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Niobrara County Notes

Greetings Niobrara County Farmers and Ranchers!

Well, winter has finally decided to arrive. Hope you all fared well through the cold snap.

We have quite a few important deadlines coming up, first, if you received a postcard or letter about 2024 ARC/PLC, please be sure to contact the office about completing your 2024 contract on your base acres. The deadline for 2024 is **March 15, 2024**.



Just as a reminder, anyone who has begun the process for an Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP) application for activities such as additional feed transportation due to drought in early 2023 or additional feed purchases due to winter weather in early 2023, the deadline to complete your application for payment is **January 30, 2024**.

On the same token, those of you who have begun the process for Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) applications for livestock losses in 2023, please keep in mind that the deadline to submit your application for payment is **February 29, 2024**.

Sheep producers, the wool rate is currently at \$.40/lb. The deadline to submit an application for a Loan Deficiency Payment (LDP) on your 2023 wool is **January 31, 2024**. Please contact the office if you have any more questions or need more information.

Please bear in mind, as we enter winter weather season, that if you have any weather-related livestock losses, please notify the office as soon as possible after you become aware of your loss. As always, please be sure to let the office know about any changes to your operation!

Please help reduce the burden on FSA staff by making an appointment prior to visiting the office, so that you can be prepared for your visit and we can be prepared for you as well. Thank you!

-Niobrara County FSA Staff

Please note the following important dates and deadlines:

January 30, 2024 – Deadline to submit 2023 ELAP/LFP applications

January 31, 2024 – Deadline to submit LDP applications on 2023 wool

February 19, 2024 – OFFICE CLOSED – President's Day Holiday

February 29, 2024 – Deadline to submit 2023 LIP applications

March 15, 2024 - Deadline to submit 2024 ARC/PLC contracts

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](#).

Farmers.gov Local Dashboard Now Available for Producers in Wyoming

Farmers in Wyoming can now access county specific farming data and USDA resources all in one place via the new farmers.gov local dashboard. Your new farmers.gov local dashboard includes farming data and USDA resources including USDA news, commodity pricing, weather forecasts, historical climate data, past storm events, USDA service center locator and additional state resources for Wyoming and your county. The dashboard transforms complex data sets into easy-to-read charts and graphs to help you quickly find information that matters to you.

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 holders 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.



Niobrara County USDA Service Center

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Niobrara FSA County Committee

Joe Kruse, Chairman
Kurt Gaukel, Vice Chairman
Carson Wurdeman, Member
Vacant, SDA Voting Member

Next Meeting: January 25, 2024

NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE

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