



July 2007

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 Assistants
Chuck Linthicum

In This Issue:

- ECP Deadline
- DCP Deadline
- Acreage Reports
- Sodbust Rules
- Farm Loans
- Committee Election
- Wind Towers
- Dates to Remember

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www.fsa.usda.gov

Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)

The Atchison County Farm Service Agency has been approved to implement the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) to provide cost-share funds to help area producers with damage to farmland and fences caused by the excessive rain and flooding in May 2007. For a producer's land to be eligible, the disaster must have created new conservation problems that, if untreated, would impair or endanger the land and materially affect its productive capacity. Under the program 75% cost-share monies would be available for the removal of debris from farmland, grading or shaping of the damaged land, restoration of conservation structures such as terraces or water impoundment structures to their pre-disaster condition, and the restoration of permanent fences.

To qualify for cost-share assistance producers must have suffered at least \$1,000 of eligible cost share expenses. Producers are not eligible to receive compensation to rehabilitate any land on which they are already required to maintain the practice which includes land under any other Federal or State cost-share program (an example – terraces built using cost-share from Soil and Water Districts within the last 10 years). Levees or the land between the levee and the river are not eligible for cost-share under the ECP program. Land on which cost-share assistance is received must maintain its agricultural use for a minimum of 10 years following the year the practice is completed.

Producers will need to apply for ECP cost-share assistance at the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office before beginning the repairs or debris removal from their acreages. The deadline to apply is August 3, 2007.

COC Candidates Sought

It will soon be county committee election time, and the Farm Service Agency (FSA) is actively looking for producers to be a candidate for the local FSA county committee. County committee members perform an important function. They represent you and your agricultural interests. They help shape how federal farm programs are implemented on the ground in local communities. Who do you know who would make a good county committee member? Who do you know who would be able to represent you and your farming interests, as well as your neighbor's interests? Why not talk to that person and ask if he or she would be willing to serve on the county committee? If he or she says yes, then fill out a nomination form (FSA-669), have the person sign it and then return it to the county office. If you can't think of another producer to nominate or your prospective nominee turns you down, why not nominate yourself? Serving on the committee will take, on average, one day a month, and you will be providing your agricultural community a vital service. Committee members are reimbursed for travel expenses and are paid at the rate of a GS-6, step 1, currently \$14.72 per hour. Visit with the Farm Service Agency county office staff for more information.

Haying, Grazing CRP Acres

Producers considering managed haying or grazing of Conservation Reserve Program acres need prior approval from the county committee. Before the committee can allow haying or grazing, there must be an approved hazing and grazing plan. The acreage may not be hayed/grazed prior to July 15. Acreage hayed/grazed in either of the last 2 years is ineligible for release this year. A 25 percent payment reduction is assessed for every approved acre hayed or grazed. Other restrictions may apply.

DCP Enrollment Extended

The June 1, 2007 deadline to enroll in the 2007 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) has been extended to **August 3, 2007**. Computer problems have caused application processing delays which prompted the enrollment deadline extension. A late-file fee of \$100 per farm will be assessed to the producer for CCC-509's filed after August 3, 2007 and before September 30, 2007. Advance direct payments for the 2007 crop year are 22%. Advance payments may be requested in any month starting with December 2006. The remaining final direct payment of 78% will be issued to participating producers in October of 2007. For clarification or an appointment, contact your local FSA office.

Crop Certification

The annual requirement of reporting to the FSA office can be referred to as crop reporting, acreage reporting, or crop certification. Filing an accurate and timely report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent loss of benefits for a variety of FSA 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.

The certification form FSA-578, Report of Acreage, must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. The producer certification deadline for fall-seeded crops is June 30 and for spring-seeded crops, July 31.

CRP & NAP Certification

Conservation Reserve Program acreage must be reported to receive annual rental payments. Crop acreage for Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) must also be reported.

Prevented Planting:

Prevented planting needs to be reported no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date.

Failed Acreage:

Producers must be able to establish to the satisfaction of the county committee that the crop failed and was prevented from being replanted through the normal planting period because of natural disaster conditions.

FSA Farm Loans

The Farm Service Agency makes both direct and guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans to family-size farmers and ranchers who cannot obtain commercial credit from a bank, Farm Credit System institution or other lender. FSA loans can be used to purchase land, livestock, equipment, feed, seed and supplies. The loans can also be used to construct buildings or make farm improvements.

If you're having trouble getting commercial credit, check with the FSA county office staff about loan eligibility, as well as maximum loan amounts, rates, term and use of proceeds.

Beginning Farmers, Ranchers

Are you a farmer or rancher who has farmed for less than 10 years? If so, you may qualify for beginning farmer targeted loan funds.

The program is designed to assist these farmers by providing direct and guaranteed loans when they are unable to obtain financing from commercial credit sources.

If you believe this program could be of benefit to you, please contact the county office staff for more information. Our loan officials will welcome your interest.

Emergency Loan Designation

Mr. Timothy Kelley, State Executive Director, Farm Service Agency has announced Atchison and Holt Counties will have FSA disaster loans available due to severe storms, flooding, tornadoes or freezing. Applications will be accepted at the Rock Port county office for physical and production losses.

Loans for physical losses must be used to replace or repair damage to buildings, fences or to compensate for losses of basic livestock, stored crops or supplies on hand, equipment, etc., that was lost due to the disaster. Loans for production losses may also be used to buy feed, seed, fertilizer, livestock or to make payments on real estate or chattel debts. Generally, loans for production losses cannot be approved until crops have completed their production cycle or have been harvested.

In order to qualify, a farmer must have suffered a 30% loss in production or an actual physical loss that was essential to the successful operation of the farm.

Loans for actual losses are made at an interest rate of 3.75% for emergency loans to the eligible applicants who are unable to obtain the actual credit needed from another source. All loan programs of the Farm Service Agency are conducted on a non-discriminatory basis

Preventing Fraud, Waste

The FSA has joined with the Risk Management Agency to prevent fraud, waste and abuse in the Federal Crop Insurance Program. FSA has been, and will continue to, assist RMA and insurance providers by monitoring crop conditions throughout the growing season. In addition, FSA will refer all suspected cases of fraud, waste and abuse to RMA.

Producers can report suspected cases to the county office staff, RMA office, or the Office of the Inspector General.

2007 Compliance Activities

FSA County Offices perform a variety of compliance reviews and spot checks to ensure the accuracy of payment and integrity of programs. Currently, these compliance reviews and spot checks are selected through a variety of processes.

Based on Office of Inspector General audit recommendations, a new compliance review and spot check selection process will be implemented for the 2007 program/crop year.

For 2007, a nationwide selection of producers has been made using a statistical sampling method. Producers were selected based on their participation in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP), Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP) Marketing Assistance Loans (MAL) and Noninsured Disaster Assistance Program (NAP).

For 2007, all producers selected through the selection process will be spot checked or reviewed for compliance with all programs in which they participated or received benefits as well as the accuracy of all of their acreage reports (FSA-578's).

Questions concerning this new procedure may be directed to the county office.

Farm Service Agency
Atchison County Office
302 E. Hwy 136
Rock Port, MO 64482

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Dates to Remember

July 31	Final Certification Date for all crops except small grains
August 1	Deadline to submit County Committee Nomination Forms
August 1	Final Date to Request a Farm Reconstitution for Fiscal Year 2007
August 3	Deadline to Apply for the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)
August 3	DCP Enrollment Deadline
September 30	Final Date for 2007 DCP Contract Revisions

Wind Tower Construction

Several wind power companies have expressed an interest in building wind turbines in the area with the purpose of generating renewable wind energy.

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) supports the continued development of wind power.

However, this type of development work on a farm typically requires the consent of lien/contract holders as well as the owner of the property. As part of the lien/contract holder consent process, for any land where government assistance is being received by the farmer, (CRP, WRP, direct and/or guaranteed loans, etc.), and assessment of potential environmental impact is required by federal law.

If you are participating in the FSA CRP, WRP direct and/or guaranteed loan program, please contact the office prior to executing leases and/or contracts with any wind power company.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (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, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C., 20250-9410, or call 202-720-5964 (voice or TDD).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.