

Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) is on its way

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) is a permanent disaster program created by the 2008 Farm Bill that replaces the previous “ad hoc” crop disaster program. Unlike previous disaster programs that paid for losses by unit and crop, the SURE program is a “total farm” disaster program.

This revenue based program compares crops’ expected revenue and program guarantee dollar amount to the actual crop revenue of the entire farming operation. Entire farming operation refers to all farms, all interests, in all counties.

In order to be eligible for payments under SURE, you are required to carry insurance on all crops with an economic significance of five percent or greater, within the farming operation. Crop insurance coverage of CAT level or higher for insurable crops and/or NAP coverage for non insurable crops is required. In 2009 and subsequent years, RMA’s rainfall index policy is acceptable coverage for hay acres. For the SURE program, grazing acres do not require coverage.

The SURE program is available to eligible producers if two “triggers” are met. First, the county must have received a secretarial disaster declaration due to natural disaster, or be contiguous to a county with the declaration.

Second, at least one crop of economic significance must have a 10 percent crop production loss. In the absence of a secretarial declaration, any farm in which actual production for all crops is 50 percent of normal production may also qualify. Phillips and Yuma Counties were contiguous to a county that had a secretarial disaster declaration in 2008.

For qualifying producers, if the total farm revenue is less than the SURE program guarantee, the SURE payment is made at 60 percent of the difference. The SURE guarantee is very similar to a producer’s crop insurance guarantee, so, depending on the coverage levels, the higher the coverage the higher the guarantee level will be.

Payments can be calculated and pay up to 90 percent of the crops normal production on the farm. There is an online calculator that can help producers estimate probable payments. One

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may access the calculator at
www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/fbapp?area=home&subject=landing&topic=landing.

To initiate an application, eligible producers should visit their local county FSA office. When available, office personnel will be able to access RMA informational downloads with applicable data.

If a producer has production evidence that is not obtainable through the RMA download, i.e. hay/forage, fruits and/or vegetables, the producer must bring that production evidence with them.

Regardless of insurance type or coverage level, there is economic stimulus funding that has created additional options under the SURE program. Every producer and every farming situation will be different, so it is in the best interest of each producer to inquire about the SURE program.

Since the SURE program is available through 2011, as a producer, prepare operations for SURE eligibility by insuring all economically significant crops in all counties.