

ELLSWORTH COUNTY FSA NEWS
November/December 2009

Ellsworth County FSA Office

402 W 15th St., Suite 2
Ellsworth, KS 67439-1623
Phone: (785) 472-3161
Fax: (785) 472-5248



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

2010 DCP Signup underway

Enrollment for the 2010 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) has begun and will continue through June 1, 2010. Producers can visit their local FSA office to complete their 2010 DCP contract.

USDA computes DCP Program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2010, eligible producers may request to receive advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment. USDA will issue advance direct payments beginning Dec. 1, 2009. Counter-cyclical payment rates vary depending on market prices.

Counter-cyclical payments are issued only when the effective price for a commodity is below its target price. The effective price is the higher of the national average market price received during the 12-month marketing year for each covered commodity and the national average loan rate for a marketing assistance loan for the covered commodity.

ACRE Option

The optional ACRE Program provides a safety net based on state revenue losses and acts in place of the price-based safety net of counter-cyclical payments under DCP.

A farm's payment is based on a revenue guarantee calculated using a 5-year average state yield and the most recent 2-year national price for each eligible commodity. For 2010, the 2-year price average will be based on the 2008 and 2009 crop years.

An ACRE payment is issued when both the state and the farm have incurred a revenue loss. The payment is based on 83.3 percent (85 percent in 2012) of the farm's planted acres times the difference between the State ACRE guarantee and the state revenue times the ratio of the farm's yield divided by the state expected yield. The total number of planted acres for which a producer may receive ACRE payments may not exceed the total base on the farm. In exchange for participating in ACRE, in addition to not receiving counter-cyclical payments, a farm's direct payment is reduced by 20 percent, and marketing assistance loan rates are reduced by 30 percent.

The decision to enroll in the ACRE Program is irrevocable. The owner of the farm and all producers on the farm must agree to enroll in ACRE. Once enrolled, the farm shall be enrolled for that initial crop year and will remain in ACRE through the 2012 crop year.

The June 1, 2010, deadline is mandatory for all participants. USDA will not accept any late-filed applications.

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 **May 31, 2010**. If you fail to timely certify your small grains, you may late-file your certification for a fee of at least \$46 per farm.

County Committee Elections

Just a reminder: Be watching your mailbox for your official county office committee election ballot. Ballots were mailed to all eligible voters, in local administrative area number 2, starting on November 6, 2009. If, for some reason, you did not receive a ballot, feel free to notify the county FSA office. Completed and signed ballots are due back in the county office by the close of business on December 7, 2009.

Crop Reporting for 2008 SURE purposes

Because of the delay in announcing the provisions of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, producers enrolling in the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) are reminded that 2008 crop reports are required for SURE participation. This includes crops planted on cropland and/or non-cropland, including native pasture or improved grass that will be hayed.

Physical evidence of the crop in the field is not required for Farm Service Agency (FSA) to accept late-filed 2008 acreage reports. However, evidence of existence or disposition, is required.

The following requirements for 2008 SURE include:

- producers **must** report all crops, in all counties, in which they have an interest
- late-filed fees shall be waived for late-filed 2008 acreage reports and physical evidence in the field is not required
- if the actual use of a crop is different from the intended use reported, the producer may report the final use to the County Office; however, the intended use shall **not** be changed.

The provisions noted are for 2008 only. For 2009 and 2010, normal acreage reporting requirements will be applied.

Special Accommodations

Special accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, contact the FSA office - Phone: 785-472-3161, ext. 2.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs 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 USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP)

There is a website which will allow producers and the public the ability to access aerial imagery and other tools that may fit their needs. The website can be accessed at <http://gis.apfo.usda.gov/naipcoverage/>

After accessing the site, click the "Help" link located in the upper right hand corner of the web site to learn more about the site and instruction on how to use the site.

2009 Disaster Designation and emergency loans

Rice County, Kansas was designated a natural disaster area because of losses caused by high winds and hail that occurred from July 17 through September 3, 2009. In addition to Rice County, Barton, Ellsworth, McPherson, and Reno are contiguous counties and producers in those counties are eligible for low interest emergency loans from FSA, provided eligibility requirements are met. Producers have eight months from November 6, 2009, to apply for the loans to help cover their losses.

2009 Program Payments

The 2009 final Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) and the 2009 Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) annual rental payment process have raised a lot of producer questions and inquiries to the county office. This year, the program payment process was handled through the regional Kansas City office. Software problems have delayed some payments while others were paid in a timely fashion.

Several questions were raised about reductions being withheld on the producer transaction statements. For the Fiscal Year 2009 payment process, the reduction was most likely the original advance payment you received under the DCP program or a haying/grazing reduction if you hayed or grazed your CRP acres in 2009.

Producers should ensure the reduction totals add up to the total amount they received in advance payments or the amount that was to be withheld from their 2009 CRP annual rental payment for managed hay/graze activities. If producers have questions or feel they haven't received all their program payment dollars for 2009, they should contact the county office.

Selling Land

If you're planning to sell farmland, there may be some program consequences you should be aware of. For example, if you're planning to sell land that's enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program, the buyer must agree to continue the enrollment. If the buyer doesn't want to continue the CRP contract, you might have to refund all of the payments you've received to date.

Reviewing program implications with your local Farm Service Agency staff before completing a sale of farmland is always a prudent precaution.

Rural Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency makes loans to rural youths to establish and operate income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5000.

Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

- Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) or a legal resident alien
- Be 10 years to 20 years of age
- Comply with FSA's general eligibility requirements
- Reside in a rural area, city or town with a population of 50,000 or fewer people
- Be unable to get a loan from other sources
- Conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work as outlined above
- Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor. The project supervisor must recommend the project and the loan, along with providing adequate supervision.

Stop by the county office for help preparing and processing the application forms.

Changing Banks

Almost all Farm Service Agency payments are made electronically using Direct Deposit. This innovation has cut down on the number of missing and late payments and reduced the time required to move funds. It has been calculated that having a problem with a payment is 20 times greater with checks than with Direct Deposit. Another benefit is that Direct Deposit to your account can be made within 48 hours.

To keep the system running smoothly, it's critical to keep the county office staff up to date on changes you might make in your financial institutions.

If you have changed accounts or institutions that might affect the direct deposit of your FSA payments, contact the FSA county office so we can update our files to insure continued uninterrupted service.



Have a safe & Happy Holiday season!