



Allen County FSA Office
202 W Miller Road
Iola, KS 66749
Phone: (620) 365-2901

Fax: (620) 365-5785

County Committee Members

Gary Coltrane, Chairperson
David Bedenbender, Vice Chairperson
Sandra Murrow, Member

The Committee meets the 2nd Thursday of each month

Office Staff: Doug Peine, CED
Lindsey Hammond, PT
Marthena Spainhoward, PT
Jandy Wiltse, PT

Hours: Monday- Friday
8:00 am to 4:30 pm

MAY 2010

DCP / ACRE Deadline is Approaching

JUNE 1, 2010, is the final day to return **ALL** signatures on the 2010 DCP or ACRE contracts. During the sign-up process farm operators were given the responsibility to acquire the necessary landowner signatures. We have several contracts with missing signatures, so operators need to conduct some follow-up activities. There are **NO** late file provisions. If all required signatures are not on file on June 1st, no one on the farm will receive payment for 2010.

We have recently mailed information to or attempted to contact those that have not initiated a DCP or ACRE contract for 2010. If you received information or received a phone message, please contact our office **IMMEDIATELY** or return the applicable documents by June 1, 2010.

If you have been waiting for a farm reconstitution to be completed, so you can enroll your farm into DCP or ACRE, please watch your mail for your notification of completion. All parties have 30 days from the notification to timely enroll reconstituted farm into DCP or ACRE for 2010.

Please contact our office **IMMEDIATELY** for additional information concerning the 2010 DCP/ACRE deadline.

Adjusted Gross Income and IRS Disclosure

USDA has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Internal Revenue Service to establish an electronic information exchange process for verifying compliance with the adjusted gross income (AGI) provisions for farm programs. Written consent will be required from each producer or payment recipient for the tax review process. No actual tax data will be included in the report that IRS sends to FSA.

The agreement ensures that payments are not issued to producers whose AGI exceeds certain limits. The limits set in the 2008 Farm Bill are \$500,000 nonfarm average AGI for commodity and disaster programs; \$750,000 farm average AGI for direct payments; and \$1 million nonfarm average AGI for conservation programs.

Participants in CCC programs subject to average AGI rules must submit form CCC-927 (Individual) and/or CCC-928 (Legal Entity) to the Internal Revenue Service by June 15 to avoid interruption of program benefits. Ensure that the form is completed correctly and that the name entered on the form is how you file your taxes. Example: If you farm under a Trust, but file your taxes under your individual name, then you should record your individual name on the form (not the Trust). If all fields are not completed correctly, IRS will reject the form. These forms may be obtained from local FSA and NRCS offices.

Reporting Acreage

Please remember that filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, will 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.

All planted acres of small grains such as wheat, oats, barley, triticale, rye, etc. must be reported by **May 31, 2010**. If you have already enrolled in DCP or ACRE and you decide to plant some oats, you will need to come back to report those acres by May 31st. **August 2, 2010**, is the final date to report CRP, corn, grain sorghum, soybeans, sunflowers and grass crops.

Farm Reconstitutions

At FSA, 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. If an owner or operator can not agree about program participation, like in the case of the new ACRE program, then producers should inquire about a reconstitution of the farm at the local FSA office.

The reconstitution—or recon—is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation.

Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by **August 2, 2010**, for farms enrolled in specific programs.

2008 Disaster Sign-up Underway

Crop producers in Allen County and those counties contiguous may qualify for disaster benefits under the 2008 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE). For a producer to be eligible for SURE, **ALL** mechanically harvested crops on your farm **MUST** be covered by an insurance policy. The "farm" definition under SURE is the sum of **all** crop acreage in **all** counties planted (or intended) for harvest and sale, or on farm livestock feeding, including native grassland intended for hay. Insurance must have been purchased for all crops on your "farm" that are of economic significance. Economic significance is defined as any crop that contributed, or is expected to contribute 5% or more of the total expected value of all crops grown by the producer.

In order to receive payments, the farm must suffer at least a 10% production loss on at least one crop of economic significance. The sign up period began January 4, 2010 and no end date has been announced.

If you feel you meet the eligibility requirements noted above, please contact our office **IMMEDIATELY**. We will be able to download your crop insurance information and data load your application. Once complete we will contact you to review and sign.

Farm Loan Programs

The Farm Service Agency is committed to providing family farmers with loans to meet their farm credit needs. If you are having trouble getting the credit you need for your farm, or regularly borrow from FSA, direct and guaranteed loans are currently available.

Ask your lender about an FSA loan guarantee if you've had a setback and your lender is reluctant to extend or renew your loan.

Farm ownership loans or farm operating loans may be obtained as direct loans for a maximum of up to \$300,000. Guaranteed loans can reach a maximum indebtedness of \$1,112,000. Producers are encouraged to apply early so that a loan can be processed and funded in a timely manner.

FSA employees will help you complete the necessary application and other forms, and help you understand what information is required, where to find it or who to contact to get it. Let FSA be your Lender of First Opportunity!

Beginning and Limited Resource Loans

FSA has a program to assist beginning farmers and or members of socially disadvantaged groups to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- does not own acreage in excess of 30 percent of the county's median farm size.

Each member of an entity must meet the eligibility requirements. Loan approval is not guaranteed.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center, 620-724-6227, Ext 229. You may also visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

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2010 FSA County Committee Elections

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to all farmers and ranchers, whether beginning or long-established, with large or small operations. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees (COC) are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

COC members are a critical component of FSA operations. The intent is to have the COC reflect the makeup of the producers and to represent all constituents. This means wherever possible, minorities, women or lower income producers need to be on the committee to speak for these underrepresented groups.

County committees provide local input on:

- Commodity price support loans and payments
- Conservation programs
- Incentive, indemnity and disaster payments for some commodities
- Emergency programs
- Payment eligibility

County committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws. COC members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions.

This year Allen County will hold an election in LAA #2, which is located in the southwest part of the county. It includes the Logan, Humboldt, Salem, and Cottage Grove townships.

Election Period

June 15, 2010 – The nomination period begins. Request nomination forms from the local USDA Service Center or obtain online at: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/fsa0669a_commiteeefctform.pdf

Aug. 2, 2010 - Last day to file nomination forms (FSA-669A) at the local USDA Service Center

Nov. 5, 2010 - Ballots mailed to eligible voters

Dec. 6, 2010 - Last day to return voted ballots to the USDA Service Center

Jan. 1, 2010 - Newly elected county committee members take office

Who Can Hold Office

To hold office as a county committee member, a person must meet the basic eligibility criteria.

- Participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA
- Be eligible to vote in a county committee election
- Reside in the LAA in which the person is a candidate

Not have been:

- Removed or disqualified from the office of county committee member, alternate or employee
- Removed for cause from any public office or have been convicted of fraud, larceny, embezzlement or any other felony
- Dishonorably discharged from any branch of the armed services.

For more information about county committee elections, contact the county office staff.

Nominations

To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign nomination form FSA-669A. The form includes a statement that the nominee agrees to serve if elected. This form is available at USDA Service Centers and online at:

http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/fsa0669a_commiteeefctform.pdf

Nomination forms for the 2010 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on Aug. 2, 2010.

Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in an FSA program may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee. Individuals may nominate themselves or others as a candidate. Additionally, organizations representing minority and women farmers or ranchers may nominate candidates. Nomination forms are filed for the county committee of the office that administers a producer's farm records.

Who Can Vote

Agricultural producers of legal voting age may be eligible to vote if they participate or cooperate in any FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm may also be eligible to vote. More information about voting eligibility requirements can be found in the FSA fact sheet titled "FSA County Committee Election - Eligibility to Vote and Hold Office as a County Committee Member." Producers may contact their local USDA Service Center for more information.

CRP Reminders

CRP Maintenance - CRP participants are reminded that noxious weeds MUST be controlled on contract acres. Trees on CRP can result in a compliance violation if they exceed the height of the grass and exceed a 3% canopy of the area. Please remember it is your responsibility to periodically inspect your CRP acres to ensure you stay in compliance with the provisions of your contract.

CRP Seeding Date: If your land was accepted in a recent continuous sign-up or if you received a one year extension resulting from the wet conditions in 2009, please remember the requirement to complete your practice timely. May 15th is the final seeding date for native grass. You will need to ensure you purchase the appropriate seed mixture and begin making arrangements for drilling. Once your grass is seeded, please remember to submit all of your bills to our office as well as the seed tags to NRCS. We will have some cost share forms for you to sign after completion. If you have any questions about completing CRP practices, contact our office or NRCS.

General CRP Sign-up Coming! We have been informed that a general CRP sign up will be conducted in 2010. General CRP sign ups allow eligible whole fields to be offered or reoffered for acceptance at the national level. If you have an interest in offering new land or if you have CRP that has recently or will expire in 2010, stay in touch for the sign up details.

Commodity Loans and LDPs

June 1 is the final date to request marketing assistance loans or loan deficiency payments for 2009 feed grains, oilseeds, and cotton.