

Agricultural News

By Warden Alexander, FSA Director

Changes in Tobacco Program Does Not Limit Carryover Tobacco

Jeffery S. Hall, Kentucky State Executive Director of the Farm Service Agency, wishes to remind farmers that recent changes in the Burley tobacco program do NOT change the amount of physical tobacco a farm can carryover from one crop year to the next. "Tobacco that is not sold this season can be carried over as unmarketed tobacco and sold in the 2002-03 marketing season," Mr. Hall said.

Effective with the 2002 Burley tobacco quota, the total amount of under marketings that can be "carried over" by quota additions to farms, nationwide, is limited to 10 percent of the national base quota for the preceding year. In the past three undermarketings could be brought forward and added to the next year's base quota provided the farm did not exceed the prior year's base quota plus prior year's "leaved-in pounds."

"However, the limiting of in-draft year under marketing was not effective beginning with the 2002 crop year," Hall said. "This will occur if the 2001 crop year under marketings for the entire Burley belt exceeds 10 percent of the 2001 national base quota. If the limit is not farm-specific, if the limit is not applied, it will be applied to the under marketings from all farms when the 2002 Effective Quota is determined."

Farmers that carry over unmarketed tobacco are required to report the pounds "carried over" to the local FSA County Office.

For additional information on the Burley Tobacco price support program, contact your local FSA County Office.

Applications for New Burley Tobacco Farm Quotas

Applications for new Burley tobacco farm quotas are being accepted through February 15, 2002. Before a new farm quota is recommended it must be determined that each applicant meets all eligibility requirements. Eligibility requirements include the applicant has no Burley tobacco quota, has land suitable for tobacco production, has two of the past five years marketing history of burley tobacco and 50% of all household income is received from farming.

Marketing Cards

Rockcastle County producers who have received marketing cards are reminded to carefully check their card for complete and accurate information. Please compare the farm number, warehouse number and pounds listed on the card to the information provided on the notification letter mailed with the card. If you find an error, write the card immediately to the office for correction(s).

Remember, you are responsible for the information listed on the card. When you have finished your sales of tobacco please return the marketing card to the FSA offices soon as possible.

Rockcastle County Disaster Declaration

On August 16, 2001, President Bush declared a major disaster in Kentucky based on damages and losses caused by severe storms and flooding that occurred on July 27, 2001. This declaration has been amended to include Amendment #1, 2 and 3.

The Kentucky counties declared as disaster areas and eligible for federal disaster assistance, including FSA Emergency Loans, included Rockcastle County declared as a disaster area under Amendment #3. Applications may be accepted for both physical and production losses, and applications pending on the specific date may be processed and completed when filed by the termination date of April 29, 2002.

2002 Crop Loan Rate

Decisions on loan rates for business after the Martin Luther King Holiday, USDA has postponed the announcement of rates for the 2002 crop year until after the legislative has had additional time to work on the farm bill proposal. This would suggest that if progress on the farm bill is not evident by planting time, the Secretary of Agriculture would be compelled at that point to announce the loan rates for the 2002 crops.

"Not knowing the basic value of potential crops makes it difficult to decide how much of each crop to plant for 2002. The House of Representatives proposal, HR2646, calls for reducing the soybean loan rate from the current \$52.6 per bushel to \$4.92 per bushel. Producers might

opt to plant fewer acres of beans if the soybean loan rate were adjusted downward to that degree."

Whatever the final content of the new farm bill, or the time frame of its completion, producers can be assured that some form of financial support will be available. Congressional members are aware that agriculture provides significant economic support for the "nation's" economy, and the economy needs to be bolstered during this critical period of recovery. USDA, through the Farm Service Agency, provides financial support for the entire economy when a healthy agricultural sector is maintained.

Burley Disposition is Open

Producers starting Monday, January 21, do not have to file an FSA-808 with the county office to get a different marketing card. Any type of marketing card will be valid at any location the producer chooses for the remainder of the 2001 burley season.

Stolen Tobacco

Producers are reminded according to regulations stated in 107B paragraph 941 pertaining to stolen tobacco a police report must be filed within 15 days of the theft and be submitted to the County FSA Office. Filing the police report according to regulations will possibly avoid a penalty, and/or a reduction of the next year's quota.

Disaster Leasing of Burley Tobacco

Producers wishing to lease tobacco to their farm for the purpose of selling excess tobacco may do so across county lines under the disaster leasing eligibility provisions. Farms leasing in pounds must have filed a FSA 578 (Crop Report), file a MQ 99 (Statement of Tobacco Production), be eligible for price support and have an approved FSA 375, Lease and Transfer. This year the producer must also file an FSA 808, Designation of Burley Tobacco Sales and Request for Marketing Card. The amount of lease in pounds is limited to 15% on the farm's effective quota as of July 1st including late leases. Disaster leasing will end February 15.

Producers who wish to lease tobacco quota due to a natural disaster must have:

- Prior to harvest filed a FSA 574 (Request for Disaster Credit)
- filed a FSA 375 (Crop Report)
- planned sufficient acreage to produce the quota
- made reasonable and customary efforts to produce the effective marketing quota

• have less than 80 percent of the farm's effective marketing quota because of a natural disaster

• meet all price support eligibility requirements.

For additional information on leasing quota under the disaster law:

• the provisions contact your local FSA office.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or familial status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's Target Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

Legislative Update

By: Danny Ford,

State Representative Medicaid, telemarketing receive legislative attention

The 2002 Session is in full swing and as of late Thursday night a total of 535 bills have been introduced for consideration, 113 in the Senate and 422 in the House.

One of the most impressive was a bill we approved Wednesday that would save an estimated \$100 million in Medicaid funds during its first year alone. The bill, HB 103, creates an advisory-committee of doctors and pharmacists to review prescription drugs effectiveness and cost-efficiency. Although the bill also requires that all new drugs be placed on the state's Medicaid preferred drug list, the committee can suggest that certain drugs be removed from the list. Current statute gives preference to name brand drugs that come with higher price tags.

The bill came a day after Pfizer Pharmaceuticals announced a program to help low-income senior citizens pay for life-saving medication to treat high cholesterol, diabetes, depression and other conditions. Ordinarily these prescriptions can run hundreds of dollars, yet Pfizer cardholders will pay \$15 a month. The program will begin on March 1 of this year. To qualify, seniors must receive Medicare and make less than \$18,000 a year. Senior couples who combined make less than \$24,000 are also eligible. Senior citizens without requiring enrollment fees or limits on the number of medications. To apply, call Pfizer at 1-800-717-7005.

Judiciary members also approved HB 138, legislation that would make all forms of human cloning in Kentucky a felony. Those who support human cloning argue that this is needed to ensure medical research and to protect life. Some argue that human cloning is like cancer continues. However, an expert in the issue told committee members that human cloning would threaten surrogate mothers and that the outcomes of animal cloning regularly suffer from serious abnormalities. Committee members that cloning has a failure rate of 95 to 99 percent. According to the expert, Dr. David Prentice, stem cells taken from the tail or the issue of a human adult are a much more promising source for medical advances.

The House Labor and Industry Committee approved a measure aimed at preventing telemarketers from getting unauthorized access and therefore being able to place unauthorized charges on consumers' credit cards. HB 194 prohibits telemarketers from obtaining credit card numbers by contacting credit card companies directly. The bill's provisions also prevent credit card issuers from providing account numbers to telemarketers.

Committee members also sent out another telemarketing measure, 47. This particular bill creates a "zero-call" list for Kentuckians who wish to have their names and phone numbers removed from telemarketing lists. The current law allows citizens to "put their names on a no-call" list, which means no telemarketers may call those numbers unless they fall under an exempted category. The attorney general's office says about 111,000 people have opted out of the list. If you would like to have your name added to the "no-call list," call toll-free 1-800-671-7701. Many legislators, myself included, have concerns about the bill because of how it might affect Kentucky's small businesses by preventing them from competing with businesses from other states. Because of these concerns, the issue of telemarketing is best addressed on the national level.

by the U.S. Congress.

Before I left Frankfort on Friday I had the opportunity to join about thirty of my colleagues for a press conference to unveil our redistricting plan. As of Friday it was the only plan that met both constitutional and court requirements. The plan is well-balanced and does the best job of evenly distributing our state's population without dividing counties any more than necessary. The plan, filed as Amendment to HB 1, came about because we are ready to put redistricting behind us and begin working on issues like education and tax reform. I hope the remaining two-thirds of my House colleagues will agree with us.

Also, I hope you will contact me if you would like to discuss this issue further. During the week I can be reached toll-free in Frankfort at 1-800-372-7181. In addition to the message line, the General Assembly offers several other toll-free lines to help you keep up with the session. A taped message containing information on legislative committee meeting schedules is available by calling 1-800-896-5225.

Information on the status of each bill lawmakers consider will be available on the Bill Status Line, 1-888-829-0021. Those with hearing impairments may leave messages for me by calling the TTY message line at 1-800-896-0305. If you have Internet access you can keep track through the Kentucky Legislature Home Page.

<http://www.kc.state.ky.us>

Beef Cattle Winter Production Meeting

Beef and dairy producers planning to participate in the Genetic Improvement Cattle Share program are required to attend a workshop on EPD's (Expected Progeny Differences). The workshop will help farmers fully understand EPD numbers for the breed of bull and type of bull they plan to buy. Hopefully this will avoid the problem where bulls are purchased and their EPD's do not qualify for Cattle Share. The workshop will be held Thursday, January 24, at 6:30 pm at the Extension office.

The third and final Phase I Cattle Share Program that Rockcastle Cattlemen's Association will be conducting is for cattle handling facilities. Handling facilities are to help carry out herd health practices such as vaccinations, dehorning,

castration, etc. Two levels of cost-share are available. 1) \$1500 on a 50:50 match for producers who attain a BQA (Beef Quality Assurance Certification) and 2) \$2500 for producers who attain BQA status plus have a group of calves on the CPHAS guidelines (certified preconditioned for health).

The BQA Certification meeting will be Thursday, January 31, at 6:30 pm at the Extension office.

Items qualifying for the herd health program include head gates, alley ways, holding pens, corral pens, etc. Applications will be available at the January 31 meeting on a first come, first served basis. All applications are due by March 15, 2002. See application for complete details.

New 4-H/FFA Club being organized

The youth and farm families of Rockcastle County are invited to the first meeting of a new club being organized through the joint efforts of Rockcastle County and the Farmers of America. The first meeting will be held on Monday, January 28, 2002, beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the Rockcastle County High School Agriculture Department classroom. The first meeting will explore community interest as well as exploring new ideas on re-emphasizing the importance of agriculture in our community.

Any youth under the age of 19 may bring. You may call John McQuay at 256-2403, Pat Craig at 758-0160, or Roy Reynolds at 256-5312 for more information.

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Rockcastle Telecommunications Center

Internet Exploration Workshop

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Are you Internet literate? If so, come to the Rockcastle Telecommunications Center Internet Exploration Workshop! Learn basic Internet operations, functions and terminology and get your questions answered! Instructed by Jamie McFerron. Limited space available. Call to register.

Wednesday, January 30, 2002
 2:00-3:00 p.m.
 Third Floor of the
 Rockcastle County Courthouse