



Allen County FSA Office  
202 W Miller Road  
Iola, KS 66749  
Phone: (620) 365-2901  
Fax: (620) 365-5785

**County Committee Members**

Marvin Sander, Chairperson  
Gary Coltrane, Vice Chairperson  
David Bedenbender, Member  
Donna Beebe, COC Advisor

*The Committee meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month*

**Hours:** Monday- Friday  
8:00 am to 4:30 pm

**Office Staff:** Doug Peine, CED  
Lindsey Hammond, PT  
Marthena Spainhoward, PT  
Jandy Wiltse, PT

**JULY 2009**

**Time to Report Acres**

The final date to report CRP, corn, grain sorghum, soybeans, sunflowers and grass crops is **August 3, 2009**. This also includes any double cropped acreage that you need to report. Any crop report taken after August 3<sup>rd</sup> will be considered late filed and will be charged a late filed fee of \$46.00 per farm.

Please remember that filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, will prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs. Failed acreage must be reported within 15 days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date.

Please call the Allen County FSA office to make your appointment to certify all acreages on your farm(s) by the **August 3<sup>rd</sup>** deadline.

**2009 DCP/ ACRE Sign-up Deadline is Approaching**

The 2008 farm bill offered two options for enrollment of farm program benefits. One is the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP). This option is very similar to the previous program utilizing the same base crops and yields for computing the direct and counter-cyclical payments. Most Allen County farms were enrolled in this option this winter or early spring, because the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) was not available until late April.

If you decide the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) provides a better price "safety net" for your farm, you will be given the opportunity to opt out of DCP and enroll into ACRE for the 2009 crop year. The election of DCP or ACRE is done based on the farm serial number. As a result, all owners and operators recorded on the farm number must be in agreement. Once a farm is enrolled into ACRE, it will remain in that election throughout the duration of this farm bill which runs through 2012.

ACRE has two forms of payments similar to DCP. The ACRE direct payments are computed using the same formula as the DCP direct payments, however when enrolled in ACRE the farm's direct payment is reduced by 20%. The marketing assistance loan rates for a farm enrolled in ACRE are reduced by 30%. The revenue payment provides a safety net based on state and farm revenue losses and acts in place of the price-based safety net of counter-cyclical payments under DCP. They are tied to actual planted acres and crop production. State and farm revenue guarantees will be computed. An acre payment is issued when the actual state and farm revenues fall below the guarantees.

**August 14, 2009**, is the final date to receive all signatures on the DCP or ACRE contracts. During the sign-up process farm operators were given the responsibility to acquire the necessary landowner signatures. We have several contracts with missing signatures, so operators need to conduct some follow-up activities. While you are reporting your spring planted crops, please review your DCP/ACRE contract status. No payments will be issued on the farm for 2009 if the **AUGUST 14<sup>th</sup>** deadline is not met.

**Farm Reconstitutions**

At FSA, farms are "constituted" to group all tracts having the same owner and the same operator under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation take place, a farm reconstitution is necessary. If an owner or operator can not agree about program participation, like in the case of the new ACRE program, then producers should inquire about a reconstitution of the farm at the local FSA office.

The reconstitution—or recon—is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by **August 3, 2009** for farms enrolled in specific programs.

**Informational Meeting Scheduled**

We will conduct an informational meeting at 9:00 am on **July 16, 2009**. The meeting will be held in the Assembly Room which is located in the basement of the Allen County Courthouse. We will discuss the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) and the COC election process.

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in this meeting should contact Doug Peine at 620-365-2901 or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 by July 6, 2009.

**County Committee Elections**

Since COC elections happen only once a year, here is an election refresher. For election purposes, counties are divided into *local administrative areas*, or LAAs. Each LAA selects one producer to serve a three-year term on the Farm Service Agency county committee.

This year Allen County will hold an election in LAA #3, which is located in the eastern one-third of the county. It includes the Osage, Marmaton, and Elsmore townships.

**Nominations**

Candidate nominations for the FSA county committee election will be accepted June 15 through Aug. 3, 2009. Producers who are residents in the LAA holding the election and who participate or cooperate in an FSA program and are of legal voting age may be nominated to serve on the county committee. Individuals may nominate themselves or others as candidates. Also, organizations representing socially disadvantaged minorities and women farmers or ranchers may also nominate candidates. The nomination form, FSA-669A, is available at the county office or may be downloaded from <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=newsroom&subject=landing&topic=cce>.

To be valid, the nomination form must be signed by the person being nominated, indicating agreement to serve if elected. The completed nomination form must be returned to the county office by the close of business on Aug. 3, or postmarked by midnight Aug. 3, 2009.

**Voting**

Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters beginning Nov. 6, and must be returned to the county office by the close of business on Dec. 7, or postmarked by midnight Dec. 7, 2009. Agricultural producers of legal voting age can vote if they participate or cooperate in any FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises and conducts the farming operations on an entire farm can also vote. No one can 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.

**Candidate Eligibility**

To hold office as a county committee member, a person must meet the basic eligibility criteria:

- Participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA
- Be eligible to vote in a county committee election
- Reside in the LAA in which the person is a candidate

Not have been:

- Removed or disqualified from the office of county committee member, alternate or employee
- Removed for cause from any public office or have been convicted of fraud, larceny, embezzlement or any other felony
- Dishonorably discharged from any branch of the armed services.

For additional clarification about county committee elections, contact our office.

**NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

"The U.S. 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 program. (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, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

**Livestock Indemnity Program**

The 2008 Farm Bill includes the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) which provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who have incurred livestock death losses due to a natural disaster, on or after January 1, 2008, and before October 1, 2011. Losses because of adverse weather, as determined by the Secretary during the calendar year, including blizzards, disease, extreme cold, extreme heat, floods, hurricanes, and wildfires, are eligible for LIP.

FSA advises farmers and ranchers who lose livestock due to adverse weather to compile and document their livestock death losses. Producers are advised that **verifiable** death loss documentation will not be accepted by County Offices until their LIP applications are filed.

Adequate documentation must prove the death of eligible livestock occurred as a direct result of an eligible adverse weather event in the calendar year for which benefits are being requested.

If adequate verifiable proof of death records documentation is **not** available, a livestock producer may provide reliable records, along with verifiable beginning and ending inventory, as proof of death.

Certifications of livestock deaths by third parties may be accepted **only** if verifiable proof of death records or reliable proof of death records along with verifiable beginning and ending inventory records are **not** available.

Additional information about LIP is available at FSA County Offices or by going on line at:  
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/notices?area=home&subject=lare&to pic=not&getData=FSA>

**Sodbusting**

The term "sodbusting" is used to identify the plowing up of erosion-prone grasslands for use as cropland. Sodbuster violations are unauthorized tillage practices on highly erodible lands that converted native vegetation such as rangeland or woodland, to crop production after Dec. 23, 1985.

Farmers and ranchers should be aware that if they use highly erodible land for crop production without proper conservation measures, they risk losing eligibility to participate in Farm Service Agency programs.

Before producers clear, plow or otherwise prepare areas not presently under crop production for planting, they are required to file an AD-1026, indicating the area to be brought into production. If Natural Resources Conservation Service indicates on a CPA-026 that the area will be highly erodible land, the producer will be required to develop and implement a conservation plan on the affected acreage, before bringing land into production. In addition, producers and the producer's affiliates have to file an AD-1026 with the staff in the administrative or control county office before any farm program payments can be made. The AD-1026 is the producer's signed certification that HELC, as well as wetland conservation, provisions will not be violated.

**Wetland Compliance**

Producers renting or purchasing land that may have a converted wetland status need to check with the county office to learn if there are restrictions. The last thing FSA wants to do is to deny a producer benefits due to wetland noncompliance.

The 1985 Farm Bill provides that, unless exempt, persons are ineligible for benefits under certain programs administered by USDA if they:

\* plant an agricultural commodity on wetland that was converted after December 23, 1985

\* convert a wetland after November 28, 1990

FSA may not approve any loan or loan guarantee to drain, dredge, fill, level or otherwise manipulate a wetland, or to engage in any activity that results in impairing or reducing the flow, circulation or reach of water except in the case of activity related to the maintenance of previously converted wetlands.

The following provides permitted uses and restrictions of certain wetlands for compliance with Wetland compliance provisions:

- \* Wetlands can be farmed under natural conditions. However, wetlands cannot be converted.
- \* Wetlands converted before November 28, 1990, cannot be planted to an agricultural commodity and retain eligibility for benefits.
- \* Wetlands converted after Nov. 28, 1990, must either be restored to wetland status or mitigated to regain eligibility for program benefits.
- \* Wetlands that can be farmed under natural conditions cannot be manipulated in any way, unless the Natural Resources Conservation Service determines the work would have a minimal effect on wetland values.
- \* Wetlands converted before December 23, 1985, can be farmed and maintained.

For additional information about wetland compliance, please contact our office.

**Farm Loan Programs**

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers loans for farmers and ranchers to purchase farmland and finance agricultural operations. FSA loan programs are designed to help producers who are temporarily unable to obtain private or commercial credit. In many cases, applicants are beginning farmers who have insufficient net worth to qualify for financing through a commercial lender. In other instances, borrowers might have suffered setbacks from natural disasters or might be persons with limited resources.

Farm ownership loans or farm operating loans may be obtained as direct loans for a maximum of up to \$300,000 each. Guaranteed loans can reach a maximum indebtedness of \$1,094,000. Emergency loans are always direct loans for farmers who may have suffered physical or production losses in disaster areas designated by a Presidential or Secretarial disaster declaration. Rural Youth Loans, Loans to Beginning Farmers and loans for socially disadvantaged applicants are also available through FSA.

For detail information loan eligibility or the different available loan programs, just contact our office to set up for an appointment with a farm loan officer.

**Radio Show**

Keep yourself informed on all the latest FSA news by listening to your radio! Be sure and tune into 101.5 FM KIKS or 1370 AM KALN for our monthly FSA radio shows. It is a quick and easy way for you to keep track of your FSA business. Our show airs at 8:55 AM on the second Friday of the month. Please tune in, and keep yourself informed.

| <b>Dates to Remember</b> |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| July 16                  | ACRE / COC election Informational Meeting                        |
| August 3                 | Final date to request reconstitution                             |
| August 3                 | Final date to certify spring-seeded crops, CRP, and NAP acreages |
| August 3                 | Final date to submit nomination for COC Election                 |
| August 14                | Final date to sign up for DCP and ACRE                           |