

Sheridan County FSA News

June 2008

Sheridan Co. FSA Office
119 N. Jackson
Plentywood, MT 59254
406-765-1550, ext. 2

County Committee

Gordon French	Chairman
Kevin Wilson	Vice Chairman
Jody Lagerquist	Member
Ellen Sedgwick	Advisor

FSA Office Personnel

Donna Hilyard	CED, ext. 102
Donelda Buckalew	PT, ext. 105
Karen Budd	PT, ext. 104
Kathy Gray	PT, ext. 100
Josie Johnson	PT, ext. 109
Marcia Rice	PT, ext. 112
Michael Sandoval	PT, ext. 110
Randy Stadstad, Fieldman,	ext. 103

Dates to Remember:

June 2 – DEADLINE for loans on '07 crop peas, lentils, mustard, safflower, sunflower, chickpeas, corn

June 15 – COC Nominations Open

Notice of Loss – filed within 15 calendar days of the natural disaster occurrence or the date the damage to the crop or loss of production was apparent

July 4 – Office closed in observance of Independence Day

July 15 – DEADLINE to drop off maps for acreage report

July 15 – deadline to provide 2007 production for NAP APH

July 15 – 2007 NAP Application for Payment Deadline

July 18 – DEADLINE to signup for Livestock Compensation Program

August 1 – Deadline to request reconstitutions

September 30 – October 1 – Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Symposium, Billings

On-going – report changes to the farming operation (land owned & operated, trust formation, etc.), & to bank accounts for direct deposit
2nd Wednesday every month – tentative schedule for County Committee meetings

EMERGENCY CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Sheridan County has been approved to implement ECP (Emergency Conservation Program) due to drought conditions which have caused a normal livestock water source to go dry in 2008. **Signup is by appointment from May 27 – June 23. If you already started or completed a livestock water project, you must sign up no later than June 10, 2008** to be considered for approval. If the project is not started yet, you must apply before starting. Producers who begin practices without written approval risk ineligibility for cost share.

Even though we've been approved to implement ECP, no funding for the program has been received yet. Do NOT wait till funding becomes available to apply! If funding does become available, practice approvals will be limited to locations where an adequate livestock watering facility was present before the drought, adequate range or pasture residue is available at the time of the request, and the livestock water facility will contribute to better distribution of grazing. Producers must incur at least \$1000 in eligible costs before they can be considered for cost-share assistance.

Producers may apply for cost-share assistance for water hauling, stock water and storage tanks, pipelines, spring developments, dugouts (only if there's a spring or other water source that can fill it), and livestock wells. Projects must be completed within 60 days of County Committee approval, with a possibility of one 60 day extension. If you are interested in a well and the driller will not be able to complete the project within 60 days of approval, you may want to consider a different practice.

Temporary practices (above-ground pipelines, tanks, dugouts) may be eligible for 75% cost share, and permanent practices (buried pipeline, spring developments, wells) may be eligible for 50%. Water hauling is 75% of the eligible actual costs not to exceed \$.35 per day per Animal Unit (AU).

FSA is required to do an on-site inspection prior to application approval to verify that there is adequate grass for grazing and that there was a pre-existing water source that has failed or deteriorated due to the drought. An environmental review will also be completed prior to application approval to determine if the practice would have any adverse impacts.



Committee Election Approaching

Beginning **June 15, 2008**, nominations are being accepted for candidates for County Committee (COC) positions. A county or area served by the COC is divided into local administrative areas (LAA). Each LAA is represented by one member on the county committee. Only one LAA holds an election each year. This year the LAA open in Sheridan County is Area 2 (Townships 31 through 37 and Ranges 51 through 55, generally south and west of Highways 5 W and 16 S). Gordon French currently represents LAA 2.

Nomination forms are available at the Sheridan County FSA office and also at the county office or by logging on to the Montana FSA website at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt>. The nominee must sign the nomination form in order to be nominated as a COC member. Nomination forms must be submitted to the FSA county office by **August 1, 2008**.

Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in an FSA program may be nominated for candidacy for the committee. Individuals may nominate themselves or others as a candidate. Additionally, organizations representing minority and women farmers or ranchers may nominate candidates. The nominee must reside within the area they are nominated to represent.

Please remember that as a county committee member, you are the local voice of how FSA programs are administered to meet your local community and resource needs.



If you extended or re-enrolled a CRP contract that expires in 2007 through 2010, we did an on site visit and notified you if we found weed problems or inadequate cover establishment or maintenance. It is important that you follow up with the actions you told the County Committee you would take on your CRP acres. FSA will conduct random spot checks on these contracts to ensure compliance with program regulations.

Map Packets being mailed out

Map packets are being sent out. Please look through your packet to make sure all maps are enclosed in both sets. Please follow the instruction sheets in the packet when filling out your maps – it saves you and the office a lot of time if the maps are completed correctly when you bring them in after seeding! Remember – the colored set of maps is for your permanent record – please do not write on them. Mark your black and white set for your acreage report. If you think you'll need additional map copies, please take one of your sets and have them photocopied. We're short on staff and funding, so your help with this is greatly appreciated.

**2008 Acreage Reports**

All acreage reports need to be accurate and filed by the final reporting date of **July 15, 2008**. Please fill the maps out completely with a red pen according to the informational sheets included in the map packet. Please do not use maps that were sent out earlier – we have been updating the maps, and you need to bring in your most recent set.

Certification is mandatory if any of the following apply: you receive DCP payments; you have acres enrolled in CRP; Loans or LDP's will be requested, including Wool, Mohair and Honey; acreage is covered by NAP.

Certification maps filed after July 15 will be considered late filed, and a fee equal to the measurement service fee will be charged on the crop(s) you want to report (minimum charge is \$46 per farm, plus an hourly rate to conduct the on-farm visit).

Failure to report acreage accurately may result in loss of program and price support benefits. All cropland on the farm must be certified to be eligible for benefits.

Remember – it's very important for you to report the same acres, crops, intended uses, and shares to both FSA and crop insurance!

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to participate in FSA programs should contact Donna Hilyard, CED, at 119 N. Jackson, Plentywood, MT 59254; phone 406-765-1550 ext. 102; or email at donna.hilyard@mt.usda.gov.

Timely report any farm owner or operator changes, share changes, entity changes, owned and/or leased land changes, etc. Farm payments are dependent on correct farm records! Have you deeded any land to a trust for estate planning purposes? If so, you need to notify us, because we have to carry the trust as the landowner. It is also important that any change in the producer's bank account, such as type of account, bank mergers, routing number or account numbers, be provided to the county office promptly if you receive payments via direct deposit.

NOTE: There are two primary nesting season dates to keep in mind when doing management or maintenance activities on CRP acres:

May 15 – July 15 *FSA State Committee established Primary Nesting Season for CRP;*

May 15 – August 1 *Primary Nesting Season for CRP contracts affected by the National Wildlife Federations settlement agreement with FSA*

→Check the Conservation Plan of Operations (CPO) for the primary nesting dates that apply to your CRP contract

**U.S. Department of Agriculture
Sheridan County FSA Office
119 N. Jackson
Plentywood, MT 59254**

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