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A Message from the Weston County Executive Director

It's the start of fall, a busy season with a great amount of ranch and farming activity as everyone is gearing up for fall and preparing for winter. Please keep safety in mind as you go about all your activities.

We are also busy at the Farm Service Agency office. We are working hard to finish out open applications, completing farm records changes, and general records cleanup. As we rollover to the new fiscal year on October 1, 2023, we are also getting ready to make annual [Conservation Reserve Program \(CRP\)](#) and [Grassland CRP](#) payments as well as payments for eligible [Agriculture Risk Coverage \(ARC\)](#) and [Price Loss Coverage \(PLC\)](#) programs, [Emergency Relief Program](#) (ERP), and [Pandemic Assistance Revenue Program](#) (PARP).

If you are a producer who has [Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program \(NAP\)](#) coverage on any of your crops for 2023, please remember it's important to file a timely notice of loss when a disaster occurs or when the losses from a natural disaster become apparent. Losses include lower than expected yield from harvested fields as well as fields you were not able to harvest due to poor growth. There are specific timelines for such reporting, depending on the crop covered by NAP. Please contact our office if you have any questions about the requirements associated with NAP coverage.

For producers who did NAP buy-up on eligible hay crops for 2023, please be on the lookout for the notification letter sometime between now and February 2024 with the premium payment owed for the additional coverage. If you have questions, or do not receive the notification, please contact our office. The notification is generated at the National level and the county office does not see a copy of your letter so please have it handy if you contact our office with questions.

As you start risk mitigation planning for 2024 and would like to consider or continue using NAP for your operation, the deadline to sign up for grazing and fall crop coverage is **Friday, December 1, 2023**. Spring crop coverage deadline is **Monday, April 1, 2024**. See the article below to see if this program is right for you and for available coverage options.

We have several outstanding disaster and price support applications for year 2023 in our office. If you submitted notice of losses for livestock and crop losses or plan to request assistance for your wool, watch your mailbox for notice of deadlines and additional information that may be required. If you are participating in these programs and have already submitted your applications for payment, we are working hard on

completing these and getting them through the required for 1st and 2nd level reviews, a lengthy and time-consuming process.

A reminder for those producers who have planted fall crops, the deadline for reporting them is **Wednesday, November 15, 2023**.

We will soon be announcing nominees for the 2023 [COC Election](#) for Local Administration Area (LAA) 1 in the northeast area of Weston County. Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters on November 6, 2023. To find out if you are located in LAA 1, we have a new GIS locator tool found [here](#) to identify the LAA you or your farming interests are located in.

And do you know what I learned today? Cows like being told farmer jokes because they like to be amused.

If you have any questions or concerns, always know you can reach out to me, my office staff, or our committee members.

Wishing you all a safe and healthy fall,

Sherie Hilgenkamp
Weston County Executive Director

UPCOMING DEADLINES & IMPORTANT DATES

- **September 23, 2023:** Weston County Hazardous Waste Day - collections run 10am through 1pm Saturday at the Upton High School parking lot.
- **September 28, 2023:** Weston County FSA County Committee Meeting on Thursday at 1pm.
- **October 1, 2023:** Start of Fiscal Year 2024.
- **October 9, 2023:** Office closed Monday for federal holiday.
- **October 10, 2023:** Weston County Natural Resource District at 3pm on Tuesday.
- **October 24, 2023:** Final date for water testing submissions through the Weston County Natural Resource District on Tuesday.
- **November 6, 2023:** Ballots for COC Election in LAA 1 will be mailed out to eligible voters Monday.
- **November 15, 2023:** Fall acreage reporting deadline on Wednesday. This is also a good time to turn in your 2023 hay production.

Also remember the following:

NAP Notice of Loss must be filed the earlier of 15 days of the disaster occurrence or when losses become apparent, or 15 days of the final harvest date.

LIP Notice of Loss must be filed 30 calendar days of when the loss is first apparent. **Leases and/or Land Ownership changes including operational changes** must be reported within 30 calendar days of change to avoid late fees, repayment of funds issued and/or ineligibility for program participation. The deadline to submit changes for 2023 program year has closed. For the 2024 program year the deadline for all changes is August 1, 2024.



Is the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program Right for You?

Farmers and ranchers rely on crop insurance to protect themselves from disasters and unforeseen events, but not all crops are insurable through the USDA's Risk Management Agency. The Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) provides producers another option to obtain coverage against disaster for these crops. NAP provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops impacted by natural disasters that result in lower yields, crop losses, or prevents crop planting.

Commercially produced crops and agricultural commodities for which crop insurance is not available are generally eligible for NAP. Eligible crops include those grown specifically for food, fiber, livestock consumption, biofuel or biobased products, or value loss crops such as aquaculture, Christmas trees, ornamental nursery, and others. Contact your local FSA office to see which crops are eligible in your state and county.

Eligible causes of loss include drought, freeze, hail, excessive moisture, excessive wind or hurricanes, earthquake and flood. These events must occur during the NAP policy coverage period, before or during harvest, and the disaster must directly affect the eligible crop. For guidance on causes of loss not listed, contact your local FSA county office.

Interested producers apply for NAP coverage using FSA form [CCC-471](#), "Application for Coverage," and pay the applicable service fee at the FSA office where their farm records are maintained. These must be filed by the application closing date, which varies by crop. Contact your local FSA office to verify application closing dates and ensure coverage for eligible NAP crops.

At the time of application, each producer acknowledges they have received the [NAP Basic Provisions](#), which describes NAP requirements for coverage. NAP participants must report crop acreage shortly after planting and provide verifiable or reliable crop production records when required by FSA.

Producers are required to pay service fees which vary depending on the number of crops and number of counties your operation is located in. The NAP service fee is the lesser of \$325 per crop or \$825 per producer per administrative county, not to exceed a total of \$1,950 for a producer with farming interests in multiple counties. Premiums also apply when producers elect higher levels of coverage with a maximum premium of \$15,750 per person or legal entity.

A producer's certification on Form CCC-860 *Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, Beginning and Veteran Farmer or Rancher Certification* may serve as an application for basic NAP coverage for all eligible crops beginning with crop year 2022. These producers will have all NAP-related service fees for basic coverage waived, in addition to a 50 percent premium reduction if higher levels of coverage are elected.

For more detailed information on NAP, download the [NAP Fact Sheet](#). To get started with NAP, we recommend you contact your [local USDA service center](#).

September is the National Suicide Prevention Month

Agricultural communities across this nation have experienced severe demands and challenges this past year. Unpredictable weather, crop disease, volatile markets, heavy workloads, social issues, and personal isolation are just a handful of the challenges that people in agriculture face. Many of us have experienced a crisis in the last year, or we are currently in a crisis. Stress affects each of us differently and personally. If you or someone you know is experiencing a crisis and may need support. Reach out. It's OK to ask for help.

The Wyoming Department of Agriculture has compiled a list of resources to help in stressful times. These resources and more can be found [here](#).



**IT'S OK
TO ASK
FOR HELP**

Have you experienced problems like rising costs, market fluctuations, family conflicts, or extreme weather?

Are you stressed or feeling defeated?

Even the toughest people **NEED HELP** sometimes.

AgriStress
HELPLINE
for Wyoming

833.897.2474
call or text

Scan code to save the number!

Conservation Practices Can Protect Livestock from Harmful Algal Blooms This Summer

Summer is the season for freshwater harmful algal blooms, which can produce toxins that are harmful to humans, livestock, working animals, and pets. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has several conservation practices that may help farmers and ranchers protect animals and people by restricting access to contaminated water or providing alternate water sources.

The ABCs of HABs

Freshwater harmful algal blooms (HABs) are usually caused by rapid growth of blue-green algae (known as cyanobacteria) in water bodies such as lakes, ponds, and streams. These organisms can produce toxins (known as cyanotoxins) that are harmful to humans, livestock, working animals, and pets. Contacting or ingesting contaminated water (including water spray or mist) can result in irritation, illness, or even death.

Cyanobacteria are naturally found in water bodies, so they cannot be eradicated. Instead, it's important to understand how and why blooms occur. Cyanobacterial blooms and their potential toxicity often are a result of excess nutrients, such as phosphorus and nitrogen, in water bodies. Excess nutrients can come from adjacent agricultural lands, livestock waste, and leaky septic systems, among other sources. HABs typically

form in summer, when warm, nutrient-rich, stagnant waters and more frequent sunlight increase the opportunity for their growth.

Treatment of current HABs involves chemical, biological, or mechanical treatment targeted directly at the contaminated waters. Prevention of future HABs involves changing the conditions that favor cyanobacteria, including nutrient management of the surrounding land and trapping or treating nutrient losses to waterbodies.

Risks HABs pose to livestock, working animals, and pets

Symptoms* of cyanotoxin exposure in animals include:

- vomiting
- excessive salivation
- fatigue
- staggered walking
- difficulty breathing
- weakness
- convulsions
- liver failure

In severe cases, HAB poisoning can lead to death. Therefore, any potential intoxication needs to be immediately addressed by qualified professionals.

NRCS is not the authority on HAB symptoms in animals and humans. Please refer to the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\) website](#) for further information on HAB symptoms or contact your state or county health department.

Steps you can take if a potential exposure to cyanotoxins has occurred:

1. Eliminate animal access to the suspected contaminated water source.
2. Wash animals with clean water and monitor for symptoms of exposure to cyanotoxins. Isolate any animals exhibiting symptoms and seek veterinary care as soon as possible.
3. An alternative source of livestock drinking water might be needed.
4. Contact the appropriate state agency for sampling and testing guidance to test the water source for HABs and cyanotoxins. It is not safe for landowners to sample the water themselves without proper personal protective equipment and procedures.
5. If a HAB occurs, there is potential for recurrence. Therefore, the waterbody should be monitored.
6. Adopt conservation practices that reduce the risk of livestock exposure to HABs and prevent and reduce nutrient loading to waters to minimize the risk of future HABs occurrences.

Reduce livestock exposure to HABs

If HABs or cyanotoxins have been detected in a water body, preventing exposure by restricting access is key to ensuring the health and well-being of people, livestock, working animals and pets on the farm.

NRCS has several conservation practices that may be useful to exclude livestock from contaminated waters or provide alternative water sources. Some examples are:

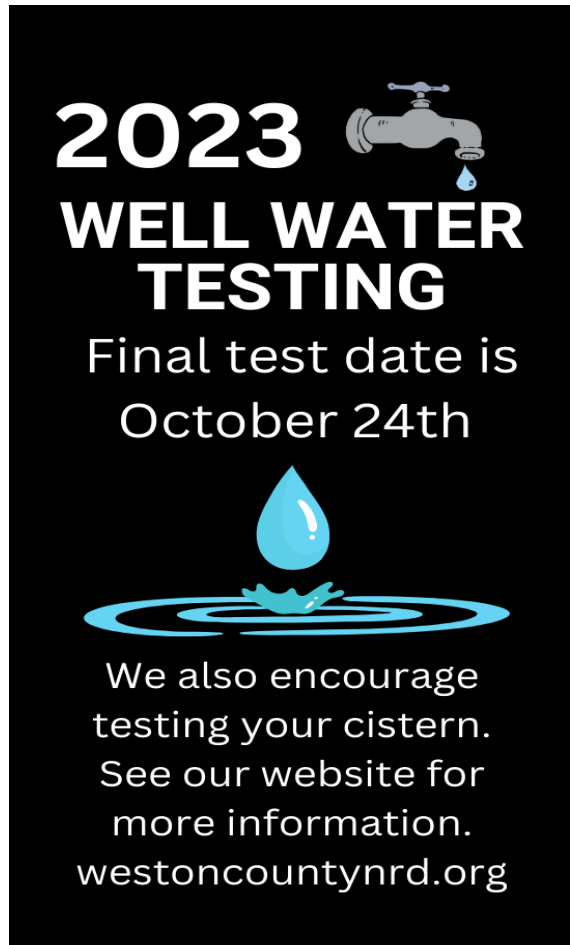
- Fencing
- Pond

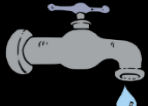
- Access control
- Water well
- Watering facility

For more information or assistance:

To learn more about how NRCS can help address HAB concerns or other natural resource concerns, visit the [NRCS website](#) or contact NRCS at your [local USDA Service Center](#).

Water Testing Services



2023 
WELL WATER TESTING
 Final test date is
October 24th



We also encourage testing your cistern. See our website for more information.
westoncountynrd.org



Do you know your water quality?

Call today to reserve your test kit

For more information call:
 (307) -746- 3264

- Domestic bacteria \$50
- Livestock and Irrigation Suitability \$40
- Annual Well Maintenance \$30



Attention all Buyers of Agricultural Products

It is required that buyers of agricultural products check or register with the Secretary of State's Office to determine if there are liens against the Seller of the product. If a lien is found, you are required to place the lien holder's name on the check as well as that of the Seller. Ag Products include but are not limited to: livestock (including horses), crops used for feed (hay, silage, oats, etc.), machinery, equipment and all other crops. **Failure to place the lien holder's name on the check may result in civil legal action being taken against the Buyer of the product. Protect yourself as a Buyer!** You may contact the Secretary of State's Office at 1-307-777-7311.

HAZARDOUS WASTE DAY

When: September 23rd - 10am-1pm

Where: Upton High School Parking Lot

**What to bring: Hazardous waste,
non-perishable food to donate to the
Upton Food Bank, or a cash donation**

Visit our website or call the office for more information on
the kind of items you can bring for disposal.

westoncountynrd.org

(307) 746-3264 ext4



Save Time - Make an Appointment with NRCS and FSA Offices

Producers are encouraged to call ahead to schedule an appointment. Appointments ensure maximum use of your time and ensure staff is available to tend to your important business needs. To contact your agency, use the information below.



Weston County USDA Service Center

FSA Office

1225 Washington Blvd., Ste. 2
Newcastle, WY 82701

Phone: 307-746-2701 ext. 2
Fax: 855-415-3437

NRCS Office

1225 Washington Blvd., Ste. 3
Newcastle, WY 82701

Phone: 307-746-3264
Fax: 866-574-1366

Farm Loan Manager:

Eilish Hanson
307-696-4459
eilish.hanson@usda.gov

County Executive Director:

Sherie Hilgenkamp
sherie.hilgenkamp@usda.gov

Program Technicians:

Jennifer Jones
jennifer.jones4@usda.gov

Kayla Pederson
kayla.pederson@usda.gov

FSA County Committee:

Randy Oleson, Chairman
John Riesland, Vice Chairman
Harry Tavegia, Member

Next County Committee Meeting:

September 28, 2023 at 1pm

District Conservationist:

Paul Eitel
paul.eitel@usda.gov

Rangeland Management Specialist: Tanner Jenks

tanner.jenks@usda.gov

NWTF Co-Operative Forester:

Austin Sommerville austin.sommerville@usda.gov

WCNRD Manager:

Caleb Carter
ccarter.wcnrd@gmail.com

WCNRD Board:

David Tysdal, Chairman, Rural Supervisor
Tucker Hamilton, Vice Chairman, Rural Supervisor
Emily Hartinger, Secretary/Treasurer, Rural Supervisor
Gene Norman, Urban Supervisor
Tom Streeter, At-Large Supervisor

WCNRD Board Meetings are held 3pm the second Tuesday of the month at the Weston County USDA Service Center