

January 2018



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

BULLETIN

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Having trouble viewing this email? [View it as a Web page.](#)

- [FROM JEN'S DESK](#)
- [ANNUAL POLICY REMINDERS](#)
- [DOCUMENT THE DROUGHT: PRODUCERS OFFERED VOICE IN US DROUGHT MONITOR](#)
- [NAP INSURANCE- HAY & GRAZING](#)
- [COMMUNICATION IS KEY](#)

Sweetwater/Sublette-Uinta County FSA Updates

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County Executive Director:
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Farm Loan Manager:
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Program Technician:
Ashley Simpson (UIN)
Sadie St. Clair (SWT/SUB)

County Committee:
Pete Arambel (SUB)
Penny Chrisman (SUB)
Kaye Goicolea (SWT)
Bob Slagowski (SWT)

Wes Lupher (UIN)
Dustin Condos (UIN)

FROM JEN'S DESK

Things are slowing down at the office as we wrap up 2017 and prepare for 2018. FSA flew aerial imagery this summer and its slowly being rolled out to county offices. We will be working on completing new maps for all our farmers and ranchers with the new imagery.

As winter comes, please keep in mind to report any losses or abnormal events to the County Office within 30 days of the losses becoming apparent. We have a very large area to cover and we aren't always aware of adverse conditions in all areas.

Wool producers be sure to watch your mail for "Page 1" to maintain eligibility for wool LDPs should we become eligible. "Page 1" was mailed at the beginning of January. If you are a wool producer and do not receive a "Page 1", please contact the office asap. Also make note that the deadline to purchase 2018 NAP coverage on your hay and grazing is April 1, 2018.

A reminder that our offices will be closed January 15, 2018 in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Stay warm!

Steve Sims (UIN)
L'Nette Iorg (UIN)

Next County Committee Meeting:

TBA

ANNUAL POLICY REMINDERS

Changing Bank Accounts - All FSA payments should be electronically transferred into your bank account. In order to make timely payments, you need to notify the office if you close your account or if your bank is purchased by another financial institution. Payments can be delayed if we are not aware of changes to account and routing numbers.

Civil Rights/Discrimination Complaint 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 your 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 Civil Rights within 180 days of the date you became aware of the alleged discrimination. To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington DC 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964 (voice or TDD), USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. A complaint must be filed within 180 calendar days from the date the complainant knew, or should have known, of the alleged discrimination.

Power of Attorney - For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., FSA has a power of attorney form available that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. If you are interested, please contact our office or any Farm Service Agency office near you for more information. Power of Attorney provisions do not apply to farm loan programs.

Nondiscrimination Statement - The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (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) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

Controlled Substance - Any person convicted under federal or state law, of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA benefits. Violations include planting, growing or harvesting a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium, poppies and other drug producing plants.

Foreign Buyers - 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. 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, realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

Sodbuster, Swampbuster - Most FSA programs require producers to comply with sodbuster/swampbuster provisions. These provisions require that producers follow an approved conservation plan for highly erodible lands planted to annual crops as determined by NRCS.

Be sure to contact NRCS on any new land that you plan to plant to an annual crop to ensure HEL compliance.

Swampbuster provisions state that converting a wetland to plant any crop will result in the loss of all USDA benefits.

FSA and RMA to Prevent Fraud, Waste & Abuse - FSA supports the RMA in the prevention of fraud, waste and abuse of 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. FSA will continue to refer all suspected cases of fraud, waste and abuse directly to RMA. Producers can report suspected cases to the county office staff, the RMA office or the Office of the Inspector General.

Adjusted Gross Income Requirements - The average adjusted gross income (AGI) limitation for commodity and disaster programs under the 2014 Farm Bill was changed to a \$900,000 limitation from all income sources. A person or legal entity, other than a joint venture or general partnership, is eligible to receive, directly or indirectly, certain program payments or benefits if the average adjusted gross income of the person or legal entity falls below the \$900,000 threshold for the three taxable years preceding the most immediately preceding complete taxable year.

Payment Limitation - Program payments are limited by direct attribution to individuals and/or entities. Through direct attribution, payment limitation is based on the total payments received by the individual, both directly and indirectly. Qualifying spouses are eligible to be considered separate persons for payment limitation purposes, rather than automatically being combined under 1 limitation.

No program benefits subject to payment eligibility and limitation will be provided until all required forms are provided and eligibility determinations are made. Eligibility and determinations may be requested by the County Committee or by the producer. All eligibility and limitation forms are subject to spot check through the end of the year review process.

Statutory provisions that require entities, earning program benefits that are subject to limitation, to provide the names, addresses and TINs of the members to the County Committee.

Noncompliance with AGI provisions, either by exceeding the applicable limitation or failure to submit a certification and consent for disclosure statement, will result in the determination of ineligibility for all program benefits subject to AGI provisions, Program benefits shall be reduced in an amount commensurate with direct and indirect interest held by an ineligible person or legal entity.

Acreage Reporting - Filing an accurate crop and acreage report at your local FSA office can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs. Failed acreage is acreage that was timely planted with the intent to harvest, but because of disaster related conditions, the crop failed before it could be brought to harvest.

Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date. Annual acreage reports are required for most Farm Service Agency programs. Annual crop report deadlines vary based on region, crop, perennial vs. annual crop type, NAP or non-NAP crop and fall or winter seeding. Consult your local FSA office for deadlines in your area.

To be eligible for the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program or a Marketing Assistance Loan (MAL) or Loan Deficiency Payment (LDP), producers must submit an acreage report to account for all cropland on all farms.

Changes in Farming Operation - If you have bought or sold land, or if you have picked up or dropped rented land from your operation, make sure you report the changes to the office as soon as possible. You need to provide a copy of your deed or recorded land contract for purchased property. Failure to maintain accurate records with FSA on all land you have an interest in can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. Making the record changes now will save you time in the spring. Update signature authorization when changes in the operation occur. Producers are reminded to contact the office if there is a change in operations on a farm so that records can be kept current and accurate.

Spousal Signature - Husbands and wives may sign on each other's behalf for FSA business, unless written request to exclude this option is received by the county office.

Firearms & Dangerous Weapons Forbidden in Federal Facilities - This is an important reminder to all customers and patrons of USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices and USDA Service Centers statewide that firearms are forbidden (even with a permit/license) in Federal Buildings. A Federal Building by definition is any building owned, leased or rented by the Federal Government, where Federal employees are regularly present for the purpose of performing their official duties.

The items that are prohibited in Federal facilities include any item prohibited by any applicable Federal, State, local, and tribal law and/or ordinance, as well as firearms, dangerous weapons, explosives, or other destructive devices (including their individual parts or components) designed, redesigned, used, intended for

use, or readily converted to cause injury, death, or property damage. Possession of firearms and dangerous weapons in Federal facilities as outlined above is a crime punishable by fines and imprisonment.

For a complete list of items prohibited in Federal facilities, please view and/or download the document titled, Items Prohibited from Federal Facilities: An Interagency Security Committee Standard: <http://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/isc-items-prohibited-federal-facilities-feb-2013-508.pdf>. The lists of prohibited items outlined in this document apply to all facility occupants, contractors, and the visiting public.

If you have questions or concerns regarding this notification, please contact your local Farm Service Agency office—<http://offices.usda.gov>.

DOCUMENT THE DROUGHT: PRODUCERS OFFERED VOICE IN US DROUGHT MONITOR

The USDA, in partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, produced the U.S. Drought Monitor to include a reporting feature that allows producers to report local drought impacts and conditions.

The report allows producers to:

- Provide a written description of drought impacts on livelihood, activities, etc.;
- Select categories to show losses and gains as a result of the drought;
- Report on the duration of drought event;
- Select Affected Places – geographic areas ranging from an entire state to a small area within a state;
- Submit images that document the drought and its impact;
- Provide contact information (includes an option to keep information confidential).

The reporting tool for producers to record the effects of the drought can be accessed at the following link: <http://droughtreporter.unl.edu/submitreport/>

More information including state specific drought impact maps can be found on the U. S. Drought Monitor homepage: <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/Home.aspx>

NAP INSURANCE- HAY & GRAZING

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds producers to review available USDA crop risk protection options, including Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage, before the crop deadline of April 1, 2018.

NAP covers losses from natural disasters on crops for which no permanent federal crop insurance program is available, including perennial grass forage and grazing crops, aquaculture, and honey.

Producers can determine if crops are eligible for federal crop insurance or NAP by visiting <https://webapp.rma.usda.gov/apps/actuarialinformationbrowser2017/CropCriteria.aspx>.

NAP basic coverage is available at 55 percent of the average market price for crop losses that exceed 50 percent of expected production, with higher levels of coverage, up to 65 percent of their expected production at 100 percent of the average market price, including coverage for organics and crops marketed directly to consumers.

For more information on NAP, service fees, premiums and sales deadlines, contact the County FSA office or visit the web at www.fsa.usda.gov/nap.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Farm Service Agency (FSA) is committed to providing our farm loan borrowers the tools necessary to be a success. A part of ensuring this success is providing guidance and counsel from the loan application process through the borrower's graduation to commercial lending institutions. While it is FSA's commitment to advise borrowers as they identify goals and evaluate progress, it is crucial for borrowers to communicate with their farm loan staff when changes occur. It is the borrower's responsibility to alert FSA to any of the following: any proposed or significant changes in the farming operation; any significant changes to family income or expenses; the development of problem situations; any losses or proposed significant changes in security.

In addition, if a farm loan borrower cannot make payments to suppliers, other creditors, or FSA on time, contact your farm loan staff immediately to discuss loan servicing options

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in this meeting should contact Jennifer Dutton at 307-362-3062 extension 2 or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).
