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Staci's Corner

April Fools to Wyoming – 50 degrees on Saturday and Sunday...to buried (literally) in some places with record breaking snowfall. When we have weather events like this it always is a cause for concern for our families and our livestock. If you have losses, please contact the office as soon as possible. We Might be able to help.



The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) has recently had some updates to policy and procedure.

- Eligible livestock now reads: Removes the recreational restriction and now considers livestock that contribute to the commercial viability of an operation and are maintained for the purposes of pleasure, roping, pets, or show, by an owner, lessee, or contract grower covered livestock for eligible losses under LIP. All other eligible animals are listed in 1-LIP, subparagraph 24A.

Note: The change does not include livestock used for hunting and consumption by owner. They are ineligible livestock for LIP.

- Livestock used or intended to be used for racing or wagering are ineligible livestock for LIP.

The Livestock Forage Program (LFP) updated as well for 2022 LFP and subsequent years the following changes have been made to covered livestock.

- Removes the restriction of ostriches which are now determined to be eligible grazing animals for LFP.

Removes the recreational restriction and now considers livestock that contribute to the commercial viability of an operation and are maintained for the purposes of pleasure, roping, pets, or show eligible grazing animals and covered livestock for LFP. Animals must be weaned livestock as of the date of qualifying drought or fire.

Note: The change does not include livestock used for hunting and consumption by owner. They are ineligible livestock for LFP.

Livestock used or intended to be used for racing or wagering are ineligible livestock for LFP.

Okay, so we have some snow...does this mean we are out of the drought? Good question! We are continuing to monitor the soil moisture and working with NOAA and the University of Wyoming folks to keep a more accurate record of our county. YOU can help us with this! IF you want to have accurate drought monitoring, YOU can help by uploading your specific ranch location situation. Tiffany is working very hard to make sure Crook County is being monitored....but she could use your help. Please call the office or stop in and talk to her about what SPECIFICALLY you can do to help make sure information is submitted correctly.

On Thursday, March 23rd the Crook County USDA Service Center (FSA, NRCS and the CCNRD) had an Open House. Thank you to everyone who braved the winter weather and joined us. William “Bill” Bunce the FSA State Executive Director (SED) was able to visit with producers about some of their concerns.

IMPORTANT DATES

April 12th – DEADLINE to Order Trees from the Natural Resource Districts in Sundance & Newcastle

May 29th – Office CLOSED – Memorial Day Observed

June 2nd – DEADLINE to sign up for ERP Phase II and PARP

June 19th – Office CLOSED – Juneteenth

July 4th – Office CLOSED – 4th of July

July 17th – DEADLINE for Spring Crop Acreage Reporting

Very Sincerely,
Staci

Keeping Livestock Inventory Records

Livestock inventory records are necessary in the event of a natural disaster, so remember to keep them updated.

When disasters strike, the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) can help you if you've suffered excessive livestock death losses and grazing or feed losses due to eligible natural disasters.

To participate in livestock disaster assistance programs, you'll be required to provide verifiable documentation of death losses resulting from an eligible adverse weather event and must submit a notice of loss to your local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is apparent. For grazing or feed losses, you must submit a notice of loss to your local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent and should maintain documentation and receipts.

You should record all pertinent information regarding livestock inventory records including:

- Documentation of the number, kind, type, and weight range of livestock
- Beginning inventory supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts.

For more information on documentation requirements, contact your Crook County USDA Service Center at 307-283-2870 ext 2 or visit fsa.usda.gov.

NRCS Refines Nutrient Management Strategies to Improve Conservation Outcomes

For decades, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has supported producers and landowners in addressing their nutrient management and water quality concerns. We continue to refine our strategies as we learn more, including from data in a [recent report on cropland conservation outcomes](#) from our [Conservation Effects Assessment Project](#).

This report showed that despite many wins in conservation outcomes, there was an [increase in soluble nitrogen and phosphorus lost to the environment nationally](#) over a ten-year period. This increase was due to many factors, including changing trends in production, climate, and technology. Preventing nutrients from fertilizers and other sources from entering local waters ensures that they can be utilized by crops and benefits both water quality and farmer finances.

These findings can help NRCS more effectively support farmers nationwide by refining applied conservation to address site-specific risk for nutrient losses. In 2022, we developed a strategic operational plan to address



these changing trends, enhancing our existing nutrient management conservation efforts. This plan includes promoting [SMART Nutrient Management](#) planning and highlighting the importance of comprehensive, site-specific assessment of nutrient loss risks.

The plan also includes several [science-based nutrient management and water quality strategies](#) for improving conservation outcomes, and NRCS continues to move this work forward. To date NRCS has:

- **Updated how producers can be paid for utilizing nutrient management related practices.** NRCS has allowed payments to producers for soil, source nutrient, and water testing. Testing is key to determine the proper rate of nutrient application. NRCS has also created new payment scenarios to more closely align with the technology that farmers are encouraged to adopt, including enhanced efficiency fertilizers and precision application technology, which can help ensure nutrients are available at the right time, the right rate and in the right place.
- **Initiated development of a new mapping tool to help conservation planners identify areas on the land that can be more sensitive to nutrient loss.** The Sensitive Area Analysis Tool uses soil survey data to show the areas of a field at risk for nutrient loss that can benefit from site-specific nutrient management plans and other practices that can help mitigate nutrient losses. The tool will be available for use in early 2023. Ask NRCS at your [local USDA Service Center](#) for details.
- **Updated manure testing protocols through an agreement with the University of Minnesota ([Recommended Methods of Manure Analysis, Second Edition](#)).** These new testing protocols for manure testing take management practices into account and deliver more accurate values specific to the farm. These protocols will be used to update NRCS nutrient management policy including laboratory testing procedures and determination of accredited laboratories.
- **Led an effort to create four new, long-term assessments to better understand the importance of legacy (historical) sources of nutrients, such as phosphorus and nitrate, as well as sediment.** Effective conservation options for addressing legacy sources are being evaluated. For example, NRCS is supporting a stakeholder-driven study of a perennial grass buffer to enhance plant uptake of legacy nutrients, reduce losses and improve on-farm nutrient cycling.

These and many other efforts are continuing in 2023 and beyond. The [Inflation Reduction Act](#) is providing NRCS with an additional \$19.5 billion over the next four years to help support climate-smart agricultural practices, including nutrient management. NRCS is targeting funding for nutrient management, increasing program flexibilities, and expanding partnerships to support the development and implementation of nutrient management plans. NRCS will keep partners and producers informed as we make further improvements and updates.

Maintaining ARC/PLC Acreage



If you're enrolled in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs, you must protect all cropland and noncropland acres on the farm from wind and water erosion and noxious weeds. By signing ARC county or individual contracts and PLC contracts, you agree to effectively control noxious weeds on the farm according to sound agricultural practices. If you fail to take necessary actions to correct a maintenance problem on your farm that is enrolled in ARC or PLC, the County Committee may elect to terminate your contract for the program year.

USDA Microloans Help Farmers Purchase Farmland and Improve Property

Farmers can use USDA farm ownership microloans to buy and improve property. These microloans are especially helpful to beginning or underserved farmers, U.S. veterans looking for a career in farming, and those who have small and mid-sized farming operations.



Microloans have helped farmers and ranchers with operating costs, such as feed, fertilizer, tools, fencing, equipment, and living expenses since 2013.

Microloans can also help with farmland and building purchases and soil and water conservation improvements. FSA designed the expanded program to simplify the application process, expand eligibility requirements and expedite smaller real estate loans to help farmers strengthen their operations. Microloans provide up to \$50,000 to qualified producers and can be issued to the applicant directly from the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).

To learn more about the FSA microloan program, contact Eilish Hansen at the Campbell County USDA Service Center at 307-682-8843 ext. 2 or visit fsa.usda.gov/microloans.



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