintained for commercial use as part of a farm/ranch operation.

Livestock owned, leased, purchased, and entered into a contract to purchase by a producer during a qualifying drought or fire.

Livestock sold or otherwise disposed of due to qualifying event (mitigated livestock) during the current production year or one or both of the two preceding production years.

Mitigated Livestock: For example - livestock sold in 2012 that were included under the 2012 LFP are also eligible for 2013 LFP if they were sold due to the qualifying event in 2012.

Mitigated Livestock: Prior years. Livestock sold or otherwise disposed of due to drought conditions in 1 or both of the 2 production years preceding the current production year will be paid at 80 percent of the monthly payment rate.

Livestock that normally graze in the eligible county during the normal grazing period but were moved due to drought conditions to another county.

Not eligible:

Livestock in feedlot on beginning date or anytime during event date range that are normally put in feedlot as producers normal business operation. In excess of normal business operation could be eligible.

Livestock not normally grazing in an eligible county during the normal grazing period would not be considered eligible livestock.

Livestock Documentation:

Inventory: Documents that provide livestock inventory numbers that are applicable to the time immediately before the beginning date (4/1) of the grazing season of the applicable year.

Documents include:

1. Bank or other loan documents/balance sheets (all information except livestock kind/type and numbers redacted or blacked out so it is not visible)
2. Veterinary records
3. Records assembled for tax purposes
4. Production records
5. Written contracts
6. Purchase / sales records

Eligible Crops/Land:

Native pasture grass, Improved grasses for grazing (old hay fields still listed as cropland on FSA maps), small grain annual crops planted specifically for grazing.

Proof of grazing crops existence must be provided. For example, for pasture grass the producer must provide documentation of the number of acres they own and/or lease. The FSA-578 crop report is one type of documentation.

State and Federal lands leased on a long term basis with lessee contribution inputs.

Deeded land or private lease grazing land.

Ineligible Crops:

CRP, irrigated crops, grain crops or forage (hay) crops.

Land leased on the basis of weight gain; cost per head/ per day/ or month; or AUM's.

Crop Documentation:

Proof of control of land:

1. FSA report of crop acreages on form FSA-578
2. Records assembled for tax purposes. County assessor ownership records
3. Leases on private land
4. Leases on federal land (BLM, Forest Service). Lease MUST list AUM's or AU's allowed to graze.
5. Leases on state land

Leases on federal land and state land may be required so FSA can obtain AUM's to calculate AU's for loading onto the application.

Drought Eligibility:

Physically located in the county as having a disaster designation per the Drought Monitor during the normal grazing period for the specific type of grazing land or pastureland.

Weston County has a D3 (4 monthly payments) designation for both years 2012 and 2013.

Applying for Benefits:

Completed applications must be submitted in the administrative COF by physical location, along with all supporting evidence documents AND supporting eligibility forms NLT: January 30, 2015. (Years 12, 13, 14)

Producer must submit an application for each county where land interest is located. For example: if a producer has land in both Weston and Crook counties and the land is administered in Weston County. Two applications will be filed with the Weston County FSA Office – one for Weston County land and one for Crook County land. If a producer has farms in Weston County and Crook County and each county FSA office administers the land in their county then the producer will file applications in both county offices for the respective land (farms).

LIP Program Requirements:

Compensates eligible livestock owners for eligible livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality on farms that occurred in the calendar year for which benefits are being requested as a direct result of an eligible adverse weather event or attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the Federal Government or protected by Federal law, including wolves and avian predators.

Eligible Adverse Weather Events include but are not limited to: Floods, Blizzards, Disease (Anthrax only), wildfires, Extreme heat, Extreme cold, Tornado, Lightning. Drought is not an eligible adverse weather event except when associated with anthrax, a condition that occurs because of drought and results in the death of eligible livestock.

Eligible producer:

One who assumes the production and market risks associated with the agricultural production of livestock and meets all of the following:

Had legal ownership of eligible livestock for which benefits are being requested on the day the livestock died.

Must have adequate land (owned or leased) to maintain livestock's grazing needs.

Eligible Livestock:

Must have died on or after 10/1/2011.

Must have died no later than 60 calendar days from the ending date of the applicable adverse weather event or attack by designated animals.

In the calendar year for which benefits are being requested.

Be maintained for commercial use as part of a farming/ranching operation on the day the livestock died.

Died as a direct result of an eligible adverse weather event or attack by eligible animals or avian predator.

Before dying, not have been produced or maintained for reasons other than commercial use.

Born at normal full-term or near full-term and death was a direct result of eligible adverse weather event or by eligible animal/avian predator and the birth, or abortion, produced a fully developed carcass that normally would have survived under normal weather conditions.

Feedlot cattle will be eligible under LIP if they were maintained for commercial use on the date of death.

Livestock not normally taken to a feedlot are eligible.

Ineligible Livestock:

Livestock which died due to a disease not related to adverse weather (Anthrax only disease that is eligible), Malnutrition, other poor handling/management practices

Livestock maintained for reasons other than commercial use.

Stillborn, Unborn livestock

Normal Mortality: Is established by livestock category and applied to determine the number of livestock losses eligible for payment.

Applying for Benefits:

Participants must file form CCC-852. Two part process: Notice of Loss (NOL) and Application for Payment (AFP). For 2012 and 2013

calendar years the NOL and AFP will be filed at the same time.

For 2014 calendar year, and subsequent years, the NOL must be filed the earlier of the following:

30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock was apparent to the participant.

30 calendar days after the end of the calendar year in which the loss of livestock occurred.

Multiple NOL's could be filed depending on if multiple weather events occurred that caused livestock deaths. Notices of loss can be phoned in to the FSA Office. For calendar year 2014, and subsequent years, the application for payment should be completed only after all adverse weather event death loss has occurred for the calendar year. Producers must provide proof of inventory documents.

Proof of Livestock Death:

Must provide Verifiable, Producer Reliable or Third Party Certification (CCC-854).

Must be sufficient data that identifies the kind/type/weight range and number of livestock that died.

Verifiable is printable documentation from a source such as:

1. Veterinarian, FEMA records.
2. Bank production records.
3. Private insurance documents.
4. Written contracts.

If adequate verifiable documentation is not available participant can provide Reliable records.

Reliable records are:

1. Contemporaneous records existing at time of event that killed claimed livestock which can include: Personal diaries/journal entries/calving or lambing book listing births/deaths and unaccounted animals. Livestock kind and type along with number killed plus the cause of death must be included in this documentation.
2. Vaccination/branding records.
3. Brand inspection records.
4. Pictures with dates.

Third Party Certification: An independent source. Cannot be submitted by someone affiliated with the farming operation on the application (hired hand or family member are not eligible third party certifications).

Third Party Certification must be very specific in knowledge of death, numbers and livestock type/weight range. Must use CCC-854 form.

If not enough information is provided in any of the above document kinds the COC can request additional information.

Documentation of death due to eligible attack animal or avian predator must be obtained from a source associated with the administration of overseeing the well-being of the protected attack animal/avian predator.

Proof of Livestock Inventory numbers:

Verifiable Beginning and Ending Inventory for the applicable year:

1. Bank or other loan documents / balance sheets (with all information except livestock kind/type and numbers redacted or blacked out).
2. Veterinary records
3. Records assembled for tax purposes (county assessor records)
4. Production records
5. Private insurance documents (insurance indemnity if payments were received)
6. Written contracts
7. Purchase / sale records

OR, Reliable Beginning and Ending Inventory for the applicable year:

1. Contemporaneous records: producer self-recorded documents of inventory such as production records, diaries, journals, calving book entries, etc...

USDA Encourages Early Registration for FSA Programs

Farmers and ranchers are reminded to register in advance for FSA programs in order to improve the sign-up process and expedite implementation of programs. Producers are encouraged to report farm records and business structure changes to a [local FSA Service Center](#) as soon as possible.

Examples of updates or changes to report include:

- New producers or producers who have not reported farm records to FSA.
- Producers who have recently bought sold or rented land. Those producers need to ensure that changes have been reported and properly recorded by local FSA county office personnel. Reports of purchased or sold property should include a copy of the land deed, and if land has been leased, then documentation should be provided that indicates the producer had/has control of the acreage.
- Producers that have changed business structures (e.g. formed a partnership or LLC) need to ensure that these relationships and shares are properly recorded with FSA. Even family farms that have records on file may want to ensure that this is recorded accurately as it may impact payment limits.

Farm records can be updated during business hours at FSA Service Centers that administer the county where the farm or ranch is located. Producers can contact their local FSA Service Center in advance to find out what paperwork they may need. In addition, bank account information should be supplied or updated if necessary to ensure that producers receive payments as quickly as possible through direct deposit.

Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) / FSA Prepares to Accept MAL and LDP Request; Sets 2014 MAL Loan Rates

NAP participants are reminded that a notice of loss must be provided for PREVENTED PLANTING claims within 15 calendar days after the final planting date of May 31st. So, a notice of loss in this case should be filed by June 15th.

Additionally, if a PRODUCTION LOSS occurs on a covered 2014 NAP crop a notice of loss must be filed the earlier of the following:

1. 15 calendar days after the damaging weather or disaster occurrence or date damage to the specific crop acreage or commodity is apparent to the producer for low yield claims.
2. 15 calendar days after the normal harvest date.

With this year's crop season fast approaching we ask that producers keep these dates in mind and take action accordingly.

MAL's/LDP's: Farm Service Agency (FSA) will begin accepting requests for marketing assistance loans (MALs) and loan deficiency payments (LDPs) for eligible 2014 commodities. MALs and LDPs for the 2014 crop year become available to eligible producers beginning with harvest/shearing season and extending through a specific commodity's final loan availability date. MALs and LDPs provide financing and marketing assistance for wheat, feed grains, wool, mohair and honey. MALs provide producers interim financing after harvest to help them meet cash flow needs without having to sell their commodities when market prices are typically at harvest-time lows. A producer who is eligible to obtain a loan, but agrees to forgo the loan, may obtain an LDP if such a payment is available.

If you have wool and would like to participate in the wool LDP program you need to contact our office and complete page 1 of form CCC-633 EZ to file your intention to participate in the program

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).