



United States Department of Agriculture Niobrara County Service Center

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September 2007 Edition

EMERGENCY CONSERVATION PROGRAM (ECP)

Niobrara County has been approved to implement the ECP program which may provide cost share to install emergency water needs for livestock, due to the severe drought conditions. If you are in need of livestock water due to drought related conditions contact our office. Signup will begin October 1 and run through October 20.

Eligible practices include constructing or deepening wells, pumps and pumping equipment including solar units, installing pipelines and tanks, developing springs or seeps and hauling water. Practices that provide water to cropland acres or to pastures that contain cropland acres that are not fenced out from the pasture acres are not eligible. Cost share for permanent practices is 50% and 75% for temporary measures.

We can not replace power sources on existing wells simply for the sake of changing to a different type. Example: windmill to submersible or solar. Exceptions to this rule must be justifiable and approved by the national office...

Hauling livestock water and providing facilities for livestock watering and storage are limited to measures:

1. Needed to permit livestock to graze range or pasture.
2. Which provide the minimum amount necessary to sustain the livestock.
3. Needed only when other sources of water for livestock are not available or cannot be developed.
4. In areas where there is adequate range or pasture residue for livestock to be served by the water hauled to that area at the time the water is hauled.
5. That contributes to better distribution of grazing.
6. On land which had adequate livestock water prior to the drought.
7. Not a normal water hauling practice for the producer in a specific area.
8. Further restrictions have been placed on this practice by the State FSA Committee.

This program is intended to provide cost share for practices that are too costly for producers to carry out themselves without federal assistance. Request for assistance of less than \$1000 will be reviewed on a case by case basis to determine need. This is not an entitlement program.

Requests for assistance will be accepted from October 1 to October 20, 2007. Practices started or completed 60 days before the approval date of August 22 (June 24) can still be eligible if an application is filed within the **first 15 days** of the signup period.

Even though the County has been approved there are currently zero funds available. Niobrara County has been placed on a list for an allocation should funds become available in the future. **Interested producers must make application before the October 20 deadline.** An on-site inspection will be performed before the county committee reviews the application. Those applications will then be acted on when funding is received. The producer has the option of waiting for funds before implementing projects or completing necessary projects and waiting for funding.

NAP Coverage

Producers with 2007 NAP coverage must remember to file a **“Notice of Loss” within 15 days** of when a loss is apparent, due to drought, hail, etc, to qualify for benefits: For low yield claims, such as drought, when you have not harvested or harvested only a portion of your acreage, you must file the notice of loss the earlier of: 15 calendar days after you have completed harvesting, 15 calendar days after the damaging weather, or 15 calendar days after the normal harvest date. That would make October 30, 2007 the last day to report your native or improved grass hay loss (if you did not cut any hay,) or native or improved grazing losses, to be eligible for a NAP payment.

Winter Wheat for grain that is irrigated or summer fallowed is the only fall seeded crop for which multi-peril or catastrophic crop insurance is available. Therefore, you may purchase NAP for any of your other fall seeded crops by the **DECEMBER 1, 2007**. NAP grass hay in both Niobrara and Sioux Counties and grass to graze in Sioux County purchase deadline is also December 1. There is a \$100 per crop administrative fee, not to exceed \$300 per producer per county. Coverage is based on 50% of yield and 55% of price.

Payments for 2007 Crop Disaster Program may depend on whether the applicant had purchased crop insurance or NAP for the applicable year.

Emergency Haying and Grazing

Niobrara County has made application for Emergency Haying and Grazing of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres. CRP producers will be notified if and when approval is given.

Farmer’s Choice of Administrative County

Until recently the County Administrative office for program participants was basically the county office in which the principal farm operator resided. Now a change in a farm’s administrative county may be permitted without completing a farm combination in the receiving county, if the producer documents that the changed administrative County Office is significantly more convenient. Changing an administrative County Office because of convenience is a **one time selection (for the current operator)** and **will not be** used to evade program rules.

Those who use the convenience method will still be able to vote for county committee candidates running for county committee in their original county’s Local Administrative Area, however they will not be permitted to be a candidate for that county’s committee.

A farm transfer can be initiated by the farm's operator or owner or the receiving or transferring county committee. All owners and operator must sign a FSA-179, **TRANSFER OF FARM RECORDS BETWEEN COUNTIES**.

Crop and Livestock Disaster Programs

USDA has announced signup dates for the Crop and Livestock Disaster Programs. At this writing we have not received any sign-up information or computer software. We anticipate beginning the Livestock Compensation Program on September 24, 2007. Applications will be taken by appointment only, so please call before coming to the office. Eligible livestock must be owned or cash leased for commercial use only and physically located in an eligible county on the beginning date of the applicable disaster. (January 1 of 2005 and 2006). Payments are based on the number of head of eligible livestock times the national payment rate of 61 percent of the cost for corn needed to maintain the specific livestock for 30 days, as determined by FSA.

Signup for the Quantity Loss portion of the Crop Disaster Program will begin October 15, 2007. Most of our Niobrara County producers will qualify for this program and must apply for both 2005 and 2006 if the crop was raised in both years, but will receive payment for only one of those years. Qualifying quantity losses must be in excess of 35 percent from natural disasters and related conditions. The payment rate is set at 42 percent of the established price. Assistance, together with any crop insurance or NAP payment received for the same crop and including the value of the crop production not lost, must not exceed 95 percent of the total value of the crop absent the disaster. More information may be found on the FSA Web site, <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>; click on Find FSA Fact Sheets and search under the topic Disaster Assistance, then Agricultural Assistance Act of 2007.

NIORARA CONSERVATION DISTRICT NOTES...

Wade's Honored by Game and Fish

Pat, JoAnn and Monte Wade were honored in Casper at the Game and Fish Hunting Expo, being named the landowners of the year for the Casper Region. They have been highly instrumental in promoting the Walk-in Program and aid the Game and Fish in testing game for CWD at the locker as well as managing for populations of mule and white tail deer, elk, antelope, turkey and many other non-game species.

Carbon Basics Workshop

Need some extra income for the ranch? Carbon Trading is the hot new item in Wyoming. The Niobrara Conservation District is hosting a workshop to help explain the carbon sequestration movement and aid you in understanding the application and trading requirements. The workshop will be on September 27th with the workshop being offered twice that day. Session One begins at 1:00 p.m. at the Niobrara County Fairgrounds and Session Two will be at 6:00 p.m. Please RSVP by the 24th to 334-2953.

World Water Day

World Water Day will be celebrated on October 18th. Last year every class in the LEMS participated in the event, over two hundred students. Throughout the world, folks sample their water for pH, dissolved oxygen, turbidity and log the results on the website. To be involved contact the office.

NRCS DEADLINE

October 1, 2007 is the deadline for EQIP signup. Livestock water, irrigation and other practices are eligible for cost share. Please note that this is a new date and contact NRCS for more information.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Niobrara County FSA Office
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Dates to Remember	
September 24	Start of Livestock Compensation Program
October 1	Deadline to submit EQIP application
September 27	Carbon Basics Workshop
October 1 to 20	Emergency Livestock Conservation Program Signup
October 8	Office closed for Columbus Day
October 15	Quantity Loss for Crop Disaster Program Start Date
October 18	World Water Day
December 1	Deadline for NAP coverage for perennial and fall seeded crops
December 3	Completed election ballots to be returned to County Office or postmarked by
December 10	LAA 3 election ballot count - 1:00pm

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