

August 2007

Fallon County FSA Office
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County Committee Members

Brian Rustad, Chair
Dave Hayden, Vice Chair
Robert Wenz, Regular Members
Maralee Burdick, Min. Advisor

FSA Office Personnel

Maria L. Braun, CED - Ext. 102
Kay Varner, PT - Ext. 104
Sonja Wiseman, PT - Ext. 100
Sharon Gookin, Temp. – Ext. 105
Ray Allerdings, Field - Ext. 108
Robin Markuson – Farm Loan
Officer (406) 775-6359 Ext. 110

Dates to Remember:

August 1: Reconstitution deadline
for 2007 crop year

August 1: Deadline to submit
nomination for LAA 2 COC member

August 3: Deadline for DCP
Contracts

August 4 – Sept. 28: DCP Late
filed fee of \$100 will be assessed

August 16 – 19: Fallon County
Fair, Baker, Montana

August 22nd – 23rd: Personnel
attending training meeting in
Glendive

September 3: Office Closed for
Labor Day

September 24-27: Tribal Outreach
Forum, Gran Tree Inn, Bozeman

September 30: Deadline for 2007
Multi-Peril Fall Seeded, Alfalfa
Forages and GRP grazing. **See
your MPCI agent for more
information.**

October 2 and 3: Women
Stepping Forward for Agriculture
Symposium, Dillon, MT

October 9: County office begins
issuing CRP and final DCP
payments

November 2: COC ballots will be
mailed to LAA 2 eligible voters

FALLON FSA NEWS

No Final 2006 Counter-cyclical Payments for Wheat, Barley and Oats

FSA will not issue final 2006-crop counter-cyclical payments to farmers enrolled in the Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program (DCP) for wheat, barley and oats. The decision was made due to the fact that prices for these commodities have averaged well above levels that trigger counter-cyclical payments.

Counter-cyclical payments are made at the end of an eligible crop's 12-month marketing year. The 2002 Farm Bill provides for the availability of two partial counter-cyclical payments. USDA did not issue a first or second partial payment for the 2006 crop of wheat, barley or oats due to strong markets.

The counter-cyclical payment rate is the amount by which the "target price" of each commodity, specified by the 2002 Farm Bill, exceeds its effective price. The effective price equals the direct payment rate plus the higher of either: 1) the national average market price received by producers during the marketing year; or 2) the national average loan rate for the commodity.

For each commodity, the counter-cyclical payment for each crop year equals 85 percent of the farm's base acreage times the farm's counter-cyclical payment yield times the counter-cyclical payment rate.

Sixth Annual Women Stepping Forward For Agriculture Symposium

The sixth annual Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Symposium will be held October 2 and 3, 2007 at the Beaver Head Golf Course in Dillon, Montana.

The event is hosted by USDA, in conjunction with the Montana Agri-Women, Montana Farm Bureau Women, Women Involved in Farm Economics (WIFE) and the Montana Cattlewomen.

Please mark these dates on your calendar. Further information on registration costs and a detailed agenda is available on the Montana FSA website at:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt> or at the FSA office.



Merit Heifer Program Offered at NILE

The NILE is providing youth the opportunity to become involved in the beef industry by awarding heifer calves to project participants. Any youth aged 13-17 who is a member of 4-H or FFA is eligible to enter.

Each program participant will own their calf jointly with NILE until the completion of the program, at which time NILE officials will sign off and the participant will take full ownership of the heifer and her off-spring. During the program duration, participants are responsible for raising the heifer, arranging for breeding, completing the record keeping procedure and bringing the animal to the 2007 NILE stock show as a bred replacement heifer. The program is completed after the heifer is determined bred, all record keeping has been completed and the heifer has been shown at the 2007 NILE.

Applicants will be chosen on their commitment to agriculture, future goals, financial need and the ability to raise the animal in a proper setting.

Applications may be obtained at <http://www.meritheifer.com> or <http://www.thenile.org> or by calling 406/256-2495.

Beginning, Small and Limited Resource Farmers: Do You Require Financial Assistance to Fund Conservation Program Initiatives?

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and FSA have worked cooperatively to make USDA programs more available and readily accessible to beginning, small, and limited resource producers.

As many producers move from the initial contract development of especially the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), many face the inability to acquire the initial capital investment for their cost-share portion needed for contract implementation. Even with increased cost-share rates, the challenge of providing the up-front share may present problems to full contract implementation.

USDA provides some options. FSA has several loan programs available that may help with the upfront costs associated with program implementation. Use of FSA loan programs, in conjunction with conservation programs, has the potential to improve the effectiveness of both NRCS and FSA programs. FSA loans can be used for various farm purposes such as farm improvements, which would cover conservation projects and practices, and payment of costs associated with land and water development for conservation use purposes. Loan funds may be used to finance the producer's share of the project cost, and also as interim financing on the Federal cost-share portion paid upon completion of the conservation program project.

Contact the FSA or NRCS office for options available and further information on how FSA loans can assist with completing conservation projects.

Beneficial Interest

For a producer to have Beneficial Interest in a commodity, the producer must have had ownership and control of the commodity at the time the producer requests a Loan Deficiency Payment (LDP); or for Marketing Assistance Loans (MAL's), from the time of planting through the maturity of the loan or the date of repayment, whichever is earlier. Beneficial interest is retained in the commodity if all of the following remain with the producer:

- Control of the commodity, the commodity must be within their possession;
- Risk of loss;
- Title to the commodity.

For LDP's, beneficial interest must be retained in the commodity from the time of planting through the date form CCC-633EZ, page 1 is filed. For loans, beneficial interest must be retained in the commodity from the time of planting through the date the loan is redeemed or the crop is sold. Once beneficial interest in the commodity is lost, the commodity remains ineligible for a loan or an LDP even if the producer regains control, risk of loss, and title.

Inventory Property Sale to Beginning Farmers and Ranchers

FSA advertises any farm property they have acquired within 15 days of acquisition. Eligible beginning farmers and ranchers are given first priority to purchase these properties at the appraised market value for the first 75 days after acquisition. If more than one eligible beginning farmer or rancher offers to purchase the property, the buyer is selected randomly.

Farm Loans for Minority Groups

FSA can make and guarantee loans to groups considered as minorities under USDA definition. These groups include women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

Funds can be used to buy and operate family-sized farms and ranches. Contact the FSA office for more information. Robin Markuson out of the Carter County FSA office is the loan officer responsible for Fallon County.

Fire Management on CRP

With the hot, dry weather Montana faces during July and August, the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) is reminding Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contract holders their responsibility for fire management on CRP acreage. Firebreaks can either be a strip of bare land or a vegetative cover that retards fire. Grazing is not allowed as an option to maintain firebreaks. Bare ground firebreaks shall be only allowed in high risk areas such as transportation corridors, rural communities, and adjacent farmsteads. If bare ground firebreaks are used, adequate erosion control treatments must be installed and maintained. Bare ground strips may serve as sites for the establishment of weeds. As required for the vegetative cover, weeds must also be controlled on bare ground strips. Lack of weed control measure could result in noncompliance of CRP provisions and assessment of payment reduction or termination of the affected acreage. It is the responsibility of the CRP contract holder to maintain the firebreaks. CRP contract holders must acquire a modification to their current CRP contract that includes fire management. Contact your local FSA office for further requirements and required fire management specifications. For information regarding other programs administered by FSA, logon to the Montana FSA website at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt> or by visiting your local USDA Service Center.

DCP Signature Deadline is September 28, 2007

Producers enrolled in the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) have until September 28th to provide all contract signatures for share acres and **late-filed fees**.

NOTE: A number of questions have been received regarding the restoration of DCP base acreage from CRP contracts expiring on September 30, 2007. Currently, the 2002 Farm Bill provides for restoration of lost base acres when a CRP contract expires. That provision ends 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.

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Managed Haying and Grazing on CRP

Managed haying and grazing is available after July 16th which is when the FSA State Committee established Primary Nesting Season ends. CRP participants must receive written notification from the FSA county committee before managed haying or grazing can begin. If you have performed either managed haying or grazing on CRP acres, you need to report the number of acres hayed or grazed to the FSA county office.

REMINDERS FOR PRODUCERS WITH 2007 NAP COVERAGE

A reminder that a Notice of Loss is required to be reported within 15 days of the disaster or within 15 days of when the producer knows that there is a loss. If you have not hayed your forage, or are doing something other than what the certified intent was with a crop, PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE IMMEDIATELY. If an appraisal needs to be completed on acreage that is not going to be harvested, it needs to be done during the harvest period, which is now. This does not have to be a paying loss, but a loss in the production. Also, do not forget to turn in a Notice of Loss to your Insurance Agent on your Multi-Peril covered crops due to a possible loss or for APH purposes.

An acreage report must be on file before a CCC-576, Notice of Loss can be accepted. The deadline to certify acres for 2007 was July 16th. Production evidence for the 2006 NAP crops must also have been submitted to our office by July 16, 2007. If you have any questions on the NAP program, please contact the FSA office.

2007 Tribal Outreach Forum

The USDA State FAC in cooperation with the Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), 1994 Land Grant Tribal Colleges and Universities, Tribal Governments and Tribal organizations from across Montana will host a Tribal Outreach Forum at the Gran Tree Inn, in Bozeman, MT September 24-27, 2007.

The conference registration fee is \$35 which will be waived for individual Tribal producers who attend. A limited amount of scholarship funds is available. If interested in applying for a scholarship, a registration form or an agenda, contact the FSA office for further details.

Fallon County FSA Office

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