



## Caldwell County News

### Caldwell County USDA Service Center

**Caldwell County FSA**  
23 West Main St.  
Kingston, MO 64650  
816-586-2711 (phone)  
816-586-2067 (fax)  
[www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)

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

**County Committee**  
Terry Wright  
Joe Graham  
Kevin Stonum  
Colleen Niehaus, Advisor

County Committee meets  
3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each  
month

**Office Staff**  
Betty Dunscombe  
Debbie Leeper  
Carol Gorham  
Jeanne Schmidt

**Fieldman**  
Mark Burnett

**Farm Loan Manager**  
Michael Harwood

**County Director**  
Debbie Clevenger

### Beginning, Small and Limited Resource Farmers & Ranchers:

#### Do You Require Financial Assistance to Fund Conservation Program Initiatives?

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Farm Service Agency (FSA) have worked together to make conservation programs more available to beginning, small, and limited resource farmers. As producers move from initial contract development into the implementation stage under NRCS' Environmental Quality Incentives Program, many face the inability to acquire the initial capital investment of their cost-share portion needed for contract implementation.

To help producers implement conservation measures, FSA has several loan programs available to assist with up-front costs. FSA makes direct and guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans to family-size farmers and ranchers who cannot obtain commercial credit otherwise. A primary objective of FSA's farm loan programs is to assist small, beginning, and socially disadvantaged (minority and female) producers. In fact, a portion of FSA's loan funds are reserved for beginning and socially disadvantaged producers. These loan programs are not new and have been used successfully in conjunction with conservation programs throughout the United States.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) and [www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov)

### DCP Sign Up Extended

The sign-up deadline for the 2007 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) has been extended to August 3, 2007.

The extension is due to issues involving the performance of the Farm Service Agency's web-based computer system. The late-file fee of \$100 will only be assessed for farms that are enrolled after August 3, 2007 and before September 30, 2007.

Enrollment in DCP for the 2007 contract period began on October 1, 2006, and was scheduled to end on June 1, 2007. The extension applies only to the enrollment time frame, and does not extend the DCP contract period.

For more information about DCP and other FSA programs, please visit:  
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov>

### Conservation Compliance

Federal regulations discourage the production of crops on highly erodible cropland unless the land is protected from erosion by an approved conservation system. Status reviews are conducted to ensure producers follow a conservation plan on highly erodible land. In addition to the highly erodible land, a person may not plant an agricultural commodity on wetland converted after Dec. 23, 1985, or convert a wetland to make agricultural production possible after Nov. 28, 1990. Failure to comply with these provisions will cause a person to be ineligible for USDA benefits. County Committees may review noncompliance situations for good faith and provide relief in approved cases.

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## Direct and Counter-cyclical Program Impact of Various Lease Agreements

Farmers are reminded that flexible and combination leases may alter the agreement terms of the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP). In the past, most farmers rented land for a specific amount of cash rent and nothing else. Due to the recent spike in cash grain prices, many renters and landlords are becoming more creative in the way rent is figured. While this is certainly acceptable, it may require the landlords to be party to the DCP contracts in the FSA Office. The purpose of the regulations has always been to protect both landlords and tenants and to insure compliance with the Payment Limitation rules. If rent is based on the amount of crop produced or the income derived from that crop, or any combination of the two, the lease is considered a share lease. In that case, the landlord must receive a share of the DCP contract payment, because the landlord now shares in the risk of the crop. Essentially, if you have a cash lease agreement that is **ANYTHING OTHER THAN JUST A FLAT CASH LEASE AGREEMENT**, you need to visit the county office by the August 3<sup>rd</sup> DCP contract deadline.

### Could you be missing money? Have you changed banks?

If you have changed banks and not notified FSA, your payment could be delayed. Payments are electronically transferred into your bank account and if we are not aware of changes to your account and routing numbers, there could be problems. In order to make timely payments, you need to notify the office if you close your account or if another financial institution purchases your bank. It is important that any changes in producer's account such as type account, bank mergers, routing number or account numbers, be provided to the county office promptly to avoid possible payment delay.

### FSA Signature Requirements

Proper signatures on Farm Service Agency contracts, applications and forms must be submitted before the document will be considered as filed. All entities, including revocable and irrevocable trusts, corporations, partnerships, estates, etc., must provide evidence of signature authority stipulating those individuals who are authorized to represent the entity. FSA cannot accept signatures without such documentation on file. Examples of acceptable evidence include trust agreements, corporate charters or resolutions, partnership agreements and court orders of appointment. Spouses can sign for one another on most program documents unless written notification denying a

spouse this authority has been provided to the county office staff. An FSA-211 may be filed to delegate signature authority for FSA program purposes to another individual.

### Toll-Free Number

Direct loan borrowers with USDA's Farm Service Agency can now check the status of their accounts around the clock using a new toll-free telephone number.

The toll-free number, 1-888-518-4983, is available in both English and Spanish. The system delivers information on active FSA loans 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

During the first call to the new system, borrowers will enter their tax identification number or the Social Security Number associated with the loan. They also will need to enter their ZIP code. Borrowers will create a personal identification number for security. Customers must enter their PIN every time they use the system and may change their PIN. The system menu helps users access helpful information. The system may also direct borrowers to contact their local FSA servicing office if action is necessary on their accounts.

### Do You Meet Eligibility Requirements to Earn Program Benefits?

USDA payments and benefits are subject to producer eligibility and limitation provisions as defined by law. It is the producer's responsibility to report changes in the farming operation which may affect payment eligibility and payment limitation. Failure to do so can result in ineligibility for payments for all years affected.

The following payments apply to DCP for each contract year through both direct and counter-cyclical payments. For all covered commodities, \$40,000 for direct payments and \$65,000 for counter-cyclical payments. The Environmental Quality Incentive Program has a \$450,000 payment limitation total for fiscal years 2002 – 2007. The Conservation Reserve Programs annual limit is \$50,000 per person. Marketing loan gains payment limit of \$75,000 per person.

Entities such as corporations, limited partnerships, trusts and estates are required to provide names, addresses, and ID numbers of their members.

## Removing CCC Loan Collateral

Producers are reminded, if you have grain under Commodity Credit Corporation loan it cannot be removed or disposed of without prior county office staff authorization or repayment. The county office staff may issue release authorizations based on a telephone or in person request when you are ready to move the grain. A loan violation is subject to monetary and administrative penalties, such as repaying the loan at principal plus interest, liquidated damages, calling the loan and denial of future farm-stored loans and loan deficiency payments. You must have an authorization for EACH DIFFERENT ELEVATOR you are hauling grain to.

All commodity loans are subject to spot check. Locking in a market loan repayment rate is not a marketing authorization. If you are planning to move CCC loan grain, contact the county office staff for additional information.

## NOMINATIONS FOR COMMITTEE ELECTION OPEN JUNE 15

From June 15 through August 1, farmers in LLA #3 can nominate eligible peers as candidates for election to the Caldwell County Farm Service Agency county committee. This includes the townships of Breckenridge, Fairview, Daviess, and Lincoln. This is an important time for the community because county committee members make decisions that have significant effects on you and the area's agricultural sector as a whole. For example, committee members make decisions on applications for federal farm program and disaster payments. Committee members play a vital role by helping local farmers weather tough financial times and natural disasters. County committee members make many other important decisions that affect local farmers. Talk to a county committee member or the CED for details on the types of decisions county committee members make.

To hold office as a county committee member, a person must meet basic eligibility requirements. Contact the county office staff or visit <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/publications/elections> and click on the 'News & Events' tab and then click on "County Committee elections" under 'Related Topics' for details about candidate eligibility. Nomination forms can be obtained at the county office or online at the above address. Remember, the nomination period runs June 15 through August 1. Voting takes place in the fall. Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters by November 2<sup>nd</sup>. December 3<sup>rd</sup> is the last day to return voted ballots to the county office. Newly elected committee members and alternates take office January 1, 2008.

**MAKE A DIFFERENCE--- NOMINATE AND VOTE!!!**

## Acreage Reporting

Acreage reporting time is just around the corner. Please remember that filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can 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.

Acreage reports are required if you want to be eligible for Farm Service Agency programs. On crops other than NAP (Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program) crops, acreage reports are to be certified by June 30 for small grains and July 31 for all other crops.

Acreage reports on crops for which NAP assistance may be paid are due in the county office by the earlier of June 30 for small grain and July 31 for all other crops, or 15 calendar days before the onset of harvest or grazing of the specific crop acreage being reported.

## Rural Youth Loans

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA) makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to establish and operate income producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be initiated, developed and carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organization or with a vocational teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and operated with the assistance of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. Contact your local FSA office for more details.

Dates to Remember	
June 15	Nominations Accepted for County Committee Election
June 30	Deadline to Report Wheat & Oats
July 31	Deadline to Report CRP, corn, soybeans, hay, pasture, etc.
Aug 1	Deadline to Make Nominations for Committee Election
Aug 3	DCP Signup Deadline
Continuous	Continuous Conservation Reserve Program
Continuous	Farm Storage Facility Loans

## **Weather Men and Women Wanted**

Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network (CoCoRaHS) is a grassroots volunteer network of backyard weather observers of all ages and backgrounds working together to measure and map precipitation (rain, hail and snow) in their local communities. By using low-cost measurement tools, stressing training and education, and utilizing an interactive Web-site, they provide data for natural resource, education and research applications. The only requirements to join are an enthusiasm for watching and reporting weather conditions and a desire to learn more about how weather can affect and impact our lives.

The information is used by the National Weather Service, other meteorologists, hydrologists, emergency managers, city utilities (water supply, water conservation, storm water), insurance adjusters, USDA, engineers, mosquito control, ranchers, farmers, outdoor and recreation interests, teachers, students, and neighbors in the community.

CoCoRaHS network originated with the Colorado Climate Center at Colorado State University in 1998. It is currently operating in twelve states: Colorado, the District of Columbia, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia and Wyoming. It has expanded rapidly with over 2,500 sites. Nevada, Wisconsin and Tennessee will be added in 2007.

The National Science Foundation is a major sponsor of CoCoRaHS. If you are interested in participating just check out their web site: <http://www.cocorahs.org/>

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