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Laramie County Comments

Happy November Laramie County Farmers and Ranchers!

The office is busy with keying in acreage reports for fall-planted crops. If you have not been in yet to report; please call us ASAP, as the deadline to report is this Tuesday, November 15th. We will need to know what, where, and when you planted, the irrigation status, organic/transitional/conventional status and the crop share. If you are organic; we will also need a copy of your organic certificate.



The ARC/PLC program is open for signups again. Signups need to be completed by March 15, 2023.

The Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) signup for fall crops and perennial grasses is December 1, 2022. If you have interest in having coverage for grazing pastures, perennial hay crops (less alfalfa), triticale, or other fall-seeded crops that RMA cannot cover; please give the office a call for more information.

For our livestock producers; the Livestock Forage Program (LFP) and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Programs (ELAP) are open for signups. Please give us a call for more information and/or to set up an appointment to apply. ELAP notices of loss must be made within 30 days of the loss being apparent, so please don't delay in contacting us.

- Laramie County FSA

The office will be closed on November 24th for Thanksgiving Day.

- Laramie County FSA & NRCS

USDA Reminds Laramie County Farmers and Ranchers to Vote in Laramie County Committee Election

December 5 is the Last Day to Return Ballots

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has started mailing ballots for the Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committee elections to eligible farmers and ranchers across the country. To be counted, ballots must be returned to the Name County FSA office or postmarked by Dec. 5, 2022.

Each committee has from three to 11 elected members who serve three-year terms of office, and at least one seat is up for election each year for a certain Local Administrative Area (LAA). Newly elected committee members will take office Jan. 1, 2023. Laramie County committee members help FSA make important decisions on its commodity support programs, conservation programs, indemnity and disaster programs, and emergency programs and eligibility.

The nominee up for election in LAA# 2, which includes ground south of county road 221 and East of county road 136, in Laramie County is Dave Bowman.

Bowman is nominated to serve as a committee member for a 3-year term. Bowman resides near Egbert and has produced wheat, sunflowers, millet, corn, oats, hay, and cattle for many years.

Producers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program to be eligible to vote in the county committee election. A cooperating producer is someone who has provided information about their farming or ranching operation but may not have applied or received FSA program benefits. Also, for county committee elections, producers who are not of legal voting age, but supervise and conduct the farming operations of an entire farm, are eligible to vote.

Producers can find out if their LAA is up for election and if they are eligible to vote by contacting their local FSA county office. Eligible voters who do not receive a ballot in the mail can request one from their local FSA county office. Visit fsa.usda.gov/elections for more information.

Applying for Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) makes loans to youth to establish and operate agricultural income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5,000.

Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

1. Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) or a legal resident alien
2. Be 10 years to 20 years of age
3. Comply with FSA's general eligibility requirements
4. Be unable to get a loan from other sources
5. Conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work as outlined above
6. Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor. The project supervisor must recommend the youth loan applicant, along with providing adequate supervision.

For help preparing the application forms, contact the Platte County USDA Service Center at 307-322-4050 x2 or visit fsa.usda.gov.

Making Your Land More Resilient to Drought

Now that the 2022 crop year has ended, it's time to start planning for 2023 and beyond. Many farmers and ranchers west of the Mississippi River have had a very difficult year in 2022 due to drought. Those in other areas of the country were spared from the worst of the drought this time but may not be as lucky in future years. So, as you're planning for 2023 production, you may want to consider some conservation practices that can help make your land and livestock more resilient to drought and help your bottom line.

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service can help you conserve water and build resilience to drought, through conservation practices that improve irrigation efficiency, boost soil health, and manage grazing lands.

Irrigation Efficiency

USDA helps you improve your irrigation efficiency to ensure each drop of water is used wisely. Saving water on your farm can help during drought and can offset rising water costs; reduce expenditures for energy, chemicals, and labor; and enhance revenues through higher crop yields and improved crop quality. Funded conservation practices include conversion to more efficient irrigation systems, such as micro-irrigation or subsurface drip irrigation, installation of irrigation pipeline, irrigation water management, structures for water control, and flow meters. Tools like drip irrigation, which provides water precisely where and when it's needed, can achieve greater precision with flow meters and soil moisture sensors.

Soil Health

In addition, soil health conservation practices, such as reduced- or no-till, cover crops, mulching and residue management can help to make your soil, and the plants you grow or animals you raise, healthier. Healthier soil can absorb and retain more water for longer periods of time, making your farm or ranch more resilient to drought. Using soil health practices, you can conserve water by increasing your soil's water-holding capacity and use conservation tillage to keep the ground covered, reducing water loss through transpiration and evaporation.

And soil health practices increase organic matter, and each pound of organic matter can hold up to 20 pounds of water. Every 1% increase in organic matter results in as much as 25,000 gallons of soil water per acre. Each 1% increase in organic matter can also provide up to 30 pounds of more available nitrogen per acre. That means less money and time spent on inputs like water and fertilizer, which make your operation more profitable.

Rotational/Prescribed Grazing, Water Sources for Livestock

Drought also impacts grazing lands, and NRCS works with you to increase the resilience of your livestock operation. Ranchers can adapt to dry conditions in two main ways: increasing the availability and suitability of forage and ensuring that cattle have an adequate and reliable source of water. For forage, rotational or prescribed grazing (rotating cattle among pastures) can relieve pressure on stressed vegetation and ensure a more consistent supply of forage for animals. NRCS conservationists can also work with you to plant more drought-tolerant forage species, plants best suited to local soils and conditions. For reliable sources of water, NRCS can help you with installing watering facilities, water wells, or water pipeline for livestock. Having available forage and water for livestock can make a big difference in difficult drought conditions.

USDA and NRCS are here for you, helping you recover from drought and prepare for the next one. For more information on drought recovery assistance at <https://www.farmers.gov/protection-recovery/drought#recovery>. For more information on conservation practices to make your operation more resilient to drought in future years, go to www.nrcs.usda.gov.



Laramie County USDA Service Center

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Thomas Tjepkes

Farm Loan Manager:

Rob Weppner
307-269-3112

FSA County Committee:

Theron Anderson
Dave Bowman
T. J. Hollingsworth
Heidi Romsa

Next County Committee Meeting:

December 8, 2022