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Crook County Corner

Producer Services Changing

Current workload and personnel changes have created temporary demands on staff that have contributed to reduced producer services. Crook County staff can no longer individually reach out to producers to promote farm programs and enrollment deadlines. This responsibility must now be transferred to producers. Information on FSA programs is available through our monthly electronic bulletin, a quarterly printed newsletter, the USDA FSA website [USDA Farm Service Agency Home Page](#), [farmers.gov](#), or a phone call to the office. In addition, many agricultural publications are an excellent source of timely information on FSA programs, as are your neighbors and agricultural service providers. Please help reduce the burden on staff by making an appointment prior to visiting the office and informing yourself on current programs, especially enrollment deadlines. Information is only a phone call away at 307-283-2870.



Weather Related Livestock Losses

Subzero temperatures, combined with wind chill, are forecast to create dangerous conditions for livestock over the next few days. Should you suffer livestock losses and/or injuries resulting in sales due to extreme weather conditions you may be eligible for the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP).

Supporting Documentation

Accurate records and loss documentation are critical following disaster events and are required when filing notices of loss with FSA. Acceptable loss documentation includes:

- Documentation of the number, kind, type, and weight range of livestock that have died, supplemented, if possible, by dated photographs or video records of ownership and losses.
- Beginning inventory supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts.
- Contemporaneous producer records existing at the time of the event
- Brand inspection records
- Documentation that livestock were removed from grazing pastures due to an eligible adverse weather or loss condition.
- Costs of transporting livestock feed to eligible livestock, such as receipts for equipment rental fees for hay lifts and snow removal.
- Sales of Injured livestock at reduced prices must include the sale price as well as details on the type and weight sold.

Applying for LIP

A livestock owner must have legally owned the livestock on the day the livestock died and/or were injured by an eligible loss condition and have been maintained for commercial use.

A notice of loss and application for payment must be submitted to the FSA office that serves the physical

location county where the livestock losses occurred within 60 calendar days after the end of the calendar year in which the eligible loss condition occurred.

If you have any questions, please contact the county office.

Update your Records

FSA encourages early reporting of any changes to your operation in which you reorganize to form a Trust, LLC or other legal entity. Making these changes now will reduce the possibility of program eligibility complications later in the year. In addition, FSA is cleaning up our producer record database and needs your help. Please report any changes of address, zip code, phone number, email address, bank accounts for direct deposit, or an incorrect name or business name on file to our office. FSA and NRCS program participants are required to promptly report changes in their farming operation to the County Committee in writing and to update their *Farm Operating Plan* on form CCC-902. To update your records, contact your Crook County USDA Service Center at 307-283-2870.

Snowbirds, did you know that...

If you are wintering out of the area that you can apply for FSA farm programs offered in your home county at any FSA office throughout the country? There's no need to worry about missing an enrollment deadline! FSA is willing to help. Contact the nearest FSA office and we'll assist in working through any application.

NAP 2023 Production Due July 15th



Producers with NAP hay coverage in 2023 need to report their harvested production. FSA can supply maps for you to record your harvested production on a field-by-field basis. Timely and accurately reporting these yields is key to your farm's Actual Production History (APH) and indemnity payments. Production reports are due July 15th.

Farmers Can Now Enroll for the Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Programs the 2024 Crop Year

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced that agricultural producers can now enroll in the Farm Service Agency's (FSA) [Agriculture Risk Coverage \(ARC\) and Price Loss Coverage \(PLC\)](#) programs for the 2024 crop year. Producers can enroll and make election changes for the 2024 crop year starting Dec. 18, 2023. The deadline to complete enrollment and any election change is March 15, 2024. On Nov. 16, 2023, President Biden signed into law H.R. 6363, the *Further Continuing Appropriations and Other Extensions Act, 2024* (Pub. L. 118-22), which extended the *Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018* (Pub. L. 115-334), more commonly known as the 2018 Farm Bill, through September 30, 2024. This extension allows authorized programs, including ARC and PLC, to continue operating.

2024 Elections and Enrollment

Producers can elect coverage and enroll in ARC-County (ARC-CO) or PLC, which provide crop-by-crop protection, or ARC-Individual (ARC-IC), which protects the entire farm. Although election changes for 2024 are optional, producers must enroll through a signed contract each year. Also, if a producer has a multi-year contract on the farm it will continue for 2024 unless an election change is made.

If producers do not submit their election revision by the March 15, 2024, deadline, their election remains the same as their 2023 election for commodities on the farm. Farm owners cannot enroll in either program unless they have a share interest in the cropland.

Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium grain rice, safflower seed, seed cotton, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

2022 Crop Year Payments

This fall, FSA issued payments totaling more than \$267 million to agricultural producers who enrolled in the 2022 ARC-CO option and the ARC-IC option for covered commodities that triggered a payment. Payments through the PLC option did not trigger for the 2022 crop year.

ARC and PLC payments for a given crop year are paid out the following fall to allow actual county yields and the Market Year Average prices to be finalized. These payments help mitigate fluctuations in either revenue or prices for certain crops. Payments for crops that may trigger for the 2023 crop year will be issued in the fall of 2024.

Crop Insurance Considerations

ARC and PLC are part of a broader USDA safety net that also includes crop insurance and marketing assistance loans.

Producers are reminded that ARC and PLC elections and enrollments can impact eligibility for some crop insurance products.

Producers on farms with a PLC election can purchase Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO) through their Approved Insurance Provider; however, producers on farms where ARC is the election are ineligible for SCO on their planted acres for that crop on that farm.

Unlike SCO, the Enhanced Coverage Option (ECO) is unaffected by an ARC election. Producers may add ECO regardless of the farm program election.

Upland cotton farmers who choose to enroll seed cotton base acres in ARC or PLC are ineligible for the stacked income protection plan (STAX) on their planted cotton acres for that farm.

Web-Based Decision Tools

Many universities offer web-based decision tools to help producers make informed, educated decisions using crop data specific to their respective farming operations. Producers are encouraged to use the tool of their choice to support their ARC and PLC elections.

More Information

For more information on ARC and PLC, producers can visit the [ARC and PLC webpage](#) or contact their local [USDA Service Center](#). Producers can also make elections and complete enrollment [online with level 2 eAuth](#).

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 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.

Important Deadlines

January 31st: Deadline to submit LDP for 2023 wool/mohair/unshorn pelts

February 15th: 2023 NAP Premiums Due

February 19th: Office Closed in Observance of President's Day

February 29th: Deadline for 2023 Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)

March 15th: Deadline to Enroll in 2024 ARC/PLC



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Next County Committee Meeting

Crook County USDA Service Center