

December 2013



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Colorado State FSA Office Quarterly Updates

Colorado State FSA Office

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www.fsa.usda.gov/co

Next State Committee Meeting: January 11, 2013

From The State Executive Director

During this holiday season, we celebrate Thanksgiving as a reflection of all we have to be thankful for. As farmers and ranchers, we are proud of the fact that Colorado agriculture is the backbone of our state's economy and our ability to provide the food and fiber to feed the people of Colorado, the nation and throughout the world. We celebrate, Christmas and the right to our individual beliefs, celebrate family and friends. We look to the New Year celebration with optimism of producing bountiful crops, fruit and vegetables and livestock.

We at FSA are proud of our partnership with Colorado farmers, ranchers, landowners and citizens of our rural communities. We are blessed to have a dedicated group of employees at the state and county levels within all program areas of the Farm Service Agency. They are committed to providing you the best information and service on the programs available to you.

In the new year of 2014, I want to invite you to stop by your local office, visit with the staff about the programs that would be of benefit to your operation. We are optimistic that we will have a new farm bill, new and improved opportunities for our partnership with you to be even stronger.

Holiday greetings to you and your family from your Colorado Farm Service Agency employees

Interest Rates
Farm Operating:1.875%
Farm Ownership: 4.124%
Farm Ownership-Down
Payment: 1.5%
Emergency-Actual Loss:
2.875%
Microloans:2.125%
Farm Storage Facility Loan:
7 year term - 2.0%
10 year term - 2.6

County Committee Elections

New County Committee Election Ballots to be Mailed

The County Committee Election ballots that were mailed to producers on Nov. 4 were incorrectly printed with the producer's name and address on the back of the ballot. County committee elections must use a secret ballot so the misprinted ballots cannot be used. Please destroy or recycle the misprinted ballot. If you have already voted, your ballot will be destroyed unopened.

New ballots will be mailed to producers on December 20, 2013.

These ballots will indicate that they are the corrected ballot in several places, including on the outside of the mailing, on the ballot and on the outside of the return envelope.

The corrected ballot must be returned to the County FSA Offices or postmarked by January 17, 2014.

All newly elected county committee members will take office February 18, 2014. All county committee members whose term expires on Dec. 31, 2013, will have their term extended to January 31, 2014.

County committee members are an important component of the operations of FSA and provide a link between the agricultural community and USDA. Farmers and ranchers elected to county committees help deliver FSA programs at the local level, applying their knowledge and judgment to make decisions on commodity price support programs; conservation programs; incentive indemnity and disaster programs for some commodities; emergency programs and eligibility. FSA committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws.

To be an eligible voter, farmers and ranchers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm may also be eligible to vote.

More information on county committees, such as the new 2013 fact sheet and brochures, can be found on the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov/elections or at a local USDA Service Center.

Commodity Loans

Marketing Assistance Loans (MAL)

Short-term financing is available by obtaining low interest commodity loans for eligible harvested production. A nine-month Marketing Assistance Loan provides financing that allows producers to store production for later marketing. The crop may be stored on the farm or in the warehouse.

Loans are available for producers who share in the risk of producing the eligible commodity and maintain beneficial interest in the crop through the duration of the loan. Beneficial interest means retaining the ability to make decisions about the commodity, responsibility for loss because of damage to the commodity and title to the commodity. Once beneficial interest in a commodity is lost, it is ineligible for a loan, even if you regain beneficial interest.

Maintaining the Quality of Loaned Grain

Bins are ideally designed to hold a level volume of grain. When bins are overfilled and grain is heaped up, airflow is hindered and the chance of spoilage increases.

Producers who take out marketing assistance loans and use the farm-stored grain as collateral should remember that they are responsible for maintaining the quality of the grain through the term of the loan.

Unauthorized Disposition of Grain

If loan grain has been disposed of through feeding, selling or any other form of disposal without prior written authorization from the county office staff, it is considered unauthorized disposition. The financial penalties for unauthorized dispositions are severe and a producer's name will be placed on a loan violation list for a two-year period. Always call before you haul any grain under loan

LDPS for Unshorn Lamb Pelts

Eligible producers have until Jan. 31, 2014, to apply for Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP) for unshorn pelts produced during the 2013 crop year.

Eligible producers must have beneficial interest in the pelts, owned the lamb for at least 30 calendar days before the date of slaughter and sell the unshorn lamb for immediate slaughter. Producers must also comply with wetland conservation and highly erodible land conservation provisions on all lands they operate or have interest in.

To qualify for payment, pelts must have been produced by an eligible producer from live unshorn lambs of domestic origin in the United States.

Loans for Beginning Farmers and Socially Disadvantaged

Beginning Farmer Loans

FSA assists beginning farmers to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

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 median size.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

Loans for the Socially Disadvantaged

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operating type loans and/or purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided priority funding for members of socially disadvantaged applicants.

A socially disadvantaged applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities.

For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

Dates to Remember

December 20 - New Election Ballots mailed to all Producers on Eligible Voter lists for LAA's holding Election

January 17 - Last date COC Election Ballot to be returned to County Office or Postmarked

January 24 - Final date for COC Ballots to be Counted

February 18 - New COC Members take Office

March 15 - Deadline to Signup for NAP crops - Amaranth, Artichokes, Beans, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Buckwheat, Cabbage, Melons, Cantaloupe, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Corn, Cucumbers, Eggplant, Flaxseed, Flowers, Gourds, Grain Sorghum, Turnips, SugarBeets, Sunflower, Potatoes, Tomatillos and Tomatoes.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. 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).