



July 2007

# Texas/ Dent County News



Texas/Dent County  
USDA Service Center

Texas/Dent County FSA  
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Hours:  
Monday - Friday  
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

County Committee:  
Shirley Best  
Pauline Chapman  
Jim O. Freeman  
Jerry "Charlie" Kiser

County Committee meets:  
The First Tuesday of each  
Month.

County Staff:  
Elvie Younger, CED  
Loretta Hinton, PT  
Lori Martens, PT

Farm Loan Staff:  
Jared Weydert, FLM  
Debi Huff, FLPT

## COC Candidates Sought

It will soon be county committee election time, and the Farm Service Agency (FSA) is actively looking for producers to be a candidate for the local FSA county committee.

County committee members perform an important function. They represent you and your agricultural interests. They help shape how federal farm programs are implemented on the ground in local communities.

Who do you know who would make a good county committee member? Who do you know who would be able to represent you and your farming interests, as well as your neighbor's interests?

Why not talk to that person and ask if he or she would be willing to serve on the county committee? If he or she says yes, then fill out a nomination form (FSA-669), have the person sign it and then return it to the county office.

If you can't think of another producer to nominate or your prospective nominee turns you down, why not nominate yourself? Serving on the committee will take, on average, one day a month, and you will be providing your agricultural community a vital service.

Committee members are reimbursed for travel expenses and are paid at the rate of a GS-6, step 1, currently \$14.72 per hour.

Visit with the Farm Service Agency county office staff for more information.

## Haying, Grazing CRP Acres

Producers considering managed haying or grazing of Conservation Reserve Program acres need prior approval from the county committee. Before the committee can allow haying or grazing, there must be an approved hazing and grazing plan. The acreage may not be hayed/grazed prior to July 15. Acreage hayed/grazed in either of the last 2 years is

ineligible for release this year. A 25 percent payment reduction is assessed for every approved acre hayed or grazed. Other restrictions may apply.

## DCP Enrollment Extended

The June 1, 2007 deadline to enroll in the 2007 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) has been extended to **August 3, 2007**. Computer problems have caused application processing delays which prompted the enrollment deadline extension. A late-file fee of \$100 per farm will be assessed to the producer for CCC-509's filed after August 3, 2007 and before September 30, 2007.

Advance direct payments for the 2007 crop year are 22%. Advance payments may be requested in any month starting with December 2006. The remaining final direct payment of 78% will be issued to participating producers in October of 2007. For clarification or an appointment, contact your local FSA office.

## Farm Operation Changes --Farm Reconstitutions

In Farm Service Agency terms, farms are *constituted* to group all tracts having the same owner and the same operator under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation take place, a farm *reconstitution* is necessary.

The reconstitution—or recon—is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by **August 1** for farms enrolled in the Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program. If 2007 DCP direct payments have already been issued on the farm, the reconstitution will be effective for 2008 unless the payments are refunded.



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## Crop Certification

The annual requirement of reporting to the FSA office can be referred to as crop reporting, acreage reporting, or crop certification. Filing an accurate and timely report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent loss of benefits for a variety of FSA programs. All cropland on the farm must be reported to receive benefits from the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, marketing assistance loans and Loan Deficiency Payments.

The certification form FSA-578, Report of Acreage, must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. The producer certification deadline for fall-seeded crops is June 30 and for spring-seeded crops, July 31.

### CRP & NAP Certification

Conservation Reserve Program acreage must be reported to receive annual rental payments. Crop acreage for Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) must also be reported.

### Prevented Planting:

Prevented planting needs to be reported no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date.

### Failed Acreage:

A report of failed acreage must be filed before disposition of the crop. Producers must be able to establish to the satisfaction of the county committee that the crop failed and was prevented from being replanted through the normal planting period because of natural disaster conditions.

## What are eLDPs?

The FSA's electronic Loan Deficiency Payment (eLDP) is an Internet-based service allowing producers to request LDPs online and, in most cases, receive approval and payment by direct deposit within 48 hours.

Online eLDPs are offered as an additional option to producers requesting an LDP. LDP benefits are still available at the local FSA county office. However, eLDP services provide greater flexibility to producers who conduct business online and want to avoid travel time to and from the local FSA office.

Access to the eLDP service is available to

all USDA customers. In order to insure personal identity, you must first register for a USDA eAuthentication Level 2 Account. This process is easy and starts online by creating a user ID and password and confirming your e-mail address. The final step requires visiting a local USDA Service Center to complete the eAuthentication process.

USDA provides eLDP services in a secure online environment that protects your privacy through stringent security measures.

All participating customers will have an eLDP Customer Profile set up through a software application that validates their farming and crop information.

Local FSA county offices will maintain Customer Profiles for accuracy. Customer Profile information is provided by the customer and verified by farm records stored in the local FSA county office.

FSA's eLDP customers can use a personal computer to submit an LDP application. After the eLDP is approved by USDA, the payment is automatically routed by electronic funds transfer to the customer's bank account.

The eLDP process is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except during routine backup and maintenance periods. The applicable LDP rate is based upon the rate in effect on the application date for the location of the stored commodity.

## Notice to Foreign Landowners

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) 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 within 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, real estate agents, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

## Beginning Farmers, Ranchers

Are you a farmer or rancher who has farmed for less than 10 years? If so, you may qualify for beginning farmer targeted loan funds.

The program is designed to assist these farmers by providing direct and guaranteed loans when they are unable to obtain financing from commercial credit sources.

If you believe this program could be of benefit to you, please contact the county office staff for more information. Our loan officials will welcome your interest.

## Loans for Beginning Farmers, Socially Disadvantaged

FSA is authorized to assist beginning farmers and or members of socially disadvantaged groups to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person whom:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's average farm size.

Each member of an entity must meet the eligibility requirements. Loan approval is not guaranteed. Socially disadvantaged groups are Hispanics, American Indians, African Americans, Asians, Pacific Islanders and women.

## Youth Loans

Remember FSA makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to establish and operate income producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be initiated, developed, and carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or similar organizations or with a vocational teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and

operated with the assistance of the organizational advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. Contact your local FSA office for more details.

## Sodbuster Regulations

The term "sodbusting" is used to identify the plowing up of erosion-prone grasslands for use as cropland. Sodbuster violations are unauthorized tillage practices on highly erodible lands that converted native vegetation such as rangeland or woodland, to crop production after Dec. 23, 1985.

Farmers and ranchers should be aware that if they use highly erodible land for crop production without proper conservation measures, they risk losing eligibility to participate in FSA programs.

Before producers clear, plow or otherwise prepare areas not presently under crop production for planting, they are required to file an AD-1026, indicating the area to be brought into production.

If Natural Resources Conservation Service indicates on a CPA-026 that the area will be highly erodible land, the producer will be required to develop and implement a conservation plan on the affected acreage, before bringing land into production.

In addition, producers and the producer's affiliates have to file an AD-1026 with the staff in the administrative or control county office before any farm program payments can be made. The AD-1026 is the producer's signed certification that HELC, as well as wetland conservation, provisions will not be violated.

## Preventing Fraud, Waste

The FSA has joined with the Risk Management Agency to prevent fraud, waste and abuse in the Federal Crop Insurance Program. FSA has been, and will continue to, assist RMA and insurance providers by monitoring crop conditions throughout the growing season. In addition, FSA will refer all suspected cases of fraud, waste and abuse to RMA.

Producers can report suspected cases to the county office staff, RMA office, or the Office of the Inspector General.



**Financial FACTS**  
 for agriculture's future

Respond to USDA's Agricultural Resource Management Survey and let the financial facts be known for agriculture's policies and programs.




Dates to Remember	
July 31	Final certification date for all crops except small grains.
August 1	Deadline to submit COC nomination forms
August 1	Final date to request farm reconstitution for current fiscal year.
August 3	DCP Enrollment Deadline
Sept. 3	Labor Day-- Office Closed
Sept. 30	Final date for 2007 DCP contract revisions.

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