Wibaux County March 2009

Wibaux County FSA Office
502 2nd Ave. NW
Wibaux, MT 59353 9040
Phone 406-796-2221

County Committee Members
Ted Dukart, Chairman
Gerald Goroski, Vice Chairman
Darin Miske, Reg member
Bettye Knight, COC Advisor

Regular meetings are 3rd Tues. of the month

FSA Office Personnel
Jan Just, CED Ext. 102
Candace Schneider, PT
Extension 100 or /Option "2"
Matt Shell, PT Ext 105
Jean Zinda, Ext 104 Temporary, as budget allows

NRCS Office
Katrina Johnson Ext. 101
Jill Obrigewitch Ext. 108
Cliff Merriman Ext. 114

Conservation District
Renee Nelson Ext. 106

Dates to Remember:

March 15 – Spring grazing on CRP acres begins
March 16 – NAP Sales closing date for all crops except value loss crops and honey
March 16 – Crop insurance sales closing date for 2008 spring-seeded crops
March 25-28 – FFA Convention – Great Falls.
March 31 – Final loan/LDP availability date for various crops harvested in 2008
NAP Pull off date – April 15th
May 14 – Spring grazing on CRP acres ends
May 15 – Beginning date of Primary Nesting Season
June 1 – DCP signup deadline

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Our phone answering machines take a while to "activate". Please be patient and wait for the beep before leaving messages. Thanks

Spring Grazing on Conservation Reserve Program Acres

The 2009 grazing period for managed grazing of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres is March 15th through May 14th. CRP participants who want to graze their CRP contracts this spring must sign up at the office.

Grazing cannot begin until the participant (s) receives written approval from the local FSA county committee or its designee. Spring managed grazing must end before May 15th, which is the start of Montana's Primary Nesting and Broodrearing Season.

Participants may graze CRP acres based on the rotation period (once every three years or once every 5 years) and other limitations that are included in their Conservation Plan of Operations. Producers wishing to graze CRP acres must first receive written notification of approval from the FSA county committee before managed grazing can begin. Livestock producers, who rent or lease acreage from the CRP participant, shall sign a statement agreeing not to sublease the CRP acreage and receive notification of approval from the FSA county committee, a copy of which they should provide to the CRP participant. All livestock must be removed from the CRP acreage when the calculated AUM's are utilized, but no later than May 14th for spring grazing. CRP participants will be assessed a payment reduction for managed grazing which is calculated by taking the number of acres grazed, times the CRP per acre annual rental payment, times 25 percent.

Managed grazing *and* managed haying of CRP will be allowed in 2009, however, a starting date for the summer/fall managed grazing *and* managed haying for CRP will be announced later.

AGRICULTURE
Every Day in Every Way

NATIONAL AGRICULTURE WEEK is March 15-21, 2009. It is a time to celebrate American agriculture and honor the people who work to meet our everyday needs. FSA in Montana thanks the many farmers and ranchers we work with on a daily basis.

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NAP Deadline March 16

For the 2009 crop year it is imperative to purchase Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and catastrophic (CAT) level of crop insurance for all insurable and non-insurable crops. This is not only for production coverage but also for eligibility for the new permanent disaster programs created in the 2008 Farm Bill.

In order for producers to be **eligible** for assistance under the Supplemental Revenue Assistance **(SURE)** Program and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, and Honey Bees, **(ELAP),** and the Tree Assistance Program **(TAP)** producers must obtain a plan of insurance for each insurable and non-insurable commodity on the farm, **excluding grazing**. To be eligible for assistance under the Livestock Forage Program **(LFP)** producers must obtain either coverage under the Pasture, Rangeland, and Forage Rainfall Index Pilot Program through crop insurance, or NAP coverage, or both on their grazing land.

Producers must file the required paperwork and pay the administrative fee by the NAP closing date of **March 16, 2009** for all crops except value-loss and honey. The deadline for value-loss and honey for 2009 has passed.

Please contact the office to ensure your eligibility for the new disaster assistance programs by March 16th.

Final Loan/LDP Availability is March 31

March 31 is the final loan/LDP availability date for Barley, Canola, Flaxseed, Oats, Rapeseed, Crambe and Wheat.
For the 2008 crop of the commodities listed above, loans and LDP's will no longer be available after March 31, 2009.

Honey Loans Available

Marketing assistance loans and loan deficiency payments for 2008 crop year honey are available until March 31, 2009. The national loan rate for honey is $0.60 per pound. Market prices currently exceed the loan rate, so LDPs are currently not available.

To be eligible for a loan, the producer must have produced honey in the US during the calendar year for which the loan is requested, and extracted the honey on or before December 31 of the applicable crop year; have continuous beneficial interest in the honey through date of repayment of the loan; and been responsible for the financial risk of keeping the bees. Producers are responsible for maintaining the quality of farm stored honey during the term of the loan.

Honey must be produced in the US by an eligible producer, from an approved floral source, and stored in approved containers.

The containers must be marked with the producer's name, type of honey, number of container and net weight. Pre-loan inspections are required before the loans can be disbursed.

Honey used as collateral may not be disposed of without approval of the FSA county office staff.

2009 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) Signup

Sign up for the 2009 DCP program for farms with base acres began Dec. 22, 2008. Signup will continue until June 1, 2009. Farms may not be enrolled after June 1 of the applicable contract period. There are no late filed provisions for contract years 2009-2012.

In addition to certain commodities, specific pulse crops have been added as an eligible commodity for the 2009 crop year for counter-cyclical payments only.

A producer with the sum of the base acreage on the farm with 10 acres or less must be a socially disadvantaged or limited resource farmer or rancher to be eligible for DCP payments.

Mixed Grain/Hay Loan LDP Eligibility

USDA does not establish loan rates for mixed commodities. A mixed commodity harvested as grain that does not meet grading standards is not eligible for a loan or Loan Deficiency Payment (LDP). A mixed commodity that is hayed or harvested as silage is not eligible for an LDP.

Eligibility for Grain/Oilseeds/Pulse Crops Harvested as **Grain** – If a mixed commodity is harvested as grain and a farm-stored loan or LDP is applied for, a sample of the harvested crop must be taken to a licensed Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) laboratory for grading, at the producer's expense. Loan or LDP eligibility will be determined based on the results of the sample.

Eligibility for Grain/Oilseeds/Pulse Crops Harvested as **Other Than Grain** – If the mixed commodity is harvested as hay or silage, there is no test to determine the percentage of each commodity in the mixture to establish the grade and class. Therefore, crops planted in a mixture and hayed or harvested for silage are not eligible for an LDP.

A commodity planted as a nurse crop with alfalfa may be eligible for an LDP if a full seeding is planted and the commodity is reported as the intended use for grain or forage. The County Committee may require documentation to support the seeding rate.

Ensure Benefits Are Received in a Timely Manner

To ensure USDA program benefits are received in a timely manner, please ensure you are consistent in the way you are presenting your operation to all USDA agencies including NRCS, Risk Management Agency (RMA), FSA and any other USDA agency programs you may partake in. For example, if you have signed up for program benefits with FSA as Joe Farmer, please sign up with NRCS as Joe Farmer. This will ensure Joe Farmer has completed all program paperwork and is eligible to receive payments. When in doubt, ask your county office.

Dairy Prices to Trigger MILC Payments

Due to low milk prices, FSA will be making payments in April to producers through the FSA's Milk Income Loss Contract, or MILC, program. The 2008 Farm Bill made changes to the MILC program, most notably the addition of a dairy feed ration cost adjustment in addition to changes to the payment rate and modifications to the per-operation poundage limit, depending on when the milk is produced.

FSA issues payment no later than 60 calendar days after FSA receives production evidence for the applicable month or the entire month's National Average Dairy Feed Ration Cost is posted for the applicable month, whichever is later.

MILC participants must select a month for which FSA will begin issuing payments for each fiscal year. Starting with the dairy operation's selected month, FSA will issue MILC payments based on that month's milk production and each consecutive month's production until the operation reaches the production cap or the fiscal year ends.

When dairy producers sign up for the MILC program they may select the current month as their start month. For subsequent years or if they wish to change a previously selected start month the producer must select a start month prior to the 14th of the month for which they want to receive payments and before the selected month's Boston Class I milk price is announced to the public.

Producers may contact the office to sign up for the MILC program.

Happy Spring!

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Lamb Referendum Ballots available at the Office. Bring documentation that you have sheep or lambs in your control.
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Wibaux FSA Office
502 2nd Ave NW
Wibaux, MT 59353

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Inside this Issue

Spring Grazing on CRP
NAP Deadline
Honey Loans
Mixed Grains/Hay Loan
LCP eligibility
Final loan/LDP availability
Deadline
MILC Payments
DCP Signup

Important Dates to Remember

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Extension Service to Conduct ACRE/SURE Workshops

Date	*Time*	*Town*	*Location*	*Contact*
March 2	9 a.m. – noon	Plentywood	Jubliee Room - Courthouse	Terry Angvick 765-3406
	3 p.m. – 6p.m.	Wolf Point	Community Room, Dumont Building, Ft Peck Community College	Carrie Archdale 768-6321
March 3	9 a.m. – noon	Glasgow	Cottonwood Inn	Verlin Koenig 228-6241
	3 p.m. – 6p.m.	Malta	Great Northern Hotel	Marko Manoukian 654-2543
March 4	9 a.m. – noon	Havre	Hensler Auditorium Applied Technology Center, MSU-Northern Campus	Joe Broesder 265-5481
	3 p.m. – 6p.m.	Ft. Benton	Ag Center	Judee Wargo 622-3751
March 5	9 a.m. – noon	Conrad	Norley Hall	Dan Picard 271-4054
	3 p.m. – 6p.m.	Great Falls	Heritage Hall – MSU College of Technology	Wade Crouch 454-6980
March 6	9 a.m. – noon	Choteau	Choteau Public Library	Mark Major 466-2491
	2:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	Helena	Bill Hamilton Building - Fairgrounds	Larry Hoffman 447-8346
March 10	2 p.m. – 5p.m.	Sidney	USDA ARS Lab	Ben Larson 433-1206
March 11	2 p.m. – 5p.m.	Miles City	Courthouse Conference Room	Cindy Berg 874-3370
March 12	5:30 – 8:30 p.m.	Billings	Billings Hotel & Convention Center	Steve Lackman 256-2828
March 13	9 a.m. – noon	Lewistown	Fergus County Sheriff's Complex	Darren Crawford 535-3919