



Farm Facts & Figures

Web-Based Tool Helps Producers Choose Options Under 2002 Farm Bill

(NAPSA)—An innovative, new Web-based software tool developed by Texas A&M University in conjunction with USDA's Farm Service Agency is available for producers to use in evaluating payments under the 2002 Farm Bill.

FSA Administrator James Little said, "The new computer-based tool, called the Base and Yield Options Analyzer (BYA), helps producers analyze the economic consequences of selecting different base and yield options for payments."

To use the tool, producers must first enter specific data about their farming operations, such as planted acres and yields for each type of crop grown. Producers can then enter projected crop prices. The tool will calculate a combination of seven base and yield options and six years of projected payments for each crop covered.

"Updating bases and yields is a complex decision that involves several different combinations of acreage, types of commodities and varying market conditions," said Little. "We are excited to be partnering with Texas A&M to help producers better understand all of their options and make more informed choices from those offered by the 2002 Farm Bill." "You can't really tell which is your best option until you crunch the numbers," said John Johnson, Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs. "To keep your current bases and yields or update—these are the big ques-



Web-based software helps producers make better choices for payments.

tions, and the online calculator gives you a head start in making this decision before you walk into the FSA office."

Johnson recommends looking at all the numbers before deciding whether to update base acres and yields for farms. Johnson said, "It's not the final FSA calculation, but it gives you a lot of good information."

Producers have until April 1, 2003 to select base and yield options and until June 2, 2003 to enter into a contract to participate.

Producers who choose to update their bases may also elect to update their yields. Most producers will be able to verify their production using weight tickets, seed receipts, production records, sales records or crop insurance

appraisals. Some crops, however, are harvested or used without tangible records of measurable productions. Crops that were grazed, harvested as silage or hay or feed on the farm may not leave an existing paper trail. When making calculations in these instances, producers may contact local FSA Service Centers.

The tool will calculate direct payments for covered commodities for the various options, which are made, regardless of market prices. Counter-cyclical payments will also be calculated if effective prices are projected to be less than the target prices set in the 2002 Farm Bill.

FSA is working diligently to help producers make the most advantageous decisions, and receive their payments as quickly as possible. The BYA software tool is considered a prime example of USDA implementing the new Farm Bill in an effective, efficient manner.

The tool is available online at: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/farm_bill/tools.asp. Producers who do not have access to the Web or have questions about the direct and counter-cyclical program and their options should contact the local USDA Service Center or county FSA office. Producers are also advised to consult with the local FSA office before reaching any final conclusions about their choices.