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FARM BILL COMPUTER ANALYSIS TEXAS A&M PROGRAM

It appears that ACRE could be a very attractive farm program option for Nebraska producers in 2009 and beyond. This is according to Brad Lubben, UNL Extension Public Policy Specialist. I haven't run enough Saline County examples yet to know but I'll learn a lot more in the next several weeks.

I have decided to take appointments effective immediately for any area producer wanting assistance in running a computer analysis of the ACRE Election Farm Bill option versus the regular DCP option. You will need to gather your 10 year crop yields (insurance forms from your insurance agent called the production, yield and acreage report) and from the FSA office, either the FSA Form CCC-509B (the payment sheet you receive at sign up) or 156EZ Form. One other key to running the analysis is planting intentions with the crop rotation plans for 2009-2012.

Texas A&M University released April 9th their on-line decision tool for analyzing ACRE vs. DCP that includes the current production and price projections with statistical analysis of probable outcomes over the 2009-2012 period. Now that's a mouthful but most operators in Saline County know what I am talking about. Yes, it has all of the bells, whistles, stops, and whatnots the law allows in the program. It is a bear.

The ACRE program does not replace crop insurance but is another tool or option farmers today have available to decide on. With early runs that I have conducted for Saline County, it is correct in stating the commodity price assumptions are very important for the 2009-2012 period. That is why the computer program has the option to set different price scenarios around a given national base price.

So with planting season here, when will farmers have the time to run the program? Not this week, unless operators are chased out of the field with rainfall. To see the program, go to www.afpc.tamu.edu and hit the link "ACRE Decision Aid - is now available."

The deadline to sign up for the ACRE program is August 14, 2009. The challenge is proving yields to FSA is required for the last five crop years. The proving yields is real and something the authors of ACRE did not give adequate thought. FSA is faced with a very difficult job. Elevator receipts will likely be better at determining yields than insurance histories. If a yield cannot be proven, FSA will use 90 percent of the county yield for the missing year, which may not be beneficial to a producer. These rules have not been announced yet. It appears that county FSA boards will have some discretion, maybe similar to the 2002 experiences we had.

So that's it, I opened the door for appointments or doing business electronically with follow-up phone calls. I have developed an input sheet of what you need. Call 821-2151 and talk to Lou for an appointment if you need me to run the computer. Many operators can run the program at home on their own computer and I can then simply provide free assistance for interpreting the result sheets if you need help.



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