

ELLSWORTH COUNTY FSA NEWS

January/February 2010

Ellsworth County FSA Office

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www.fsa.usda.gov/ks

*The Committee meets the 1st Wednesday of each month
8:00 a.m.*

Office Staff

Michael Martin

Carmen Homeier

Joan Weinhold

Alice Soukup

Linda Davis

Hours: Monday - Friday, 7:00 am - 4:30 pm

County Committee Members

Frank Toman, Chairperson
Dan Johnson, Vice Chairperson
Lucas Janzen, Member
Karen Grothusen, Advisor

2009 County Committee Election Results

The 2009 FSA County Committee (COC) Election results are in. Lucas Janzen was re-elected to serve his second three-year term by receiving 63 votes. The 2009 election covered Local Administrative Area (LAA) #2. LAA #2 includes the following townships: Garfield (14-7), Mulberry (14-6), Ellsworth (15-8), Clear Creek (15-7), Carneiro (15-6), West Empire (16-7), East Empire (16-6), Trivoli (17-7), and Langley (17-6). FSA thanks those voters who cast their ballot to participate in the 2009 COC election.

2009 and 2010 AGI Eligibility

Compliance with FSA's Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) provisions changed with the passage of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill). A majority of Ellsworth County FSA participants have certified on form CCC-926 that they are compliant with the AGI provisions for 2009. Some producers have already filed the form for 2010 as well.

Recently, FSA and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) have finalized a data-sharing process for average AGI compliance and verification. IRS will report the results of compliance to FSA. In order for IRS to share information with FSA, consent must be given by the USDA program participant to do so.

Two new forms have been created which will allow IRS to share compliance information with FSA. Form CCC-927 will authorize IRS to share information regarding an individual and form CCC-928 will authorize IRS to share information regarding legal entities. Legal entities will need to complete the form down to fourth level members. Both forms are available at the local FSA office and will also be provided to producers through a FSA newsletter published by the FSA Kansas State Office.

The forms must be completed and signed and then returned to IRS. **Again, the forms are to be returned to IRS, NOT the local FSA office.** These forms will not be accepted at the FSA office. In some instances, both forms may need completed if you receive benefits under your social security number as an individual and receive benefits under an employer identification number through a legal entity.

Completing either form consists of filling in the name and address, tax identification number, checking the applicable box for either 2009 and/or 2010 AGI data sharing, and signing the form. Most program participants in Ellsworth County would need to check both boxes as 2009 payments have already been received and the participant will plan to participate and receive 2010 program payments.

The deadline to submit the form(s) to IRS is June 15, 2010. The form(s) must be received by IRS no later than

AGI eligibility continued...

60 calendar days after the form is signed and dated. Failure to provide the consent form to IRS will result in program participants being ineligible to participate in USDA programs. This would result in participants being ineligible for current year benefits and also require program payment refunds for 2009 payments already received.

FSA will not be viewing a program participant's tax return information. Rather, IRS will report results to FSA as either "participant appears to meet all average AGI limitations" or "participant appears to not meet all average AGI limitations". If the participant appears to not meet the AGI limitations, further review may be necessary.

Changes to your farming operation

Producers are reminded that if any changes occur to their farming operation, they should notify FSA immediately. Producers are required to file a CCC-902, Farm Operating Plan, to be determined eligible to participate in many FSA programs. This is a continuous plan and annual review is necessary but a new form is not required unless changes to the farming operation would result in the need for a new determination.

Attention Women: Special Event planned for you

The Ellsworth County Farm Service Agency, K-State Research and Extension, and the Ellsworth County Conservation District have teamed up to promote outreach to the local Women in Agriculture in Ellsworth County. This meeting is for women only, sorry guys you cannot attend. Please encourage your wives, mothers, daughters, sisters, or aunts to attend.

A meeting is planned for Thursday, February 18, 2010. The meeting will be held at the Ellsworth Golf Course Meeting room. Registration begins at 5:00 pm, a light meal at 5:30 and the meeting will start at 6:00 pm.

The meeting will cover important issues that today's farm families and women in agriculture need to be aware of. Two guest speakers will present topics relevant to today's women in agriculture.

Marylyn Bell, "Tips from the Trenches". Marylyn owns and manages a farm near Lincoln, KS. She will share her knowledge and experiences of what she needed to know when she suddenly was faced with becoming a farm manager.

Duane Hund, "Farm Transitions". Duane is the Farm Analyst Program Coordinator for K-State Research and Extension. Duane will outline considerations in the transition of a farm from one generation to the next.

SURE Sign-up is underway

Sign-up for the Supplemental Revenue Assistance (SURE) program is underway. Sign-up started on January 4, 2010 and there is not an established deadline at this time. The sign-up is for **2008 crop year** benefits under the SURE program. SURE is intended to provide crop disaster assistance payments to eligible producers on farms that incurred significant production or quality losses due to natural disaster conditions.

A "farm" for SURE purposes, refers to all acreage in all counties nationwide that is planted or intended to be planted to crops for commercial use, except for grazing.

For qualifying producers, SURE provides assistance in the amount of 60 percent of the difference between the SURE farm guarantee and total farm revenue. The farm guarantee is based on the amount of crop insurance and Non-insured Assistance Program (NAP) coverage on the farm. Total farm revenue takes into account the actual value of production on the farm as well as insurance indemnities and certain farm program payments.

To be eligible for SURE, producers must have first suffered at least a 10 percent production loss on a crop of economic significance. In addition, producers must have purchased crop insurance and/or NAP coverage for all economically significant crops. Producers considered socially disadvantaged, a beginning farmer or rancher, or a limited resource producer, may be eligible for SURE without insurance or NAP coverage. Further, a producer must have either: (1) farming interest physically located in a county that was a Secretarial-declared primary disaster county or contiguous county; or (2) actual production on the "farm" is less than 50 percent of the normal production due to a natural disaster. For 2008, Ellsworth County was a secretarial-declared primary disaster county.

If Ellsworth County producers believe they may qualify for 2008 SURE crop disaster benefits, they must visit the Ellsworth County FSA office to obtain more information and file an application. More information about the new SURE program can also be found on the FSA website: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/sure>.

Acreage certification

Producers must report acreages by applicable deadlines to maintain eligibility for most FSA programs. All cropland on the farm must be certified on FSA-578 to remain eligible. All farmland, including hay and grazing land must be certified to remain eligible for disaster programs. Small grain certification deadline is **June 1, 2010**. This includes oats, barley, wheat, and triticale.

2010 DCP and ACRE Program Sign-up deadline

The 2010 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) and Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) program sign-up deadline is **June 1, 2010**. There are no late filed provisions for DCP or ACRE. Visit the office or call today for more information or to sign up.

Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) Program

Numerous changes were included in the 2008 Farm Bill regarding the FSFL program. Eligible commodities under the new law include hay, renewable biomass, and various fruits and vegetables. FSFL maximum loan amount was increased from \$100,000 to \$500,000. Loan terms may be extended from seven years up to ten or twelve years, depending on the loan principal amount borrowed.

The loan application fee has increased to \$100 per borrower on FSFL. This fee is non-refundable. Multi-peril crop insurance or Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) coverage is required on all commodities stored in the FSFL-funded facility. For more detailed information regarding FSFL changes contact the Ellsworth County FSA office.

Foreign Landowners

Foreign investors who buy, sell or hold a direct or indirect interest in agricultural lands in the U.S. are required under the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act to report their holdings and transactions to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture through the Farm Service Agency. Transactions must be reported within 90 days of the date of the sale. Failure to file an accurate or timely report can result in a penalty with fines up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the agricultural land.

2009-Crop Year Commodity Loans

The final dates to request marketing assistance loans (MAL) or Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP) for the 2009 Crop year are as follows:

- The deadline to request MALs or LDPs (if applicable) for 2009 Wool, Mohair, and Unshorn Pelts is **February 1, 2010**.
- The deadline to request MALs or LDPs (if applicable) for 2009 small grains, including wheat, oats, barley, and also honey, is **March 31, 2010**.
- The deadline to request MALs or LDPs (if applicable) for 2009 feed grains and oilseeds, including grain sorghum (milo), corn, soybeans, and sunflowers, is **June 1, 2010**.

If loans are disbursed jointly, a check will be issued from Kansas City. Remember, now that payments are sent from Kansas City, checks can take 10 to 14 days before you receive the money

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