Noninsurable crop closing date announced

March 15 is sales closing date for noninsurable crops.

Perkins County USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) urges producers who want to purchase coverage through the Noninsurable Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) to do so before Friday, March 15.

The NAP provides financial assistance when low yields, loss of inventory or prevented planting occur due to normal disasters.

Purchasing NAP protection is an easy way to practice risk management. 2012 has proven that natural disasters can directly affect the profitability and recovery of ag operations.

The following crops have a NAP application closing date of March 15, 2013: Spring seeded mixed forage, alfalfa, grass for forage and grazing, oats, and spring seeded vegetables.

To meet eligibility requirements for the NAP, crops must be noninsurable, commercially-produced agricultural commodity crops for which the catastrophic risk protection level of crop insurance is not available. If the Risk Management Agency (RMA) offers coverage for a crop under the insurance program in the county, then NAP coverage is not available for that crop.

In the event of a natural disaster, the NAP covers the amount of loss greater than 50 percent of the expected production based on the approved yield and reported acreage.

Eligible producers can apply for coverage using form CCC-471, Application for Coverage. File the application and service fee by March 15. The service fee is the lesser of $250 per crop or $750 per producer per administrative county, not to exceed a total of $1,875 for a producer with farming interests in multiple counties.

For more information contact the Perkins County FSA office at (308) 352-4747, or by going to www.fsa.usda.gov/ne

Disaster Designation

Perkins County is one of Nebraska counties designated as secretarial disaster due to drought conditions.

In a press release, Farm Service Agency (FSA) State Executive Director, Dan Steinkruger, announced 17 counties have been designated as contiguous natural disaster areas due to the ongoing drought affecting Colorado, Kansas and Missouri. Local counties include: Chase, Cheyenne, Deuel, Dundy, Franklin, Hitchcock, Keith, Kimball and Perkins.

These counties were declared a Secretarial Disaster on Jan. 9, based on their adjoining primary disaster areas in the specific state.

This designation authorizes emergency loans for eligible producers who are encouraged to contact their local FSA Service Center for detailed information about available programs and updated Secretarial Disaster Designations.

In addition to the Emergency Loan Program, the FSA has other loan programs and disaster assistance programs which can be considered in assisting farmers to recover.

While this release pertains to the availability of FSA programs, other federal agencies such as FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) and SBA (Small Business Administration) may also have assistance to the public. Information is available from these two agencies at the following websites: www.fema.gov and www.sba.gov.

IRS Form Changes

FSA implemented some changes regarding issuing IRS Form 1099-G and 1099-MISC for payments issued in 2012. FSA will no longer issue IRS Form 1099-G and/or 1099-MISC if a producer's total reportable payments are less than $600. In addition, FSA will only issue one IRS Form 1099-G and/or 1099-MISC for producers participating in multiple counties. Producers receiving reportable payments that total $600 or more before withholdings were applied are still being issued an IRS Form 1099.

Microloan Program

A new Microloan program has been developed to better serve the financial needs of beginning and socially disadvantaged operators, veterans, and niche crop and livestock producers. Producers can apply for loan funds up to $35000 to purchase seed, fertilizer, livestock, equipment, hoop houses, and other production related expenses. Requirements for managerial experience and loan security have been modified to accommodate smaller operations.

Discrimination Claims

If you, or someone you know, believe the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has improperly denied you farm loan benefits between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic or female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation. If you think you might be eligible to file a claim, call 1-888-508-4429 or visit www.farmerclaims.gov.