

December 15, 2007

Big Horn FSA County Office
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County Committee Members

Merna Kincaid, Chairman
Alex Uffelman, Vice-Chairman
Shawn Fredericks, Member
Thomas Whiteman, Min. Advsr.

FSA Office Personnel

Roger W. Bruckner, CED
Michael Turley, FLM
Katie Berkram, PT
Gloria Menke, PT
Diane Schanaman, PT
Marie Weibert, PT
Cindy Woody, Temp. PT

Dates to Remember:

December 12-15 – Montana Stockgrowers Annual Convention, Billings

December 24 & 25 – Holiday – Office closed

January 1 – Holiday – Office closed

January – April – Continuation of Brand Liens

January 14 – Holiday – Office closed

January 31 – Final loan/LDP availability date for wool/mohair shorn in 2007

January 31 – Final LDP availability date for 2007 unshorn pelts

March 17, 2008 – NAP sales closing date for all crops except value loss crops



Big Horn County December 2007

Signup Still Underway for Disaster Assistance Programs

Signup continues for the Livestock Compensation Program (LCP), Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), and the Crop Disaster Program (CDP).

To be eligible for LIP and LCP, an owner or contract grower's livestock must have been located in a county or contiguous county designated a natural disaster by the President or declared by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture between January 1, 2005 and February 28, 2007. Livestock producers incurring livestock losses in 2005 or 2006 calendar years may only select one year in which to receive assistance. These two disaster programs provide benefits to livestock producers for livestock deaths, feed losses, and additional feed costs caused by natural disasters that occurred between January 1, 2005 and February 28, 2007.

CDP provides benefits to farmers who suffered quantity and quality losses to 2005, 2006, or 2007 crops from natural disasters if the crop was planted before February 28, 2007, or in the case of prevented plantings, for crops that would have been planted before February 28, 2007. Producers who incurred qualifying losses in 2005, 2006 or 2007 must choose only one year to apply for benefits. Producers may apply for benefits for losses to multiple commodities as long as the losses occurred in the same crop year. Only producers who obtained crop insurance coverage or coverage under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the year of loss will be eligible for CDP benefits.

Producers must have suffered quantity losses in excess of 35 percent to be eligible for CDP.

The payment rate is set at 42 percent of the established price.

Assistance, together with any crop insurance or NAP payment received for the same crop and including the value of the crop production not lost, must not exceed 95 percent of the total value of the crop absent the disaster.

Farmers may receive a maximum of \$80,000 in CDP benefits. CDP does not require a disaster declaration.

Contact Katie (LCP/LIP) or Gloria (CDP) for further explanation of the programs or Diane to make an appointment to discuss eligibility.

Year End Reviews

Producers that have a farm loan with FSA are reminded they must provide data for their Year-End Analysis (YEA) to their loan officer each year. Borrowers are urged to provide this information timely so that their files can be maintained. The office will contact you for the data you will need to assist us.

For Your Information

A number of questions have been received regarding the restoration of DCP base acreage from CRP contracts that expired on September 30, 2007. The 2002 Farm Bill provided for restoration of lost base acres when a CRP contract expired. That provision ended September 30, 2007 with the expiration of the 2002 Farm Bill. When a new Farm Bill is passed by Congress, FSA will provide details as they become available.

Annual Notice of Payment Eligibility to Producers

FSA program benefits may not be provided to any producer until the applicable payment eligibility determinations are made. A producer will remain ineligible until all required forms for the specific situation are provided. Payment Limitation/Eligibility determinations may be initiated by the FSA County Committee or requested by the producer. Statutory provisions require that entities earning program benefits provide FSA with the names, addresses, and ID numbers for the members of the entity. Furthermore, entities earning payments must inform their members of the requirements for designating "permitted entities." All Payment Eligibility forms (CCC-502) submitted by a producer are subject to spot check through the End-of-Year Review process. Farming operations selected for an End-of-Year Review will be required to submit documents to verify their contributions of capital, land, equipment, labor, and management. Individuals, joint operations, or entities which are determined to be "not actively engaged in farming," will be ineligible for Direct and Counter Cyclical (DCP) Payments, Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP's), Marketing Loan Gains, Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) payments, and possible Disaster related program payments such as the Crop Disaster Program (CDP) Payments and the Quality Loss Program (QLP) Payments. Spouses may be determined to be two "Persons" only if this determination is requested in writing and the applicable requirements are met by each spouse.

Census of Agriculture Coming Soon

Beginning December 28, 2007, the National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS) will mail out Census of Agriculture forms to collect data for the 2007 calendar year. Completed forms are due by February 4, 2008. Forms may be returned by mail or, for the first time, forms may be filled out online via a secure web site.

Conducted every five years by USDA, the Census is a complete count of the nation's farm and ranches and the people who operate them. The Census looks at land use and ownership, operator characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures and other topics. The Census provides the only source of uniform, comprehensive agricultural data for every county in the nation.

For more information about the 2007 Census of Agriculture, contact the NASS Montana Field Office at 406/441-1240 or 1-800-835-2612 or logon to the Montana Agriculture Statistics website at <http://www.agcensus.usda.gov>.

Annie's Project

Montana MarketManager will usher Annie's Project into Montana starting in January 2008. Annie's Project will be delivered in six 3-hour sessions at 12 locations around Montana. Each Monday evening session will run from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. Registration is \$100.

Area Class locations:

Baker – Baker High School
Bozeman – Burns Telecom Center, MSU
Lewistown – Central Montana Education Center
Miles City – Miles City Community College
Rapelje – Rapelje High School

Contact the Montana Grain Growers for registration information.

[www.montanamarketmanager.org/Education & Reference/WorkshopCalendar](http://www.montanamarketmanager.org/Education&Reference/WorkshopCalendar) or call the Montana Grain Growers office at 406/761-4596.

Farm Storage Facility Loan

FSA may make loans to producers to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities.

Commodities covered under this storage program are rice, soybeans, dry peas, lentils, small chickpeas, peanuts, sunflower, flaxseed, mustard seed, and other oilseeds as determined and announced. Corn, grain sorghum, oats, wheat, or barley harvested as whole grain or other than whole grain are also eligible.

Loans may be made only for the purchase and installation of eligible storage facilities, permanently affixed drying or handling equipment, or remodeling existing facilities.

Eligible facilities and equipment include:

- New conventional-type cribs or bins designed and engineered for whole grain storage and having a useful life of at least 10 years;
- New oxygen limiting and other upright silo-type structures designed for whole grain storage or other than whole grain wet storage having a useful life of at least 10 years;
- Re-manufactured oxygen-limiting storage structures built to original manufacturer's design specifications using original manufacturer's rebuild kits having a useful life of at least 10 years;
- New structures that are upright, bunker-type, horizontal, or open silo structures with at least 2 concrete walls and a concrete floor, designed for whole grains storage or other than whole grain storage having a useful life of at least 10 years;
- New permanently affixed grain handling equipment and grain drying equipment determined by FSA to be needed and essential to the proper functioning of a grain storage system, with or without a loan for storage structures;
- Existing storage renovated according to FSA regulations without an increase in storage capacity;

- New electrical equipment, such as lighting and motors integral to the proper operation of grain storage and handling equipment, excluding the installation of electrical service to the electrical meter;
- New equipment to improve, maintain or monitor the quality of stored grain;
- Safety equipment as required; and
- New flat-type storage structures, including a permanent concrete floor and bulkheads, designed for and primarily used to store whole grain for the term of the loan.

The applicant must:

- Complete form CCC-185
- Pay a non-refundable application fee of \$45.00 to the FSA office
- Provide copies of contracts, project cost breakdown, copies of site plans or estimates for all proposed work;
- Provide form FSA 440-32
- Provide proof of multi-peril crop insurance
- Provide legal description of parcel (s) of land to be offered as security and legal description of land where facility will be placed;
- File CCC-10

The maximum term of the loan is 7 years. The maximum principal amount of any farm storage facility loan shall be 85 percent of the net cost of the applicant's needed storage or handling equipment not to exceed \$100,000 for each borrower signing the note and security agreement.

A minimum down payment representing the difference between the net cost of the storage facility and the amount of the loan shall be made by the loan applicant to the supplier or contractor before the loan is disbursed.

Loans shall bear interest at the rate equivalent to the rate of interest charged on U.S. Treasury securities of comparable maturity on the date the loan is approved. The interest rate for each loan will remain in effect for the term of the loan. Other requirements may apply.

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January 1 – Office Closed
January 15 – Office Closed
January 31 – Final loan/LDP availability due date for wool/mohair shorn in 2007
January 31 – Final LDP availability date for 2007 unshorn pelts

NAP Application Deadline

The NAP closing date for all crops except value loss crops is March 17, 2008. Contact the FSA office for more information on the NAP program.

Happy Holidays From Our Staff

