



United States Department of Agriculture

February 2008

Nodaway County News

Nodaway County Farm Service Agency

Nodaway County FSA

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Hours

Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

County Committee

Joyce Ecker, Chairperson
Larry Tobin, Vice Chair
Richard Fletchall, Member

Staff

Tim Dreier, CED
Charlotte Holeman, FLM
Tom Shelton, FLO
Marianne Adkins, PT
Teresa Blackford, PT
Marilyn Buhman, PT
Judy Fast, PT
Tammy Luke, PT
Re'nee Schrader, PT
Megan Schuman, Intern
Andrew Lance, FA
Eric Redden, FA

Issue Highlights

- Farm Bill Status
- Crop Disaster Program
- Livestock Comp. Program
- NAP Deadline
- ECP
- Foreign Buyers
- Digital Imagery
- COC Election Results
- Power of Attorney
- Reasonable Accommodations
- FSFL
- Direct Deposit
- Report Changes
- Farm Loans
- New Field Assistants

What a Year!

What a year we've seen weather wise in the region! Mother Nature has made sure to let us all now who the boss is, hasn't she? We saw record cold temperatures last April, floods in May, extreme heat and drought in July, more floods in August, a wet October, and for good measure an ice storm in December! Yet, we have persevered through it all. While the weather affected the crop yields some we were aided by record high prices at the elevator. The weather even brought on new programs here at the office, ECP, and we saw the end of the existing farm bill in September. Like I said, what a year! Here's hoping that 2008 will be more "stable" weather wise and that it will be prosperous for the producers of Nodaway County.

Tim Dreier, CED

The following articles will get you up to date on what is happening at your local FSA office. Please take a few moments to read through this newsletter to become informed on programs that may be applicable to you and your operation.

Farm Bill Status - Still Delayed

We have taken several inquiries about sign up for the annual program. Unfortunately, authority to hold an annual sign up for the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) expired with the old farm bill on September 30, 2007. It's unlikely to have a new sign-up before spring.

Recently, the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate passed their own versions of a farm bill. However, both the House and Senate versions are subject to a threatened Presidential veto. A conference committee is working on compromises that could be acceptable to all sides.

As soon as a bill is announced and the program provisions and sign-up dates become available, the office will provide the necessary information to you through this newsletter. Stay tuned!

Crop Disaster Program

Earlier this past year Congress passed an Appropriations Act that included a Crop Disaster Program (CDP) intended to provide benefits to farmers who suffered production losses because of a natural disaster occurring in 2005, 2006, or 2007. Sign-up for quantity losses is currently underway. A basic requirement for the program is that **producers must have obtained crop insurance on the applicable crop or coverage under the Noninsured Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the disaster year.**

One major change to the program is that crops planted in the spring of 2007 are now eligible.

Production loss must exceed 35% of the expected production of the insured unit. FSA will use crop insurance loss records obtained through the USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA) to determine eligibility. If insurance loss records are not available, the producer must provide verifiable and reliable records to substantiate the loss.

If a qualifying loss occurred in more than one year on the unit, the payment will be based on the year for which benefits are highest. More info can be found at: <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov>

2007 Eligible Year for Livestock Program

The Livestock Compensation Program (LCP) has now been extended to include the year 2007. To apply for 2007, Nodaway County producers need to provide the FSA Office with an inventory of their livestock numbers as of 4-1-07. Any livestock sold prior to 5-1-07 will need to be reported to the office as well. For 2006, producers must inventory their livestock numbers as of January 1st and report any sales made prior to May 1st of that year. As noted previously, producers can apply for all years, but will only receive payment on the year with the largest payment (this is normally the year that you had the largest number of livestock). Nodaway County has been approved for a 30% loss in 2006 and a 20% loss in 2007.

The following groups of livestock are eligible for LCP as long as they have been produced for commercial purposes as a part of the farming operation:

- Adult beef cows or bulls
- Non-adult beef cattle, 500 lbs. or more,
- Adult dairy cows or bulls,
- Non-adult dairy cattle, 500 lbs. or more,
- And goats, sheep, swine, elk, deer, and equine (confinement operations are not eligible).

A sign-up deadline for LCP has not yet been established.

NAP Application Deadline

March 15 is the deadline date for producers to apply for Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program, or NAP coverage. NAP is available for crops for which crop insurance is not available like double crop soybeans, oats, hay, and pasture. This program resembles crop insurance since it was designed to reduce financial losses resulting from weather related crop disasters. A loss of 50% must be experienced before a payment will be eligible. The application and service fee must be filed by the applicable closing date for each of the 2008 spring seeded NAP crops. To remain eligible for NAP, a producer must annually report the crop, including: type, variety, location, producer shares, date planted, and the intended use (fresh, processed, etc.). Once the crop is harvested the production must also be reported.

The application service fee is \$100 per crop per county or \$300 per producer per county. The fee cannot exceed a total of \$900 per producer with farming interest in multiple counties. Limited resource producers may request a waiver of service fees.

In the event of a crop failure caused by natural disaster, the producer needs to notify the local FSA office by completing a "Notice of Loss" (form CCC-576). The notice of loss must be executed within 15 days of the date the damage became apparent.

Emergency Conservation Programs (ECP)

The State Committee has mandated that producers who have made an application for cost-share assistance through the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) due to the damage caused by the heavy rains and flooding last spring must have the work completed by May 1, 2008, to be eligible for cost-share assistance.

If you are going to need a contractor to complete your work you may need to be contacting them now. Due to the poor weather and snow cover since crops were harvested the repair work has been delayed and it has also put the office behind in making the required field visits. Please be patient as we work to complete this task.

Please contact the office if you are ready to start a project and we have not made an inspection yet. As you complete the work, bring in the bills and report.

Foreign Buyers Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA. Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

Website for Digital Imagery

Landowners who have access to the internet may find the following site of interest. Producers can access 2004 digital imagery for their land by using the map room link at: <http://www.cares.missouri.edu/index.asp>

There will be no line work on the fields, but it is a good source of current photography. Producers can also access topographical maps, floodplain maps and measure distance and acreages.

Controlled Substance

Any person who is convicted under federal law of planting, producing, cultivating, harvesting, growing, or storing a controlled substance will be ineligible to participate and receive payments under USDA programs. Marijuana, opium poppies, and other drug producing plants are controlled substances.

County Committee Election Results

FSA County Committee (COC) elections were recently held and Larry Tobin was re-elected to the committee to represent Independence, Jackson, and Polk Townships. Also, the committee held the officer election and Joyce Ecker has been chosen to continue as the committee Chairperson. Larry Tobin will serve as the Vice-Chairperson and Richard Fletchall is the third member.

The COC determined that it will continue to hold normal meetings on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 1:00 p.m.

I want to say **THANK YOU** to everyone who participated in the County Committee election process, whether that was being a candidate or casting a ballot. It's only through all your efforts that the County Committee system works.

Spousal Signatures

Husbands and wives may, as individuals, sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) programs in which either has an interest. In most cases, this option is automatically available unless a request for exclusions is made to the county office staff by either spouse.

Power of Attorney

We have a power of attorney form available for those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the FSA office. This can be done by completing an FSA-211, Power of Attorney. The form is available at your local USDA Service Center or online at: <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov>

Forms obtained and completed outside the USDA Service Center office must be notarized. To find out more, call the office.

Faxed Signatures

Certain faxed signatures shall be accepted for all applicable program forms or other documents approved for faxed signatures, if all other requirements are met.

Reasonable Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If special accommodations are required, please call the FSA County Office staff, and we will be happy to make any arrangements that are necessary.

Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL)

Do you need more storage capacity for your farming operation? Check with your local FSA office to discuss the possibility of a Farm Storage Facility Loan. Now is the time to start planning to have the storage facility of your choice ready for next fall's harvest, and an excellent time to take advantage of many suppliers' pre-season discounts. Low cost loans for storage facilities continue to be available for producers to build or remodel farm storage facilities.

The seven-year FSFL's are available for the purchase and installation of eligible storage facilities, permanently affixed drying or handling equipment, or remodeling existing facilities. Eligible facilities include new conventional type cribs or bins, buildings specially designed for the storage of grain and new and remanufactured oxygen-limiting and other upright silo-type structures.

All FSFL's are secured with a promissory note and security agreement. The maximum amount that may be borrowed is 85% of the net cost of the storage or handling equipment, up to \$100,000 for each borrower. A minimum down payment is also required. A \$45.00 application fee is assessed and other fees are incurred depending on the type of loan being processed. Interest rates for February are 3.5%. Contact your local FSA office for complete details concerning the Farm Storage and Facility Loan program.

Direct Deposit Mandatory

As of Jan 1, 1999, all payments issued by the county FSA office will be by direct deposit (electronic funds transfer) to a pre-designated checking or savings account with your financial institution. Forms are available at the FSA office to sign up for direct deposit if you haven't yet. For those already signed up, it is important that we are notified anytime there is a change in your account number or financial institution. If we are not notified timely, future payments may be delayed.

Reporting Farm Changes:

It is the producer's responsibility to notify FSA of ANY changes in their farming operation or entity status throughout the year. Changes that may affect a determination include, but are not limited to, a change in contract shares which may reflect change of land lease from cash rent to share rent or from share rent to cash rent; addition or deletion of a farm; change in the structure of the farming operation, such as individual to a corporation or trust; change in contributions or inputs such as personal labor, or change in farming interests.

Nodaway County FSA Office
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FSA Farm Loans Available For Beginning Farmers

The Farm Service Agency receives a special allocation of funds to make loans to beginning farmers and ranchers. These loans can be used to purchase real estate, livestock, equipment, or to finance annual input expenses. To be eligible as a beginning farmer you must not have farmed for more than 10 years, and for real estate loan requests, you must not own more land than 30% of the average farm size in the county you operate. The maximum loan amount is \$200,000 and can be repaid over a period of 40 years for real estate and 7 years for livestock and equipment purchases.

In instances where the purchase price exceeds \$200,000, FSA can make joint financing loans in cooperation with a local lender. Applicants seeking an FSA Beginning Farmer loan to purchase real estate must have been farming for at least three years and not more than ten.

New Field Assistants

The Nodaway County FSA office has recently hired two new Field Assistants to help complete non-office work around the county. Eric Redden and Andrew Lance were chosen from a long list of qualified applicants to fill the open positions. The office is looking forward to getting both of them up and running as soon as possible. They will both be welcome additions to the staff that serves the producers of Nodaway County. Welcome aboard guys.

Dates to Remember

Feb. 18	President's Day Office closed
Mar. 17	2008 NAP coverage sign-up deadline
On Going	LCP – Livestock Compensation Program
On Going	CDP – Crop Disaster Program
On Going	FSFL – Farm Storage Facility Loans
On Going	CRP – Continuous Sign-up

**Please visit the
FSA Website:**
www.fsa.usda.gov

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