



.....**STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSES MOUTH**

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Did you look at the calendar? We are almost at the end of September. Where did this month and this year go? But then my guess is that most of us don't have to look at calendar or even a clock to know what time of year it is. One only has to look at the dust coming from the combines in the soybean fields or the silage and farm trucks traversing down the country roads and highways carrying the cargo that represents this year's harvest of the inputs, time, sweat and equity. It is bitter sweet for many of our farmers as we are reaching the culmination of a year that was filled with early promise, the worry of uncertain weather and rain and especially the uncomfortable feeling of missing out on those rains that so many of our neighbors to the east were getting. Compounding the equation is the prospect of less of a harvest than what you hope for and then the price that we will receive for the commodities that will come from all that has been put into these enterprises.

It is not only praying that the weather and the crop itself holds up for harvest, that the machinery doesn't break down and then actually getting the crop in the bin or to the elevator. These farmers have a lot of other things on their minds as well. Let's take a look at a couple of these additional responsibilities, as with all that is going on some reminders may be good.

This past year was a traumatic one with decisions that had to be made concerning the 2014 Farm Bill, which took a lot of paperwork, worry, and sleepless nights as they had to make decisions on updating yields, acreage and then which direction to go with no program, or more likely ARC or PLC, and then of course insurance decisions. I can tell you that I was a part of that and you really didn't feel you had a full grasp on the ramifications of your decisions and that it was nothing but a big, risky crap shoot. But then if you look at the reality of it farming has always been a guessing game with high risk, but this all just seemed like someone else had control and the decisions could have consequences that were out of your control.

We will soon see what those decisions brought us but there is something that all farmers need to do and the time is running out. I know the timing is terrible and you have already made countless trips to the FSA office, but this is a critical part of what is required with as the requirements and the rewards for the this Farm Bill are kicking in. Yes one more trip is in line to finish up the paperwork for 2014-15 and prepare for next year as the enrollment deadline is here!

ARC/PLC Program Enrollment Deadline – September 30: Just so farmers, who are single minded right now about harvest have something else to worry about. The end of this month also means the deadline for producers to complete their ARC and/or PLC contracts for the 2014 and 2015 program years. I suggest highly that if you haven't already done so that you call your county FSA office to make an appointment now if you have not completed your ARC/PLC contracts. Please make note that all farmers enrolled in the Farm Bill program must complete this enrollment process by September 30th, this includes having all signatures on the contracts back into the county office. Payment eligibility may also need to be updated before payments that may be earned can be issued. It should be noted that these new programs, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, trigger financial protections for producers when market forces cause substantial drops in crop prices or revenues. I think that most of you will see that this will be the case for this year. For more information go to www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc

NAP: While we are on the subject of government programs and are coming out of a very dicey year for many of our area farmers, it may be an advantage to farmers who looked at NAP coverage to notify their county FSA office in a timely fashion if they had a crop that has failed or even if you had a loss of production. You will need to obtain a form CCC-576, "Notice of Loss", which is used to report failed acreage and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. Timely filing this report is required for all crops. Failed acreage must be reported on this CCC-576 form for losses to crops covered by the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). It should be noted that losses on NAP crops must be filed within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent. The reason for loss must be due to a weather related event. It is no secret that some individuals had storms and too much rain and others not near enough!

Changes in Pesticide Applicator Training: As many producers know, in order to obtain a pesticide applicators license and purchase Restricted Use Pesticides (RUPs), every three years you complete a private pesticide certification program or self-study program. The EPA is stepping in again to make our lives a little more complicated. As if worry about WOTUS is not enough, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing stricter standards for people to use RUPs. Yep, that affects our local farmers and those that work for farmers. You might ask "How do these proposed rule changes impact private pesticide applicators?" It looks to me that the proposal changes age requirements and then requires that both private and commercial applicators receive Continuing Education Credit (CEUs) covering core (general standards) content. It could be as many as 6 CEUs for private applicators, 3 CEUs for each private category (new categories proposed: aerial, soil fumigation, and non-soil fumigation), and 6 CEUs for each commercial category. A CEU is considered as 50 minutes of active training time. Currently NDA does not require a specific time for training but instead requires that each competency be addressed during private and commercial recertification training. This will likely change if these rules are implemented. For more information on this topic please go to <http://pested.unl.edu/proposed-certification-rule-changes>. If you have thoughts on this, you may want to provide your feedback. EPA is accepting comments on the proposal until November 23. To comment, please enter Docket ID: EPA-HQ-OPP-2011-0183 at www.regulations.gov/. You can make a difference!

The preceding information comes from the research and personal observations of the writer which may or may not reflect the views of UNL or Nebraska Extension. For more further information on these or other topics contact D. A. Lienemann, Nebraska Extension Educator for Webster County in Red Cloud, (402) 746-3417 or email to: dlienemann2@unl.edu or go to the website at: <http://www.webster.unl.edu/home>