

Hill County FSA Office
206 25th Ave W Ste 2
Havre MT 59501

County Committee Members
Clarence "Fritz" Keller, Chair
Richard Pollington, Vice
Chair
Mary Ruth St. Pierre
Dave Stevenson

FSA Office Personnel

| | |
|----------------|----------|
| Liane Albus | ext.100 |
| Clint Greytak | ext. 107 |
| Linell Pegar | ext. 101 |
| Rosalie Sather | ext. 105 |
| Lisa Toth | ext. 102 |
| Mike Zook | ext. 111 |

Dates to Remember:

February 16 – Holiday – Office Closed

February 27 – CDP Deadline

March 16 – NAP sales closing date for all crops except value loss crops

March 31 – Deadline for Price Support Loans

April 1 – Deadline to submit applications for building pulse crop base for countercyclical payments

April 15 – Deadline for some CRP management practices

May 1 – Livestock must be removed from NAP forage crops

June 1 – DCP sign-up deadline, as well as the ACRE sign-up deadline



Hill County FSA News

February 2009

County Committee Election Results

Hill County conducted the election for County Committee members on December 8th, 2008. The following are the results of the ballot tabulation;

LAA 4

| | | |
|----------------------|----|---------------------------|
| Mary Ruth St. Pierre | -- | elected as regular member |
| Robert W. LaSalle | -- | first alternate |
| Robert Myers | -- | second alternate |

LAA 3

| | | |
|--------------------|----|---------------------------|
| Richard Pollington | -- | elected as regular member |
| Shawn Wall | -- | first alternate |

LAA 1

| | | |
|----------------|----|---------------------------|
| Dave Stevenson | -- | elected as regular member |
| John Wendland | -- | first alternate |

At this time, we'd like to thank Diana Patrick for her many years of service on the County Committee. She will be missed.

Crop Disaster Program Deadline Announced

USDA has announced the sign-up for the Crop Disaster Program (CDP) will end February 27, 2009. The deadline date applies to both quantity and quality provisions of CDP.

The FSA-840 (Crop Disaster Program application) and all supporting documentation must be received in the FSA county office by the close of business on Feb. 27, 2009. Late filed applications will not be approved following the Feb. 27 deadline. Sign-up for the program began Oct. 15, 2007 for crop years 2005 – 2007.

2009 County Committee Determinations

The Hill County FSA Committee will have their regularly scheduled meeting on the second Wednesday of the month in the USDA Service Center located in Havre, Montana.

Additionally, they have instructed staff to hold a regular office day on the first Wednesday of the month at Stone Child College from 10:00 am until 4:30 pm. Office space will be provided by the National Tribal Development Association located in the Sitting Old Woman Building on the east edge of the campus.

DCP Sign-Up Announced

You may now make appointments to sign-up for the 2009 Direct and Counter cyclical Payment program. There are a few changes from previous years.

Advance payments of 22% will be made at your request; however, payment will only be made on 83.3% of your base acres – slightly down from previous years. You must still certify in a timely fashion, and not exceed your historical plantings of fruits and vegetables on base acres. Pulse crops, including chickpeas, dry peas and lentils will be added as covered commodities, and not subject to FAV. Maintenance of the acreage, and not allowing weeds, especially noxious weeds, to grow is still required.

All signatures are required on the contract, and you will need to document the leasing relationship on the property, even if it is an oral agreement. No late signatures will be accepted, and the deadline for signatures is June 1st, 2009.

Please call in and make your appointment; we anticipate because of the need for new payment eligibility forms and other items to be completed for all participants (including landowners), that it will take some time.

New Payment Eligibility Forms Must Be Filed

New Payment Eligibility forms, including those used to determine Adjusted Gross Income, have been received by the office. Before any payments can be issued for the 2009 year, they will have to be completed, and eligibility determinations made. Please plan on completing these forms when you make your appointment for DCP sign-up.

Also, new Power of Attorney forms are available. While we will honor those that were previously marked, "All current and future programs", the new forms also reference the NRCS, so you may wish to get a new one completed.

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to participate in FSA programs should contact Mike Zook at 206 25th Ave W Ste 2, Havre MT 59501, or by calling (406)265-6792, extension 111, or e-mailing him at mike.zook@mt.usda.gov

1099-G Mailed from Kansas City

During the last week of January, producers who have received payments from FSA should receive a CCC-1099-G from the Kansas City office. A CCC-1099-G is a report to the Internal Revenue Service about FSA payments made to you in calendar year 2008. The CCC-1099-G is a service to help participating producers report taxable income. It is not intended to replace the program participant's responsibility to report income to the IRS.

If you receive a CCC-1099-G, we recommend that you check the amounts shown with those in your records to see that the amounts are correct. Refunds will no longer be reported on the 1099-G, but will be available online from the FSA Financial Inquiries (FSA-FI) web-based database. Program participants with eAuthentication user ID's and passwords can access their refund information at FSA-FI and select "Inquiry Type 1099/Refund Reports". Refund amounts are displayed on the Producer's Year-to-Date Activity web page.

If you have a question concerning the 1099-G refund information, you may contact the county office for assistance locating the correct payment data. If you choose to visit the office, bring your CCC-1099-G with you.

Don't Lose Your FSA Payments!!!!

A number of situations have occurred where producers have had changes on their farm, and FSA hasn't been notified. If it comes to light later on, then the contract is terminated, and all payments are demanded back **from EVERYONE on the farm.**

FSA encourages producers to notify us of any changes to your farming operation including land ownership or lease changes, entity changes including members and shares, and who is authorized to sign documents for the operation or individuals.

Previous to signing up your farming operation, if there have been any changes (i.e. a landowner has died, converted to a living trust, or you have picked up or lost leases, etc.), it will be in your best interest to let us know and provide the necessary documentation, or it may extend the sign-up process.

Changes to FSA Payment Processing

FSA began a new payment processing system in the first part of December.

Through the new system, all payments made through direct deposit will be processed through the Federal Reserve Bank and will be received in the participants account within 2-3 days of processing. For participants without direct deposit who receive payment by check, the U.S. Treasury will issue the payment and delays up to possibly 7 days should be expected. Be aware of the delays when doing tax preparation for 2008 or 2009.

Year End Reviews

Producers that have a farm loan with FSA are reminded they must provide data for their Year-End Analysis (YEA) to their loan officer each year. Borrowers are urged to provide this information timely so that their files can be maintained. The office will contact you for the data you will need to assist us.

Milk Income Loss Contract Program Announced

The initial signup for the MILC program ended on **January 21, 2009**. There is an extended signup, however, that began on **January 22, 2009**. The extended signup will continue throughout the duration of the MILC program, ending on **September 30, 2012**.

CRP Maintenance and Management

Now is the time to review your Conservation Plan of Operation on your CRP contract to see if you have scheduled practices such as mowing, light tillage, prescribed burns etc., scheduled for this year. Some of them must be completed by April 15th, so please take the time to make the review now.

CRP Early Release

For CRP contracts that will mature this year, there are some early release provisions; contact the office if interested.

New CRP Program Announced

There is a new type of CRP allowed in Hill County that is called, "SAFE", or "State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement". It is designed to address local wildlife conservation needs by creating high priority state wildlife conservation objectives that restore vital habitat. The signup begins January 5th, 2009.

Hill County is one of fourteen counties that have been given 7,700 acres for the Prairie Pothole-Upland Game Bird Habitat Enhancement practice.

Continuous signups will automatically be accepted if all eligibility requirements are met. The practices will address wildlife habitat that can be enhanced through the restoration of eligible cropland. Individual practices for each SAFE were developed similar to CRP general signup practices.

Contracts are between 10-15 years. Cost-share is available at 50 percent with an additional signing incentive payment of \$10/acre/year and a practice incentive payment of 40 percent on the total cost of installing the practice.

Practices will be monitored and evaluated to show an improvement to the wildlife habitat.

SAFE allows producers to install practices that benefit high priority State wildlife conservation objectives through the use of targeted restoration of vital habitat.

For further information regarding eligibility criteria, contact your local Farm Service Agency office in any of the counties involved in SAFE.

Additional information is available on the Montana Farm Service Agency website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt>.

New Bases Can Be Built

We have been informed that April 1st is the deadline to submit requests to build base acreage because of your seeding history on pulse crops for the DCP program; while they do not receive a Direct payment, they may be eligible for a Countercyclical payment. If interested, contact the office.

Hill County FSA Office
206 25th Ave W Ste 2
Havre MT 59501

PRESORT STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BOZEMAN MT 59715
PERMIT #54

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Important Dates to Remember

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New Farm Bill Requirements – Items of Note

- All permanent disaster programs require that you certify all grazing acres; if you don't have these up to date with our office, including your BOR or BLM leases, you should do that as soon as possible so we can have the materials together when you need to certify them.
- Payment eligibility forms are now available; you may wish to review them prior to coming in to our office. If you would like blank copies, you can get them on-line. The new form numbers are CCC-902I for individuals, and CCC-902E for entities. The Adjusted Gross Income forms are CCC-926's.
- While the rules have changed for permanent disaster program eligibility (i.e. you do not need to carry pasture insurance or a grazing NAP policy if you only want to participate in the crop disaster program, better known as SURE), you still will need to carry at least NAP coverage on any of your crops that are of economic significance. The Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) sign-up deadline is March 16th, 2009.
- If you are again carrying NAP coverage on your permanent vegetative forage or grass seed stands, you must have livestock removed from it by May 1st, 2009 in order to remain eligible for compensation if a natural disaster affects you.
- Price Support loans are available until March 31st, they take longer to process, so we highly recommend your request is submitted by March 27th, 2009.