



Rooks County FSA Office
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County Committee Members

Steve Cook, Chairman
Lois Ann Gasper, Vice Chairperson
Bill McCune, Member

The Committee meets the 1st Wednesday of each month

Hours: Monday- Friday
8:00 am to 4:30 pm

Office Staff:

James Adams, CED
Reesa Brown, PT
Betty Bedore, PT
Kacey Johnston, PT

February 2010

FSA COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTION

Bill McCune was elected to the County Committee (COC) for the South 1/3 of the county. Thanks to the producers who took the time to vote in the COC election. The COC is your grass roots link to Washington. Steve Cook and Lois Ann Gasper are the other COC members. Let them know of your concerns and suggestions for a better local office and State and National policies. We would like to thank James Eichman for his years of service and representation for the county as a COC member.

DCP Signup Continues

Signup for the 2010 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment (DCP) Program continues until June 1, 2010. The June 1, 2010 deadline is mandatory for all participants. FSA will not accept any late-filed applications.

FSA computes DCP Program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2010, you may request to receive advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment for each commodity associated with the farm. FSA will issue advance direct payments later this month. Counter-cyclical payment rates vary depending on market prices and are issued only when the effective price for a commodity is statutorily set below its target price.

The electronic DCP (or eDCP) service will save you time, reduce paperwork and speed up contract processing at FSA offices. It is available to anyone eligible to participate in the DCP Program. To access this on-line service, you must have an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires filling out an online registration form at <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov> followed by a visit to the local USDA Service Center for identity verification.

Producers eligible for the DCP Program are also able to enroll in the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program or the Counter-cyclical Program. You may first enroll in the DCP Program, receive advance direct payments and then later modify your enrollment to the ACRE program or you may wait and elect to enroll in DCP and ACRE at the same time in spring 2010.

New Compliance and Verification Procedure

The 2008 Farm Bill required the establishment of valid procedures under which to conduct audits of persons and legal entities determined most likely to exceed the AGI limitations. USDA and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) have developed an electronic information exchange process strictly for the purpose of average AGI verification. This process electronically looks at certain line items on tax returns filed for the applicable three-year period; performs a series of calculations to arrive at the average amounts; and then compares these values to the average AGI limitations. USDA receives the results of these comparisons with indicators of whether the participant appears to exceed or not exceed the average AGI amounts. No actual tax data will be included. The cases that appear to exceed the average AGI limitations will be received and evaluated by FSA state office or headquarters personnel.

IRS requires written consent from the individual or legal entity to provide USDA verification of the average AGI. Such written consent is given by completion of forms CCC-927, Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information - Individual; or if a legal entity, CCC-928, Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information - Legal Entity. These forms allow for the selection of the appropriate year or years and authorize IRS to perform the average AGI calculations. These consent forms must be completed for the same year or years an individual or legal entity was required to provide an AGI certification. FSA-211 or FSA-211A Power of Attorneys **cannot** be used for the CCC-927 or CCC-928. In addition, a person cannot sign for their spouse. The forms must actually be signed by the individual or authorized representative for the legal entity. If unsure about signatures, consult your tax accountant. Completed forms must be **mailed directly by the producer to the IRS address on the form. Do not mail the form to USDA, FSA, or NRCS. FSA cannot mail these forms to IRS on behalf of producers. Failure to provide the written consent will require refund of applicable payments received from FSA and NRCS.**



Foreign Investors Reporting Rule

Foreign owners of U. S. agricultural land are required by law to report their land holdings, acquisitions, leases of 10 years or more and land use changes within 90 days to the local FSA office. Failure to report these changes can result in a civil penalty of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of their interest in the agricultural land.

Reasonable Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment to attend or participate in meetings or events sponsored by the Farm Service Agency. If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in one of our events, please call the FSA county office and we will be happy to make any needed arrangements.

Spousal Signatures

Husbands and wives may sign documents on behalf of one another for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation programs in which either has an interest. This option is automatically available unless a written request for exclusion is made to the county office staff by either spouse.

There are exceptions to the rule. Spouses may not sign FSA-211's on behalf of each other or sign on behalf of the other as an authorized signatory for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations or other similar entities. Spouses must have a power of attorney on file or sign personally for claim settlements, such as promissory notes, and on security documents for price support loans.

Individual signatures are also required on certain Farm Loan and Farm Storage Facility Loan Documents. A spouse's authority to sign documents on behalf of the other spouse does not entitle the spouse to review or receive agency records of the other spouse.

REPORT FSA FARM RECORD CHANGES

Report record changes such as the sale of any acreage, operator change (for either fall or spring crops), estate or other entity formation or dissolution now. All changes must be reported to the county office within 30 days of the change.

Conservation Reserve Program

All Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) participants are required to maintain the CRP practices they have. This means on all practices that did not have trees or shrubs planted in them according to a CRP Plan of Operations; trees and shrubs must be controlled by whatever means will accomplish the control. Cutting, spraying and burning are all allowed. However, please check with FSA personnel before burning to make sure it will not impact other CRP issues. *Always refer to your Plan of Operations to determine what operations are required and when.*

Over the past several years intense reviews have been completed and it was apparent some CRP fields were not being properly maintained. Not completing the required maintenance measures will cause non-compliance and monetary penalties to be assessed.

Trees and shrubs on CRP are not the only examples of violations. Non-control of noxious weeds such as musk thistle, *Sericea lespedeza*, and bindweed among others, is also a violation. Some other examples of violations are:

- Permanent roads or trails
- Trash and brush disposal areas
- Parking or storage of junked machinery and autos
- Livestock hay or feed storage
- Buildings or houses
- Mowing strips for hunting
- Cosmetic mowing to make it look nice

Dates to Remember

Feb 15, 2010 – Office closed for Presidents Day

Mar 15, 2010 – NAP application date for coarse grains

Mar 31, 2010 – Commodity loan for small grains

May 31, 2010 – Acreage certification for small grains for grain.

May 31, 2010 – Office closed for Memorial Day

June 1, 2010 – Deadline for DCP/ACRE sign-up

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 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 USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."