

## FSA State Office Announces 45th General Sign-Up

Richardson County Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Executive Director Shawna Mitchell announced today that the Richardson County FSA will conduct a four-week Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) general sign-up beginning May 20 and ending on June 14.

"It continues to be our goal to ensure that we use CRP to address our most critical resource issues" said Mitchell. "In 2012, Nebraska experienced the worst drought in 60 years. CRP protected environmentally sensitive lands from washing or blowing away. It gave ranchers extra grazing land when they needed it. I expect there will be strong competition to enroll or re-enroll acres into CRP, so I urge producers to maximize their environmental benefits and make sure their offers are cost-effective."

In addition to erosion control, CRP provides significant water quality benefits including reduced nutrients and sediment loadings and adverse consequences associated with floods as well as expanded and enhanced wildlife habitat.

Currently, about 27 million acres are enrolled in CRP nationwide, 20,687 acres in Richardson County. CRP is a voluntary program available to agricultural producers to help them safeguard environmentally sensitive land. Producers enrolled in CRP plant long-term, resource-conserving covers to improve the quality of water, control soil erosion and enhance wildlife habitat. Contracts on an estimated 3.3 million acres of CRP are set to expire on Sept. 30, 2013, 2,000 of those acres in Richardson County. Producers with expiring contracts or producers with environmentally sensitive land are encouraged to evaluate their options under CRP.

Producers that are accepted in the sign-up can receive cost-share assistance for planting covers and receive an annual rental payment for the length of the contract (10-15 years). Producers also are encouraged to look into CRP's other enrollment opportunities offered on a continuous, non-competitive, sign-up basis. Continuous sign-ups often provide additional financial assistance. Those sign-up dates will be announced later.

For more information on CRP and other FSA programs, visit your local FSA county office or [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).