

CONNECTIONS

CONSERVATION DISTRICT, EXTENSION SERVICE, FARM SERVICE AGENCY, & NATURAL RESOURCES & CONSERVATION SERVICE

January, 2008

CROP DISASTER PROGRAM NOW OPEN FOR 2007 SPRING-SEEDED CROPS

On December 26, 2007, President Bush signed into law the Department of State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2008 (2008 Act). The 2008 Act amended the February 28, 2007 date and allows for all crops planted for the 2007 crop year to be included for loss purposes under the Crop Disaster Program. Similarly, under LIP and LCP, the 2008 Act extends the date livestock and livestock feed losses could have occurred in a primary or contiguous county named in a Secretarial or Presidential disaster declaration to December 31, 2007.

What this means to you—the operator or landowner is: We will be going back through the downloads that we have received from Crop Insurance and will be looking at the 2007 crop year. You will need to look in your **2007 records and find your Proof of Loss** form and drop it by the office. For those of you that we have already paid on a previous year or 2007 winter wheat losses; we will still be going through your 2007 spring seedings. If 2007 is the larger year for losses, we will make up the difference between what we owe you and what

has already been paid. Just a reminder—your crop had to be insured by crop insurance or by having a NAP policy. Uninsured crops are not eligible for this disaster program. The program covers the crops planted in 2005, 2006 or 2007. Crops planted in 2007 for harvest in 2008 are not eligible. ♥



NO NEWS ON THE 2008 FARM BILL YET

As of the printing of this newsletter, we have no news on the 2008 farm bill. The House and Senate both have passed versions but they have not yet gone to Committee to work out the details. So for those of you wondering about advance payments, sign-up, etc., we have nothing yet to work with. Once a Farm bill is passed by the President, I'm sure we will all be notified and we will see what is included in the bill. Your patience is appreciated as a new farm bill always brings new challenges. ♥

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. ♥

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ELIGIBILITY DEADLINE EXTENDED FOR DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Bozeman—Signup is underway at the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices for three disaster assistance programs; the Crop Disaster Program (CDP), Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and the Livestock Compensation Program (LCP). Initially these disaster programs were limited to crops planted or disaster declarations approved prior to February 28, 2007. **Recent legislation has extended the eligibility date to December 31, 2007.**

For Toole County, this means producers are now eligible for the livestock program. If you are interested, you will need to pick up a LCP worksheet (or give us a call—we'll mail one to you) to complete. Once you have filled out the worksheet bring it into the office for review. Once the information is loaded into the computer, we can set up an appointment.

CDP does not require a disaster declaration. For CDP purposes, the date change to December 31, 2007 now allows all crops planted and prevented planted with the intention of harvesting those crops in 2007, eligible for payment. Crops planted in 2007 that will be harvested in 2008 are not eligible.

For detailed information on eligibility requirements and payment rates for the three disaster assistance programs, contact your local county FSA office or log on to the Montana FSA website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt> and click on the Disaster Assistance link under "In the News." ♥

AGRICULTURAL CENSUS IS HERE!

Beginning December 28, 2007, the National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS) will mail out Census of Agriculture forms to collect data for the 2007 calendar year. Completed forms are due by February 4, 2008. Forms may be returned by mail or, for the first time, forms may be filled out online via a secure web site.

Conducted every five years by USDA, the Census is a complete count of the nation's farm and ranches and the people who operate them. The Census looks at land use and ownership, operator characteristics, production practices, income and

expenditures and other topics. The Census provides the only source of uniform, comprehensive agricultural data for every county in the nation.

For more information about the 2007 Census of Agriculture, contact the NASS Montana Field Office at 406/441-1240 or 1-800-835-2612 or log on to the Montana Agriculture Statistics website at <http://www.agcensus.usda.gov>. ♥

NRCS – TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS AND THE LAND

Recently, NRCS completed contracts for the 2008 Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). This program was able to award nearly half a million dollars to Toole County farmers/ranchers specifically for the adoption of practices that will benefit our natural resources. Ultimately the intent of NRCS, utilizing EQIP as a tool, is to assist producers in taking care of the land as well as their agricultural business.

In Toole County, NRCS funded 21 contracts out of the 32 applications that qualified, equaling \$463,301. Some of the cost shared practices that were included in the accepted contracts include: cross fencing rangeland, water developments on rangeland, precision ag nutrient management of fertilizer on cropland, salinity treatment seedings on cropland, and improvements of animal waste treatment facilities and practices. Many times these contracts capture management changes that producers have considered and wanted to adopt for years. Their bottom line budgets just wouldn't allow for the necessary capital outlay that would enable them to better their operation with those changes. The cost share that the EQIP program offers often is the difference that makes a conservation improvement 'pencil'.

All eligible agricultural producers can apply for EQIP by signing an application form at the NRCS. Applications may be accepted continuously although there are cut-off deadlines for funding consideration. Typically that cut off date is June 1 for the next fiscal year funding cycle. With the new farm bill pending, this could change considerably. In the meantime, any producers contemplating conservation improvements are encouraged to apply for EQIP and preferably before June 1, 2008 for consideration of 2009 funds. For further information, please contact the NRCS office. ♥

LOAN GRAIN REPORTED TO IRS ON 1099-G

The 1099-G form received for 2007 will include market gains associated with Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) loan repayments regardless of whether the taxpayer repays the loan with cash or uses CCC certificates in repayment of the loan.

If a producer made a special election to treat CCC loans as income when received, the farmer accounts for market gain by making an adjustment to basis. The farmer’s basis in the commodity will be equal to the amount of loan proceeds previously reported as income minus the amount of any market gain.

A farmer who made the special election should report market gain as an *Agricultural program payment* on line 6a of Schedule F, but not as a taxable amount on line 6b. The market gain is reported in the same way even if CCC certificates were used to facilitate repayment of the loan.

If a special election was not made the CCC loan was not included in income, the market gain is reported on line 6A and as a taxable amount on line 6b of Schedule F. This is the case even if CCC certificates were used to facilitate repayment of the loan.

A detailed explanation of the IRS Ruling can be found in IRS Bulletin: 2007-33 dated August 13, 2007 (Notice 2007-63). It may be found on the Internal Revenue website at http://www.irs.gov/irb/2007-33_IRB/ar07.html. ♥



2007 LOAN RATES

HRW	= \$2.84	HRS	= \$2.67
HAD	= \$2.97		
OATS	= \$1.25	BLY	= \$1.85
PEAS	= \$6.12 cwt		
CANOLA	= \$8.20 cwt		

The final application date for 2007 grain loans is March 31, 2008.



ANNIE’S PROJECT

Montana Market Manager will usher Annie’s Project into Montana starting in January 2008. Annie’s Project will be delivered in six 3-hour sessions at 12 locations around Montana. Each Monday evening session will run from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. Registration is \$100.

Class locations:

- Bozeman – Burns Telecom Center, Montana State University
- Culbertson – Roosevelt Memorial Hospital
- Dillon – University of Montana – Western
- Glasgow – Frances Mahon Deaconess Hospital
- Great Falls – MSU College of Technology
- Havre – MSU Northern
- Lewistown – Central Montana Education Center
- Miles City – Miles City Community College
- Rapelje – Rapelje High School
- Scobey – Scobey High School
- Shelby – Marias Medial Center
- Sidney – Agricultural Research Service Center

Annie’s Project brings women together to find answers, sharpen business skills, grow confidence, recognize strength and build friendships in these six workshops.

To register – go to www.montanamarketmanager.org/Education&Reference/WorkshopCalendar or call the Montana Grain Growers office at 406/761-4596. ♥

FSA's 2007 NATIONAL COMPLIANCE AND SPOT CHECK REVIEW

FSA is committed to delivering accurate program payments to America's agricultural producers. The accuracy of payments not only benefits farmers and ranchers, but also maximizes taxpayer dollars and government efficiency.

As part of the 2007 National Compliance Review, FSA's national office is requiring local FSA county offices to conduct compliance reviews and spot checks of certain producers selected by the national office through a statistical sampling method. A statistical sample of FSA employees, County Committee (COC) and State Committee (STC) members have also been selected for review using this same process.

FSA may review a producer's operations in multiple states and counties, depending on the scope of the producer's operations. FSA will review both the accuracy of the representations made by the selected producers in connection with participation in FSA programs as well as the producer's compliance with applicable program requirements. The reviews may need to be conducted at various times throughout the year depending on the FSA programs in which the producer is participating. FSA appreciates the cooperation of its customers as the agency continues to enhance its operations.

FSA's goal is to ensure that program dollars are delivered effectively and efficiently so America's farmers and ranchers can provide safe and abundant food, fiber and fuel for consumers at home and abroad. ♥

CONSERVATION SECURITY PROGRAM CONTRACTS TO BE REVIEWED

The NRCS will be conducting spot checks of the Conservation Security Program (CSP) over the course of the next few years. Each contract holder shall be checked to verify that the practices that are contracted are being conducted accordingly. The Conservation Security Program was designed to identify agriculture producers that have adopted the highest levels of management and to reward those conservation efforts. The program has not been adequately funded in recent years and thus has not been made available to all agriculture producers. The new farm bill is expected to attempt to remedy the

watershed approach and allow more farm operations to apply for CSP.

In the meantime, the contract holders with existing contracts are expected to maintain the integrity of their operation and the CSP contract – for both contractual requirements as well as for courtesy to fellow neighbors that have never had the opportunity to participate. These contracts should not be something taken for granted given the rare privilege to participate. The CSP program is watched by many to ensure its prudent expenditure of taxpayer dollars. The following article is reprinted from the Spokane Review and is evidence as to the seriousness placed upon this program.

Feds Investigate 21 Farmers

They're suspected of fraud over conservation program.

John Stucke
Staff writer
July 19, 2007

The U.S. Attorney's Office is investigating a group of Eastern Washington farmers suspected of gaming a federal program that pays for good conservation practices.

The 21 grain farmers possibly defrauding the Natural Resources Conservation Service have had to pay the federal agency \$564,197 in reimbursements and costs. Of the 21, seven farmers mediated settlements with the NRCS and others lost appeals.

The problems could have been a blow to the Conservation Security Program, a taxpayer-funded initiative launched by the 2002 Farm Bill that pays farmers for environmental practices such as using less fertilizer and pesticides.

A review determined that farmers cheated on their applications, some submitting false or altered soil samples in an attempt to reap federal dollars.

When the NRCS expanded its review, six more farmers were caught.

Dave Brown, an assistant state conservationist overseeing programs, said the records have been turned over to federal authorities in Spokane to investigate whether the farmers committed crimes. The agency is withholding the names of the 21 farmers, citing the criminal investigation and the federal Privacy Act. ♥

WHY SHOULD I CONSIDER ESTATE PLANNING IMPORTANT?

From trusts to taxes and living wills to beneficiary deeds, estate planning is as complex and challenging as ever. However, on January 22 and 23 Shelby and Conrad residents will have the opportunity to learn that there are actions they can take to provide financially for their families. The Pondera and Toole County Extension offices are sponsoring an estate planning program to be presented by Marsha A. Goetting, Family Economics Specialist for Montana State University Extension. If you are interested in attending either program, please contact the Toole County Extension Office before January 17.

"Estate planning is often avoided because it deals with attitudes and feelings about death, property ownership, business arrangements and family relationships that people may not be ready to contemplate," says Goetting. "Some people say estate planning is only for the old and very rich." But, she says, nothing could be further from the truth.

Estate planning is merely one aspect of financial planning—a way to assure that the results of your hard-earned efforts is distributed according to your wishes. In addition, Goetting says, estate planning can reduce income taxes during your lifetime, help a loved one get established in business, provide for your own secure retirement, and specify care for your children or aging parents.

To give Montanans an overview of estate planning and its intricacies and starting points, Goetting will share highlights from an educational packet she has developed, Estate Planning: The Basics. The packet includes fact sheets on estate planning topics and is designed so that Montanans can learn about estate planning at home and at their own pace.

The fact sheets answer many questions Montanans may have about estate planning, such as:

- When I inherit my family's ranch, what if I have to pay so many taxes that I have to sell or divide up the land?
- My parents are getting older, but they refuse to talk about estate planning. What should I do?
- Can I write my own will? Or do I need a lawyer?
- If I transfer my property into a living trust, will my assets be protected from nursing home care costs?

- The packet also answers many more relevant questions and provides information on non-probate assets, beneficiary deeds, dying without a will and federal estate taxes.

All fact sheets are downloaded for free at <http://www.montana.edu/extensionecon/publications/estate.html>. Or the packet can be purchased for \$10 from the county Extension office. ♥

FSA AND THE LEGAL POWER OF ATTORNEY

If one of the things you are doing for estate planning is giving somebody your power of attorney, you need to keep in mind that the FSA office can not accept any power of attorney forms other than FSA-211 for FSA and CCC programs. An exception would be in unique cases when a producer could not complete FSA-211, such as incompetence; incapacitation or cases involving members of the US Armed Forces under active military duty. In these cases the power of attorney requires review and approval by the regional attorney. Minors may **not** appoint an attorney-in-fact to act on their behalf or be appointed an attorney-in-fact to act on grantor's behalf. Since August 1, 1992, spouses may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and CCC programs in which either has an interest without completing FSA-211, unless written notification denying this authority has been provided to the County Office.

An FSA-211 authority does **not** provide the appointed attorney-in-fact the authority to sign or act on behalf of the grantor for anything outside of the FSA Office or for any of the following actions:

- COC elections
- Granting authority to another individual
- requesting direct deposit electronic access, unless designated on the form
- any program that is not a FSA or CCC program.

An FSA-211 shall remain in full force and effect from the date the FSA-211 is correctly executed until 1 of the following occurs:

- grantor cancels FSA-211 in writing by either of the following:
- providing written notification of cancellation of FSA-211 to the County Office

Continued on page 6

- either grantor or appointed attorney-in-fact dies, becomes incompetent or incapacitated
- is a legal entity, and the entity becomes dissolved

Transferring a farming operation to a different County Office does not invalidate a power of attorney.

For individuals granted authority to act as attorney-in-fact on behalf of another individual or entity, the signature shall consist of both an indicator, such as “by” or “for”, illustrating that the individual is signing in a representative capacity, the individual’s name, capacity, and name of individual or entity that granted authority.

When an individual is declared incompetent and a conservator has been appointed by the court to act on behalf of the incompetent individual the conservator may act on behalf of the incompetent individual for FSA and CCC programs; neither FSA-211 nor non-FSA power of attorney form is required for the conservator to act on behalf of the incompetent individual. However, before an individual may sign as a conservator, a copy of the court order must be provided to the County Office.

County offices may process and record a non-FSA power of attorney form for incapacitated individuals **only** when **all** of the following are met:

- grantor cannot complete FSA-211 because of incapacitation
- conservator for the grantor has not been appointed by the court
- individual appointed as attorney-in-fact by the non-FSA power of attorney form **signs and dates** the Non-FSA Power of Attorney Certification provided by the county office
- County Office is provided a legible copy of the non-FSA power of attorney form to maintain on file
- regional attorney reviews and approves the non-FSA power of attorney form to ensure that the form meets both of the following:
 - provides legally sufficient authority for the attorney-in-fact to act on behalf of the grantor for FSA and CCC programs
 - compliance with applicable State and local laws. ♥



FSA COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTION RESULTS

Congratulations are extended to Chuck Kelleher, who was re-elected to the Toole County FSA Committee for another three years. The County Committee is responsible for the County Farm Service Agency, the overall direction of the operations, and the administration of the various farm programs at the county level. The programs they help administer directly affect the welfare of our farmers. Other Committee members are Tim Fenger and Kathy Rankin. ♥

UNDER REPRESENTED GROUPS

FSA solicits and accepts nominations of under represented groups such as females and minority (American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander) producers for county committee representation. Please notify this office if you wish to be identified as a minority producer. ♥

REASONABLE ACCOMODATION STATEMENT

USDA is required to provide the reasonable accommodations statement semiannually in county office newsletters and on printed announcements of all public meetings, seminars or FSA sponsored training, and farm program orientation sessions.

Website: Producers may access FSA information and forms on the Montana Internet site at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt> ♥

DAIRY DISASTER AID PROGRAM SIGNUP BEGINS

Signup began December 3rd for the Dairy Disaster Assistance Payment (DDAP-III) Program. DDAP-III will provide benefits to eligible dairy producers who suffered production losses during a variety of adverse weather conditions. Eligible counties are those counties that were declared a natural disaster in 2005 and/or 2006 and January/February 2007.

Production losses must have occurred between January 1, 2005, and February 28, 2007 due to natural disasters.

The program provides benefits to dairy producers for production losses that occurred between January 1, 2005, and February 28, 2007. It compensates dairy producers who may have incurred decreases in annual production because of cattle and yield losses. ♥

CHANGE IN FARMING OPERATION OR ADDRESS

Producers are reminded to notify this office to report change in address or ownership. This is vital to assist this office in keeping records. ♥

CHANGE IN DIRECT DEPOSIT ACCOUNT

The Debt Collection Act of 1996 mandates that payments from FSA be directly deposited into a producer's checking or savings bank account. It is important that any change in the producer's account such as type of account, bank mergers, routing number or account numbers be provided to the county office promptly to avoid possible payment delay. ♥

SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS VIA E-GOVERNEMENT

As required by the Freedom to E-File Act, eForms provides customers with the option to electronically access, fill out, and print paper forms, or obtain secure electronic access credentials for signing and transmitting forms and other documents electronically to their local Service Center. Level 2 access is required. Step-by-step instructions are available on the Montana FSA website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt> explaining the Level 2 access process. Contact the local county FSA office to complete your Level 2 registration. ♥

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance may be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits.

Violations include planting, harvesting, possessing or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium poppies and other drug producing plants. ♥

FARM LOANS

FSA offers direct and guaranteed farm ownership and operating loan programs to

farmers and ranchers who are temporarily unable to obtain private commercial credit. Rural youth loans, Beginning Farmer and Rancher, and assistance for socially disadvantaged persons are also available. ♥

CIVIL RIGHTS/DISCRIMINATION PROCESS

As a participant or applicant for programs or activities operated or sponsored by USDA, you have a right to be treated fairly. If you believe you have been discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, gender, age, religion, disability, or marital or familial status, you may file a discrimination complaint.

The complaint should be filed with the USDA Office of Adjudication and Compliance within 180 days of the date you became aware the alleged discrimination occurred. To file a complaint of discrimination write: USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication and Compliance, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Room 326W, Whitten Building, Stop 9410, Washington DC 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964 (voice or TDD). ♥

FOREIGN PERSON RULE

A foreign individual is someone who is not a citizen of the United States or a lawful alien possessing a valid Alien Registration Receipt Card (Form I-551 or I-151). A foreign entity is a corporation, trust, estate, limited partnership, limited liability company, or other similar organization that has more than 10 percent of its beneficial interest held by individuals who are not citizens of the United States or lawful aliens possessing a valid Alien Registration Receipt Card (Form I-551 or I-151). In addition to the requirements for "person" and "actively engaged in farming," the following significant contributions must be provided by an individual or entity considered to be a "foreign person." An individual determined to be a "foreign person" must provide a significant contribution of land, capital, and active personal labor.

Each foreign individual who is a member of an entity determined to be a "foreign person" must provide active personal labor to enable the entity to provide a significant contribution of active personal labor. ♥

FARM STORAGE FACILITY LOAN

FSA may make loans to producers to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities.

Commodities covered under this storage program are rice, soybeans, dry peas, lentils, small chickpeas, peanuts, sunflower, flaxseed, mustard seed, and other oilseeds as determined and announced. Corn, grain sorghum, oats, wheat, or barley harvested as whole grain or other than whole grain are also eligible.

Loans may be made only for the purchase and installation of eligible storage facilities, permanently affixed drying or handling equipment, or remodeling existing facilities.

Eligible facilities and equipment include:

- New conventional-type cribs or bins designed and engineered for whole grain storage and having a useful life of at least 10 years;
- New oxygen limiting and other upright silo-type structures designed for whole grain storage or other than whole grain wet storage having a useful life of at least 10 years;
- Re-manufactured oxygen-limiting storage structures built to original manufacturer's design specifications using original manufacturer's rebuild kits having a useful life of at least 10 years;
- New structures that are upright, bunker-type, horizontal, or open silo structures with at least 2 concrete walls and a concrete floor, designed for whole grains storage or other than whole grain storage having a useful life of at least 10 years;
- New permanently affixed grain handling equipment and grain drying equipment determined by FSA to be needed and essential to the proper functioning of a grain storage system, with or without a loan for storage structures;
- Existing storage renovated according to FSA regulations without an increase in storage capacity;
- New electrical equipment, such as lighting and motors integral to the proper operation of grain storage and handling equipment, excluding the

installation of electrical service to the electrical meter;

- New equipment to improve, maintain or monitor the quality of stored grain;
- Safety equipment as required; and
- New flat-type storage structures, including a permanent concrete floor and bulkheads, designed for and primarily used to store whole grain for the term of the loan.

The applicant must:

- Complete form CCC-185
- Pay a non-refundable application fee of \$45.00 to the FSA office
- Provide copies of contracts, project cost breakdown, copies of site plans or estimates for all proposed work;
- Provide form FSA 440-32
- Provide proof of multi-peril crop insurance
- Provide legal description of parcel (s) of land to be offered as security and legal description of land where facility will be placed;
- File CCC-10

The maximum term of the loan is 7 years. The maximum principal amount of any farm storage facility loan shall be 85 percent of the net cost of the applicant's needed storage or handling equipment not to exceed \$100,000 for each borrower signing the note and security agreement.

A minimum down payment representing the difference between the net cost of the storage facility and the amount of the loan shall be made by the loan applicant to the supplier or contractor before the loan is disbursed.

Loans shall bear interest at the rate equivalent to the rate of interest charged on U.S. Treasury securities of comparable maturity on the date the loan is approved. The interest rate for each loan will remain in effect for the term of the loan. Other requirements may apply. ♥



USDA SERVICE CENTER

Phone: 406-434-5234

FAX: 406-434-2718

CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS

Terry Tomsheck, Chairman

Steve Ahrens, Vice Chairman

Bob Pace, Treasurer

Roger Smedsrud

Dick Steinbacher

Willie Wilson, Sunburst Urban Supervisor

Sara Shepard, Administrator (Ext 113)

NRCS STAFF

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Lance Wallewein (Ext 115)

FSA COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Tim Fenger, Chairman

Chuck Kelleher, Vice Chairman

Kathy Rankin, Regular Member

FSA OFFICE STAFF

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email: william.daugherty@mt.usda.gov

Rogene Halver- Grain, Bin, & Farm Loans, NAP & LCP (Ext 103)

email: rogene.halver@mt.usda.gov

Carla McNamara-Payment Limitation & Direct Counter Cyclical Payment Program (Ext 101)

email: carla.mcnamara@mt.usda.gov

Dale White-CRP & Maps (Ext 106)

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Lynda Fretheim-Crop Certification & Maps

(Ext 104) *email: lynda.fretheim@mt.usda.gov*

JANUARY 31 DEADLINE TO REQUEST 2007 WOOL/MOHAIR LOANS & LDPs

Wool and mohair producers have until January 31 to apply for either a nine-month, non-recourse marketing assistance loan or a Loan Deficiency Payment (LDP) for 2007-crop wool or mohair.

The national loan rate for ungraded wool offered as collateral will secure a non-recourse loan made at a rate of 40 cents per pound. For graded wool, loans will be based on the statutory rate of \$1.00 per pound. Producers who desire a non-recourse loan for mohair will receive the statutory rate of \$4.20 per pound. Loan rates will be adjusted based on a schedule of quality premiums and discounts applicable to the 2007 marketing year. The repayment amount per pound for mohair and for both graded and ungraded wool will be announced at close of business each Tuesday, and can be found on the Montana FSA website at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt>.

For Montana the loan rates are divided into two regions by county. Producers should pick the correct region for their operation and then check the posted rates at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dafp/psd/MKTPRICLEA N2.htm> for region 2 counties and at:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dafp/psd/MKTPRICLEA N3.htm> for region 3 counties.

Instead of obtaining a loan, producers may request LDPs on these commodities. The LDP rates will be the difference between the per pound loan rate and the weekly announced repayment rate. The repayment prices reflect prices being offered in the current market. ♥

2008 MAP PRINTING IN PROCESS

The office will begin printing maps for the 2008 crop year next week in the hopes that they will be ready for Toole County producers by the first part of April. A lot of our producers have made reference to the maps and acreage that their insurance agent has given them. Please keep in mind that they are not produced by the same company and the acreages are not the same. Our office can use only the acreages from our maps. They are for our purposes only and should not be used for the selling of real estate or any purposes outside of the agency. ♥

Calendar of Events

Jan 21	Office Closed
Jan 22,23	Estate Planning
Jan 31	Deadline for 2007 Wool Loan/LDP
Feb 4	Deadline for Census Forms
Feb 18	Office Closed
Mar 17	NAP Coverage Deadline
Mar 31	Deadline for 2007 Grain Loan/LDP

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET CENTER at 202-702-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director; Office of Civil Rights; Room 326-W, Whitten Building; 1499 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, D.C., 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964 (voice or TDD).

Toole County FSA
1125 Oilfield Ave.
Shelby, MT 59474

STANDARD RATE

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“Special accommodations will be made for the physically handicapped, vision or hearing impaired person upon request. If accommodation is required, please contact Bob Hermance, County Executive Director at the above address; call 406-434-5234; or email: robert.hermance@mt.usda.gov