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## Crook County Corner

Happy New Year to our amazing producers. As we embark on this New Year journey, we have some new updates in the office. We have welcomed Hope Keller into our FSA family as an FSA Program Technician, she has been a wonderful addition to our staff here in Crook County. So, if you happen to stop by the office make sure and say hello and welcome her to the office.



With that note, Tiffany will also be moving on to new opportunities within another FSA office. Even though we will miss her greatly, we are wishing her good luck on this new adventure! With that being said, if you are trying to get in contact with anyone at the Crook County FSA Office, Tiffany will not be available after January 12, 2024. Please feel free to contact Dixie Mount acting CED, or Hope Keller via phone or by email. Dixie Mount at [dixie.mount@usda.gov](mailto:dixie.mount@usda.gov) or Hope Keller at [Hope.Keller@usda.gov](mailto:Hope.Keller@usda.gov).

Here are some words from Tiffany:

Thank you so much for allowing me to serve you all the last 3 years here in the Crook County office. You have helped me succeed in ways that I can't even explain. I have been very blessed to have worked with every single one of you. All of the producers of Crook County are one of a kind and I will miss all of you as I move on to this next exciting phase that is best for myself and my family.

Thank you again to all of you for embracing the changes that have been happening in the office and continuing to be understanding. Have a wonderful New Year!

### **Important Deadlines:**

**JAN 31: LDP** - Wool/Mohair/Unshorn pelts from previous year crop

**MAR 31: Loan/LDP** – Grain/Hay crops from previous year crop

**JULY 15:** Crop report for current year spring planted crops.

Crop production report for spring planted crops from prior year

**AUG 1:** Request current year farm changes

**NOV 15:** Crop report - current year perennial forage (hay)/ grazing crops.

Crop production report - current year perennial forage/graze crops

**DEC 1:** Purchase NAP - next year's pasture, forage (hay or graze), honey, winter wheat (for winter kill coverage)

## CROP LOSS INFO: When you have a loss on a crop covered by a NAP policy

You must file a notice of loss the earlier of: 15 days of the disaster event;

or when the loss becomes apparent to you.

### Days USDA Offices Are Closed

Jan. 17 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Feb. 21 - President's Birthday

May 30 - Memorial Day

July 4 - Independence Day

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## USDA Launches Loan Assistance Tool to Enhance Equity and Customer Service

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) launched a new online tool to help farmers and ranchers better navigate the farm loan application process. This uniform application process will help to ensure all farm loan applicants receive equal support and have a consistent customer experience with USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) regardless of their individual circumstances.

USDA experiences a high rate of incomplete or withdrawn applications, particularly among underserved customers, due in part to a challenging and lengthy paper-based application process. The Loan Assistance Tool is available 24/7 and gives customers an online step-by-step guide that supplements the support they receive when working in person with a USDA employee, providing materials that may help an applicant prepare their loan application in one tool.

Farmers can access the Loan Assistance Tool by visiting [farmers.gov/farm-loan-assistance-tool](https://farmers.gov/farm-loan-assistance-tool) and clicking the 'Get Started' button. From here they can follow the prompts to complete the Eligibility Self-Assessment and start the farm loan journey. The tool is built to run on any modern browser like Chrome, Edge, Firefox, or the Safari browser, and is fully functional on mobile devices. It does not work in Internet Explorer.

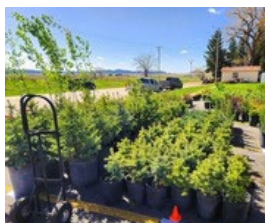
The Loan Assistance Tool is the first of multiple farm loan process improvements that will be available to USDA customers on farmers.gov in the future. Other improvements and tools that are anticipated to launch in 2023 include:

- A streamlined and simplified direct loan application, reduced from 29 pages to 13 pages.
- An interactive online direct loan application that gives customers a paperless and electronic signature option, along with the ability to attach supporting documents such as tax returns.
- An online direct loan repayment feature that relieves borrowers from the necessity of calling, mailing, or visiting a local Service Center to pay a loan installment.



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## 2024 CCNRD Tree Sale



The Crook County Natural Resource District is conducting their annual tree sales! If you are interested, please pick up an order form in the office or on their website at [www.ccnrd.org](http://www.ccnrd.org).

**Orders are due April 14, 2024! Order early for the best selection, as some species sell out quickly.**

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## Making Farm Reconstitutions

When changes in farm ownership or operation take place, a farm *reconstitution* is necessary. The reconstitution — or recon — is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation.

To be effective for the current fiscal year, farm combinations and farm divisions must be requested by **August 1 of the fiscal year** for farms subject to the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program. A reconstitution is considered to be requested when all of the required signatures are on FSA-155 and all other applicable documentation, such as proof of ownership, is submitted.



Total Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and non-ARC/PLC farms may be reconstituted at any time.

The following are the different methods used when doing a farm recon:

- **Estate Method** — the division of bases, allotments and quotas for a parent farm among heirs in settling an estate
- **Designation of Landowner Method** — may be used when (1) part of a farm is sold or ownership is transferred; (2) an entire farm is sold to two or more persons; (3) farm ownership is transferred to two or more persons; (4) part of a tract is sold or ownership is transferred; (5) a tract is sold to two or more persons; or (6) tract ownership is transferred to two or more persons. In order to use this method, the land sold must have been owned for at least three years, or a waiver granted, and the buyer and seller must sign a Memorandum of Understanding
- **DCP Cropland Method** — the division of bases in the same proportion that the DCP cropland for each resulting tract relates to the DCP cropland on the parent tract
- **Default Method** — the division of bases for a parent farm with each tract maintaining the bases attributed to the tract level when the reconstitution is initiated in the system.

For questions on your farm reconstitution, contact your Crook County USDA Service Center at 307-283-2870 ext. 2

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## CCNRD Used String Christmas Lights and Extension Cord Drop off



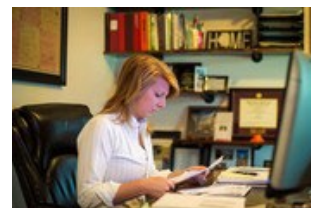
The Crook County Natural Resource District is recycling stringed Christmas lights and extension cord for free! Please bring them to the Sundance USDA Service Center during business hours prior to January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

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## Preparing for Tax Season

USDA issues 1099 forms for:

- Conservation programs administered by the Farm Service Agency and Natural Resource Conservation Service (such as the Conservation Reserve Program and Environmental Quality Incentives Program)
- Crop disaster payments



- Assistance for distressed borrowers, including through Section 22006 of the Inflation Reduction Act
- Market Facilitation Program

Additionally, USDA issues 1098 forms for USDA farm loans, if:

- The farmer is classified as an individual.
- And if the farm ownership or operating loan is secured by real estate.

USDA technical assistance is free and creates no tax implications



## Crook County USDA Service Center

P.O. Box 1070  
117 South 21st Street  
Sundance, Wy 82729

Phone: 307-283-2870  
Fax: 855-415-3442

### FARM SERVICE AGENCY

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