



January 2008

Atchison County Newsletter

Atchison County USDA Service Center

Atchison County FSA
302 E. Hwy 136
Rock Port, MO 64482
(660) 744-5328 (Phone)
(660) 744-5536 (Fax)

Hours
Monday – Friday
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

County Committee
Duane Klute, Chairperson
Craig Heits, Vice Chair
Julie Joesting, Member

Staff
County Executive Director
Corey Leshner

Farm Loan Manager
Bob Dreyer

Farm Loan Officer
Roger Uptergrove

Program Technicians
Nancy Daugherty
Pam Husing
Patricia Lane
Marilyn Thurnau
Karen Vette

Field Assistant
Chuck Linthicum

NAP Program

If you are interested in protection for non-insurable crops, contact the office. The sales closing date is March 15.

Farm Bill Update

To date, the Farm Bill has not been passed. No programs are available to sign up for as far as direct program payments are concerned.

If you enjoy winter, we sure have had our fill here in Atchison County this year. With all the ice, snow, lack of electricity, etc. I'll be glad to see spring this year.

Emergency Conservation Program

It has been announced that producers who have made an application for cost-share assistance through the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) due to the heavy rains and flooding must have the work completed by May 1, 2008 to be eligible for cost-share assistance. Due to the weather, we have been behind in making the required field visits. Please be patient as we work to complete this task.

Disaster Programs

The office is currently conducting sign-up for the Crop Disaster Program and Livestock Assistance Program. Please read the articles on page 2 for complete details.

Reporting Farm Changes

It is the producer's responsibility to notify FSA of any changes in their farming operation or entity status throughout the year. Changes that may affect a determination include, but are not limited to, a change in contract shares which may reflect change of land lease from cash rent to share rent; addition or deletion of a farm; change in the structure of the farming operation, such as individual to corporation or trust; change in contributions or inputs such as personal labor, or change in farming interests.

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Craig Heits. Craig was re-elected to represent farmers from Clay, Templeton, Benton and Clark townships on the county committee. Craig was elected to his third consecutive term. The Atchison County Committee holds their regular meeting the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 8:00 AM.

Powers of Attorney

FSA has a power of attorney form available for those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc.. that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. This can be done by completing an FSA-211, Power of Attorney. The form is available at your local USDA Service Center or online at <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov>. Forms obtained and completed outside the USDA Service Center must be notarized.

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to call or visit the office. As soon as the Farm Bill is passed, future newsletters and local news releases will announce program availability.

Corey Leshner

Livestock Compensation Program

The **Livestock Compensation Program (LCP)** sign-up is currently underway. This program compensates producers for a portion of their grazing losses during the 2006 grazing period in Atchison County. A **Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)** is also available for livestock death losses due to eligible disaster events occurring between January 1, 2005 and February 28, 2007.

Eligible ranchers and other livestock producers can apply to receive LCP compensation for feed losses occurring between January 1, 2006 and December 31, 2006, due to a natural disaster. The natural disaster that occurred in Atchison County during the eligible time periods was drought.

The program is similar to livestock programs in the past, as it looks at livestock numbers and grazing losses, calculates a dollar value for both, and pays the lesser of the two. Knowing the numbers of livestock owned or cash leased as of January 1, 2006 will begin the process. Several species of livestock are eligible for the program, however, the main category of livestock in Atchison County will be beef cattle. They will be divided into 2 groups; adult cattle, which are cows which have had at least 1 calf, bred heifers, and bulls 2 years of age or older, or non-adult cattle, which are cattle that weigh at least 500 pounds on January 1 of the designated year but do not meet the requirements for adult cattle. For calves or non-adult cattle to be eligible for payment, a producer must have owned them January 1 of 2006, they must have weighed at least 500 pounds on January 1 and the producer would have had to have maintained ownership through May 1, the beginning of the grazing period, of the applicable year. For example, calves sold in February will not be eligible because they did not graze your pastures after May 1.

The program will pay the lesser of: the value of the calculated grazing or feed loss, or a flat rate for the livestock. Producers will need to certify a grazing loss percentage for the year and provide pasture information for the application. Maximum payment rates are adult beef cattle, \$10.66 per head, non-adult beef \$8.00 per head; all sheep and goats, \$2.67 per head; and equine, \$7.89 per head. Eligibility of equine and other livestock depends on its use. Sales of these types of livestock must be a part of the farming operation and be shown as farm income.

Crop Disaster Program (CDP)

CDP signup is currently underway. Producers who experienced quantity losses in excess of 35% to crops in 2005, 2006 and 2007 are eligible. Previously, only crops planted through Feb. 28, 2007 were eligible. This date has been extended to Dec. 31, 2007. Eligible producers with losses in multiple years will receive the payment for the year with the highest benefit. Qualified producers with land administered in more than one county may receive payment in both counties. Applications for loss benefits may be made on multiple commodities as long as the losses occurred in the same crop year. A payment limitation of \$80,000 per person applies. Only producers who obtained crop insurance coverage or coverage under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Program (NAP) for the year of loss will be eligible for CDP benefits.

The FSA office has received a download from the Risk Management Agency (RMA) which shows who had insurance and who received indemnity payments from insurance. In these situations, the FSA office can easily run an application to determine eligibility. There are various examples of when a producer may not have received an indemnity payment from insurance, but could be eligible for payment through CDP. One example would be based on the level of insurance a producer carries. If a producer has insurance at a 50% level, he may not have had enough of a loss to qualify with crop insurance, but there may have been a loss greater than 35% which would qualify under CDP. If unsure of eligibility, the following equation is used per RMA unit: $\text{Producer Share} \times \text{yield} \times 65\% - \text{actual production}$. If the result is a positive number, the loss would be eligible through CDP. Also, producers get the benefit of using the higher of the established RMA yield for the unit or the county average yield which is 135 bu/ac for corn and 42 bu/ac for soybeans in Atchison County.

Contact the office with specific questions.

Spousal Signatures

Husbands and wives may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) programs in which either has an interest. In most cases, this option is automatically available unless a written request for exclusion is made to the county office staff by either spouse.

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 targeted funding for members of Socially Disadvantaged Applicants. 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.

For detailed information on loan eligibility or the different loan programs available, contact your local FSA office to set up an appointment with a Loan Approval Official. FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

Applications for FSA Loans

Farmers and ranchers that intend to apply to the Farm Service Agency for loan assistance for the upcoming crop year are encouraged to file their applications as early as possible. Filing early will help ensure that your loan is processed and approved as early as possible so that planting decisions can be made. Failure to apply early can result in a delay in processing loans due to the volume of applications that must be processed in date order. Contact your local FSA Loan Approval Official for more details and assistance in applying.

Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL)

Do you need more storage capability for your farming operation? Check with your local FSA office to discuss the possibility of a Farm Storage Facility Loan. Low cost loans for storage facilities continue to be available for producers to build or remodel farm storage facilities for a variety of commodities, including wheat, grain sorghum, corn and soybeans.

The seven-year FSFL's are available for the purchase and installation of eligible storage facilities, permanently affixed drying or handling equipment, or remodeling existing facilities. Eligible facilities include new conventional type cribs or bins and new and remanufactured oxygen-limiting and other upright silo-type structures.

All FSFL's are secured with a promissory note and security agreement. The maximum amount that may be borrowed is 85% of the net cost of the storage or handling equipment, up to \$100,000 for each borrower. A minimum down payment is also required. A \$45.00 application fee is assessed and other fees are incurred depending on the type of loan being processed.

Marketing Assistance Loans

Producers are reminded of the marketing assistance loan program which offers nine month loans using grain as collateral. The loans are non-recourse which means the grain can be forfeited to CCC in times of extremely low prices. The current interest rate is 4.250%, subject to change at the first of each month for loans taken during that month, then again on January 1, 2009 for the duration of the loan period. The quantity of grain can be certified by the producer or measurement service is available. Loan rates for Atchison County are: Corn \$1.88; Soybeans \$4.96; Hard Wheat \$2.97; and Oats \$1.37. The final date to request loans is March 31 for small grains and May 31 for spring crops. You must now make an application before loan processing can begin.

For those producers who have CCC loans, please be reminded to contact the county office when moving or selling the grain, and watch grain closely when the weather begins to change.

Selected Interest Rates for January 2008	
90-Day Treasury Bill	3.625%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	4.375%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	5.125%
Limited Resource Loans	5.000%
Farm Ownership Loans Beginning Farmer Down Payment	4.000%
Emergency Loans	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility Loans	3.625%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	4.250%

Farm Service Agency
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Dates to Remember

Jan. 21	Office Closed – Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday
Feb. 18	Office Closed – President’s Day
Mar. 15	Deadline to obtain 2008 NAP coverage on spring planted crops
Mar. 31	Final availability date for 2007 wheat and oats loans and LDP’s
May 1	Last day to have work completed for the ECP
May 31	Final availability date for 2007 corn and soybean loans and LDP’s

Direct Deposit Mandatory

As of January 1, 1999, all payments issued by the county FSA office will be by direct deposit (electronic funds transfer) to a pre-designated checking or savings account with your financial institution. Forms are available at the FSA office to sign up for direct deposit if you haven’t yet. For those already signed up, it is important that we are notified anytime there is a change in your account number or financial institution. If we are not notified, future payments can be delayed or lost for a period of time.

Soil and Water District Funds Available

The Atchison County Soil and Water District (SWCD) would like to notify producers that there is over \$300,000 of cost-share money still available. At this time there is no limit on the amount one can spend. If there is something that meets the cost-share guidelines, provide the layout notes to the office so an application can be generated. For questions, contact the SWCD office at (660) 744-6201 ext. 101.

Controlled Substance

Any person who is convicted under federal law of planting, producing, cultivating, harvesting, growing, or storing a controlled substance will be ineligible to participate and receive payments under USDA programs. Marijuana, opium poppies, and other drug producing plants are controlled substances.

Faxed Signatures

Certain faxed signatures shall be accepted for applicable program forms or other documents approved for faxed signatures if all other signature requirements are met.

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 to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.