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BAKER COUNTY FARM SERVICE AGENCY

May 2009

3990 Midway Dr, Baker City, Oregon 97814
(541) 523-7121 Ext. 2 FAX: (541) 523-2184

COUNTY COMMITTEE

Wells Wyatt, Chairmen
Perry Jacobs, Vice-Chairmen
Kate Rohner, Member

Signup Underway for the Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)

The Grassland Reserve Program is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to landowners and operators for the restoration and conservation of the nation's grasslands. FSA and NRCS jointly administer GRP and both offices accept GRP applications on a continuous basis for easements or rental agreements. Applications received prior to May 15, 2009, will be evaluated for 2009 GRP funding, applications received after this date will be evaluated for future GRP years funding. This program has several enrollment options: permanent easements and 10, 15, or 20 year rental agreements. Application evaluation for acceptance in the 2009 GRP will be based on ranking criteria that will emphasize grazing operations, protection of grassland, land that contains forbs, and shrub land at the greatest risk from the threat of conversion to uses other than grazing; plant and animal biodiversity; restoration costs; and expiring CRP contracts. Eligible landowners who enroll in GRP will receive payment for permanent easements based on the lowest amount of either the fair market value of the property less the grazing value of the land; geographical cap as determined by NRCS; or offer from landowner. Participants with approved rental agreements will receive annual payments for the rental contract period. GRP enrollment permits common grazing practices, haying, mowing, or harvesting for seed production, subject to certain restrictions. For additional eligibility criteria and application information regarding GRP, contact your local NRCS or FSA office. For application materials and more information, visit the NRCS Web site at:

www.or.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/grp.

IMPORTANT DATES AND ITEMS

April 20-May 15: Sign-up period for GRP
Ongoing: Sign-up for CREP and Continuous CRP
May 25: Service Center closed for Memorial day
August 14: Final day to signup for 2009 DCP/ ACRE program.
3rd Tuesday of each month: Baker COC meeting will be held at the Ag Service Center. (Subject to change)
Within 15 days: NAP Notice of Loss (FSA-576) must be filed within 15 days of loss or when the loss is apparent.

ACREAGE REPORTS AND MEASUREMENT SERVICE RATES

The acreage reporting deadline for Baker County is August 15, 2009. Acreage reports are required for DCP, ACRE, Loan and Loan Deficiency Payment eligibility, Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and Noninsured Crop Disaster Program (NAP) covered crops. Late- Filed reports will require a minimum fee of \$46.00 per farm.

Measurement service is available to producers to determine accurate acreage and production. Services available include staking and referencing, measuring crops after planting and measuring farm-stored commodities. The mandatory rate for performing the measurement service is a \$30.00 basic fee plus \$16.00 for the first hour and \$8.00 for each additional ½ hour to complete the service. Contact Trent @ 541-523-7121x2

PULSE CROPS

The 2008 Farm Bill added the following crops as eligible for base acres: dry pea varieties green, yellow, Austrian, Umatilla, and wrinkled; lentils, large chickpeas (Kabuli garbanzo beans), and small chickpeas (Desi garbanzo beans). If you planted any of these crops in 1998-2001 and can prove existence and disposition you may be eligible to add these to your farm and receive Counter-Cyclical or ACRE payments for 2009-2012. Producers have until **August 14, 2009** to decide. Contact Dyann @ 541-523-7121x105 for more information if this applies to you.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program 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 Adjudication and Compliance, 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."

NOTES AND REMINDERS

- Producers who did not obtain crop insurance or Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for **2008** can pay a buy-in fee through May 18, 2009 to become potentially eligible for some of the 2008 disaster assistance programs including the SURE program.
- Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL) are available for the purchase and installation of eligible storage facilities, permanently affixed drying and handling equipment. All FSFL are secured by a promissory note and security agreement. The maximum loan amount is 85 percent of the net cost of the new structure, not to exceed \$100,000.
- Continuous CRP sign-up is available to all eligible landowners and operators on eligible cropland for high environmental benefit conservation practices, such as waterways, filter strips, windbreaks and buffers. Annual payments for 10 to 15 years on the approved acreage are based upon the average rental rate for the soil type.
- Notify the county office of any farm operation changes, including land ownership, tenant or operator changes and direct deposit/financial institution information as soon as possible to allow farm records updates to be completed timely for program and payment purposes.
- The National FSA website can be accessed at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/fsa> for information to farmers and ranchers about the Farm Service Agency programs

NEW SUPPLEMENTAL REVENUE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

SURE Program will be available to eligible producers on farms in disaster & contiguous counties that have incurred crop production losses & or crop quality losses during the crop year & on any farm in which during the calendar year the total loss of production of the farm because of weather is greater than 50 % of normal. In general a farm is the sum of all crop acreage in all counties that is planted or intended to be planted for harvest by the eligible producer. To be eligible mechanically harvested insurable crops must be insured under Federal Crop Insurance & mechanically harvested Non-insured crops must be covered by the Noninsured Crop Assistance Program (NAP), unless the crop meets the de minimis exceptions (NAP fee exceeds 10% of the value of the NAP coverage or crop is expected to contribute less than 5% of that value of all crops for the farming operation). SURE payments will be issued to an eligible producer in an amount equal to 60% of the difference between the disaster assistance program guarantee & total farm revenue. Contact Joey @ 541-523-7121x2

What is Continuous CRP?

The Continuous Conservation Reserve Program is a private lands environmental improvement program that allows participants the opportunity to enroll acreages in conservation practices that will reduce soil erosion, improve water and soil quality and provide wildlife habitat and food sources. The Continuous CRP program is a voluntary enrollment program. Eligible landowners enter into contracts that range from 10 to 15 years in length. In return, the landowners may receive annual rental and maintenance payments, incentive payments for certain activities, and cost share for establishment. To be eligible for enrollment in the Continuous CRP, participants and acreage must meet certain requirements. Provided the eligibility requirements are met, FSA will automatically accept enrollments of acreage into Continuous CRP. Landowners may enroll in the program at any time during the year. Contact Joey @ 541-523-7121x103

PERMANENT DISASTER PROGRAMS REMINDER

The 2008 Farm Bill created the following new permanent agriculture disaster programs that will be forthcoming: Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payment Program (SURE), Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP), and the Tree Assistance Program (TAP).

To be eligible for the SURE, TAP, and ELAP producers must have purchased at least catastrophic risk protection (CAT) level of crop insurance for All insurable crops and/or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for All non-insurable crops that are mechanically harvested for all farms in all counties. To be eligible for LFP, producers must timely obtain FCIC or NAP coverage on those grasslands they want LFP to cover. LIP has no insurance or NAP requirement. *If you do not currently have NAP or insurance coverage on all of your crops for 2009 then you will not be eligible for most of these programs for 2009.* Producers who are limited resource, socially disadvantaged (minorities), or beginning farmers or ranchers may qualify for fee waivers or exceptions. In the future, as these programs become available, signups and more information will be announced.

FARM RECONSTITUTIONS

In program terminology, 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. A reconstitution is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land ("parent" farms or tracts) based on the current farming operation. Following are the different methods used when doing a farm division: Estate Method, Designation of Landowner Method, DCP Cropland Method & Default Method

If payments have already been issued on a particular farm, the reconstitution will be effective for the next year, unless the payments are refunded. Contact Dyann @ 541-523-7121x105

New Program – “ACRE”-Sign up begins April 27

Under the Average Crop Revenue Election program, ACRE, producers may receive revenue-based payments as an alternative to receiving price-based counter-cyclical payments.

Eligible Farms – Only farms with covered commodity or peanut base acres may participate in the ACRE Program. Farms that are already enrolled in the Direct & Counter-Cyclical Payment program for a crop year may elect to switch to ACRE before the end of this farm bill, 2012.

Eligible Commodities – The following planted crops may be eligible for ACRE payments:

wheat, barley, oats, grain sorghum, corn, cotton, rice, soybeans, other oilseeds, peanuts & pulse crops.

ACRE Election & Enrollment – Sign up is planned 4/27/2009 thru 8/14/2009. Election is by FSA farm number. All producers on a farm must agree to the ACRE enrollment. Once enrolled, a farm is required to remain in ACRE thru 2012, receives 20% less on Direct Payment, 30% reduction of loan rates and will not receive CC payments.

Payments – ACRE payments are revenue-based and are tied to crop production and the National Average Market Price for planted crops. Payable acreage is limited to the total of base acres on the farm. Payments can only be issued for a crop if 2 triggers are met for the covered commodity crop.

State Trigger: The Actual State Revenue for the program year must be less than the State ACRE Guarantee.

Farm Trigger: The participating farm's Actual Farm Revenue for the program year must be less than the Farm ACRE Guarantee.

Reports – Producers must annual report planted acreage plus production to FSA.

ACRE Payment Calculations	
ACRE State Trigger (State ACRE Guarantee Must exceed Actual State Revenue)	
State ACRE Guarantee	Actual State Revenue
90% multiplied by	Actual State Yield
Benchmark State Yield (5 year "Olympic" average)	multiplied by ACRE Price: (the higher of the National Average Market Price
multiplied by	or
ACRE Guarantee Price (Previous 2-yr national average market price)	70% of the National Loan Rate
ACRE Farm Trigger (Farm ACRE Benchmark must exceed Actual Farm Revenue)	
Farm ACRE Guarantee	Actual Farm Revenue
Benchmark Farm Yield (5 year "Olympic" average)	Actual Farm Yield
multiplied by	multiplied by ACRE Price: (National Average Market Price
ACRE Guarantee Price	or
plus	
Crop Insurance Premium per acre paid by producer	70% of the National Loan Rate)
Both the State trigger and the farm trigger must be met to receive an ACRE payment.	

SODBUSTER, SWAMPBUSTER

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.

NAP Production Reporting

Production records for individual crops need to be filed with our office to establish an approved NAP yield. If this is the first year you participated in NAP, you can provide production and acreage information from prior years to establish your yield(s). If you participated in NAP in previous years, you must report your production and acreage on a yearly basis to keep your yield up-to-date. Records need to show crop disposition. It is recommended producers submit 2009 production records as soon as possible after harvest.

All production records must be submitted by the subsequent crop year's final acreage reporting date.

“NAP” is a 4-step program: 1) apply & pay fees; 2) report acres; 3) report production; 4) report loss. All areas have specific requirements and deadlines in order to maintain compliance. Missing a deadline or requirement in any area can severely & adversely affect your ability to receive benefits on what may be a payable loss. Take care to adhere to all program requirements. Any questions contact Joey @ 541-523-7121x103

**Baker County FSA Office
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Baker City, OR 97814**

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