

Deadline looms to purchase risk management coverage

Written by Gothenburg Times
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Nebraska Farm Service Agency executive director Dan Steinkruger reminds farmers, ranchers and landowners that 2010 risk management coverage for all crops in all counties must be timely purchased in order to maintain eligibility for disaster program benefits.

Risk management coverage may either be purchased through the federal crop insurance program, or through FSA's NonInsured Crop Assistance Program (NAP), as applicable. Coverage purchased through the Pasture, Rangeland and Forage—Vegetative Index (PRF-VI) crop insurance pilot program meets the risk management coverage requirements.

March 15 is the spring sales closing date for purchasing both NAP and certain crop insurance coverage in Nebraska. Producers who fail to timely purchase the required risk management coverage for all required crops will be ineligible for 2010 program benefits available through the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE), the Emergency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP), and the Livestock Forage Program (LFP).

Steinkruger noted that in 2009, producers were provided an opportunity to "buy-in" and maintain eligibility for the permanent disaster programs after the sales closing date.

No "buy-in" opportunity will exist in 2010. Producers must purchase the required coverage by March 15 to maintain their eligibility for 2010 disaster program benefits.

In cases where PRF-VI was purchased, all acres of a crop must have been covered in order to maximize benefits under FSA's permanent disaster programs. Certain producers who qualify as socially disadvantaged, limited resource, or beginning farmers or ranchers, may be exempt from the risk management purchase requirements.

Specific questions regarding the risk management purchase requirements for each disaster program (SURE, ELAP or LFP) should be referred to the local Farm Service Agency office.

"Drought and other natural disasters damage crops and pastures every year in Nebraska,"

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Steinkruger added. "Farmers, ranchers, and landowners need to utilize all of the USDA risk management programs to protect themselves from natural disaster losses."