

April 2025

THE HOUSEHOLDER BULLETIN

The Monthly Newsletter of Leut Services, P.C.

ECAP APP OPEN

Example ECAP Payment

	CORN	SOYBEANS	WHEAT
Acres:	500	500	100
\$ Per Acre:	\$42.91	\$29.76	\$30.69
Payment:	\$21,455	\$14,880	\$3,069
Total Potential Payment: \$40,385			
Initial Payment: \$34,327.25 (Factored by 85%)			

Payment will be made for all acres planted on the farm to eligible commodities for harvest, grazing, haying, silage, or similar purposes for the 2024 crop year. This includes 100% of planted acres and 50% of prevent plant acres.

SOURCE: FARM BUREAU

According to the American Farm Bureau, farmers and ranchers across the country lost nearly \$20.3 billion in crops and pastureland due to extreme weather last year. In December, Congress authorized around \$31 billion in emergency assistance to help producers. Last week, the USDA opened disaster aid applications and said it was expediting disbursements through the Emergency Commodity Assistance Program (ECAP). However, this funding pool makes up one-third of the assistance Congress approved. This \$10 billion is intended for farmers growing traditional commodities, like corn, soybeans, and cotton. Payments are determined by multiplying a flat commodity rate by acres planted. *See example above.* The USDA has not yet said when or how the remaining \$21 billion will be distributed. We recommend contacting your FSA office to get your application started. *Please keep a file of all information used to certify your application in case you are audited for this program payment.*

A NOTE FROM YOUR Attorney

We have reached the final letter in our lineup, and it is the perfect ending to this chapter. John Maxwell defines the last “E” in Influence as *EMPOWER*. I love this word for many reasons, but primarily because it echoes our mission statement. A mission statement defines a business’s purpose and explains its existence. It reminds the employees why they do what they do. At Leut Services, our mission is ***“To serve the Colonies by empowering leadership with the necessary skills they need to preserve, thrive, and expand the Colony while upholding the Hutterite beliefs and culture.”*** We know that the Colonies have survived their founders and withstood many challenges. Some Colonies are close to 100 years old. That is why it is crucial to empower leadership with these skills. So, how do we achieve this? By teaching them. At LS, we believe that if we give a man a fish, we feed him for a day. But ***(continued on next page)***

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- 1 ECAP App
Note from Your Attorney
- 2 EMS Vote
Grant Funds Update
- 3 DYK w/ Joe
USDA Appointments
- 4 Colony Feature
New ND Food Law
- 5 When the Sun Goes Down
The Code
- 6 Recipe of the Month
Events & Activities

REAP GRANT FUNDS UPDATE

In March, the USDA announced it plans to release potentially billions of dollars for rural energy projects. This amount includes funds for the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) Grant. These funds were frozen in late January as part of an effort to review government programs and funding allocations from the Inflation Reduction Act. USDA stated it will remove any language in the criteria related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) as well as language related to greenhouse gas emissions and “far-left climate features.” LS expects the scoring rubric and application process to shift for new applications to align with the administration’s priorities. The next REAP Grant deadline is September 30.

EMERGENCY VOTE

ATTENTION DAVISON & HANSON CO.

On April 22, rural voters in Davison and Hanson Counties must head to their polling locations to vote on the future of Emergency Medical Services (EMS). Mitchell EMS is facing significant funding and staffing challenges. This service covers the rural areas of Davison and Hanson Counties, including Alexandria, Emery, Ethan, Farmer, Fulton, and Mount Vernon. However, starting January 1, 2026, EMS services may become unavailable in these rural areas unless funding for six additional employees is secured. The upcoming special election on April 22 will determine the future of EMS services for residents in these areas. EMS services are not classified as essential services in South Dakota, which means they do not receive state funding. A YES vote will allow a tax levy on all taxable real property within the district to support EMS services and create an ambulance district that spans both counties. A NO vote rejects the ambulance district and puts these vital services at risk.

(Note from Your Attorney continued)

if we teach a man to fish, we feed him for a lifetime. Recently, I traveled to the International Maxwell Conference in Orlando to become certified as a Maxwell Leadership Coach. This thought-provoking conference was one of the best leadership trainings I have attended. With this certification, I have access to materials and information from one of the world’s most recognized leadership authorities. That being said, we are starting a new series called Seminars for Stewards. (Yes, *that is a fishhook in the logo*). In this series, I, along with some great people I’ll introduce you to, will teach life, business, and leadership skills to help you become better businessmen, managers, and leaders. We do not plan to flood your calendar with these events, so when we do host a seminar, we highly encourage you to attend. Our inaugural seminar is on Tuesday, May 27, and the topic is **The Meeting on the Meeting**. We will teach you how to conduct meetings efficiently and effectively. In the morning, SDSU Professor Connors will cover the fundamentals of running a meeting. As a registered parliamentarian, he has helped numerous organizations master meeting skills. In the afternoon, I will discuss the bylaws, what they mean, and how to follow them. We recommend the Colony officers attend this seminar. More information is found in this newsletter. We want these seminars to add value to your life, so if there is a topic you’d like us to cover, please let us know. We hope to see you at The Shoffice on May 27. As always, Consult Your Attorney,

Kiera Leddy

SEMINARS
— FOR —
 STEWARDS

DID YOU KNOW *with Grandpa Joe*

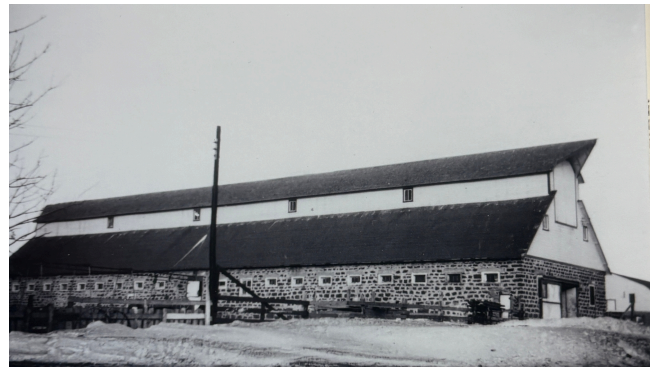
This month, we feature my new neighbor: New Elm Springs Colony. And while Heinela claims there is “nothing new at New Elm,” I respectfully disagree. Founded in 1909, members of New Elm lived there for a short while before selling the property and moving to Alberta in 1918. In 1934, members of Sundale Colony (MB) went bankrupt and moved back to the original New Elm homestead in 1936. New Elm once had a dairy and stone barns and buildings, but those are now all gone. There is a book on New Elm called *Growing up in a Hutterite Colony* by Peter Tschetter. Today, New Elm raises turkeys, hogs, crops, has a butcher shop, manufacturing shop, excavating/dirt moving business, and their own fire department. New Elm’s daughters include: Maxwell (SD), Big Stone, Poinsett, and Old Elm Springs.



Heinela and his boys.
Photo from Art Institute of Chicago.



Chicken barn at New Elm.



Former dairy barn at New Elm.

USDA APPOINTMENTS

The USDA has made additional appointments within the department. Most notably, leaders were appointed for the Farm Service Agency (FSA), the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and the Risk Management Agency (RMA). These sub-agencies are housed under the Farm Production and Conservation area within the USDA. Brooke Appleton will serve as the deputy undersecretary for this area. Previously, she was a Vice President of Public Policy for the National Corn Growers Association. Andrew Fischer will serve as chief of staff. He worked on Capitol Hill for Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and Senator Roy Blunt (R-MO). Bill Beam will serve as the FSA Administrator. Beam is from Pennsylvania, where he grows corn, soybeans, wheat, and hay. He also has a sawdust and wood shavings business. He has served on various boards such as the Pennsylvania Soybean Board, United Soybean Board, and United States Soybean Export Council. Pat Swanson will serve as the RMA administrator. Swanson served as a director for the American Soybean Association (ASA) and completed her term on the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation board. She lives on a farm in Iowa where her family raises soybeans, corn, and cattle. She also has experience running a crop insurance agency with her husband, Don. Aubrey Bettencourt will serve as chief of the NRCS. She previously worked as president and CEO of the Almond Alliance and was an Interior deputy assistant secretary in the first Trump administration.

BOI- BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE.

On March 26, FinCEN issued an interim final rule that narrowed the definition of "Reporting Company" to include entities formed in a foreign country and registered to do business in the U.S. In other words, BOI reports are not currently required for U.S.-formed businesses. Because this is an "interim" rule, this rule is for "in the time being," and could change-- again. FinCEN is accepting comments on the rule until May 27. It plans to issue a final rule later this year. Stay tuned.

COLONY FEATURE

Lakeview Colony

The Western National Bank building in Mitchell is completing a rehabilitation project. The building is being remodeled into a 28-unit apartment complex. Lakeview Colony assisted with the cabinet design and fabrication portion of the project.

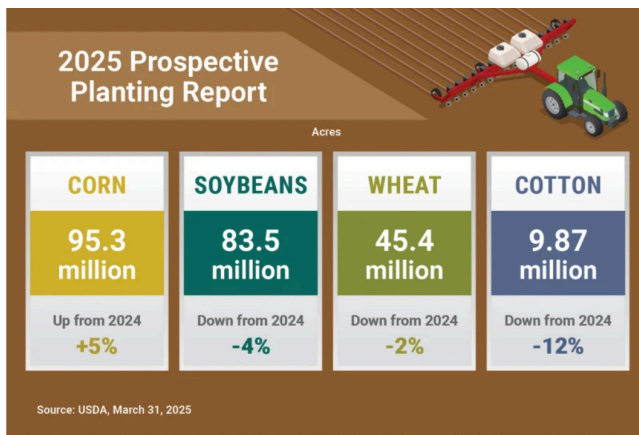


SSA CHANGES

There have been several updates and changes within the administration, particularly regarding the Social Security Administration. Here's a brief overview of the changes. Any claims that local Social Security field offices are closing are false. In fact, the SSA is encouraging office visits. Starting April 14, individuals applying for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Medicare, or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and who are unable to use their *my Social Security* account can complete their claims over the phone without needing to visit an office. Those who cannot apply for benefits using their *my Social Security* account will only need to verify their identity at a Social Security office when applying for Retirement, Survivors, or Auxiliary (Spouse or Child) benefits. If someone needs to apply, we suggest making an appointment at your local office, as this can often be the most streamlined option, especially for individuals who are hard of hearing. We've found that the staff at local offices are well-trained and capable of assisting Hutterites with their applications.

NEW ND FOOD LAW

The North Dakota governor has signed a new "cottage food" bill that now allows these food products to be shipped out of state to consumers without being inspected. Cottage food refers to homemade food products prepared in a private home kitchen and sold directly to the consumer for at-home consumption. The law also allows these products to be sold over the internet, by phone, mail, or consignment. The selling of uninspected meat and shipping of poultry products over state lines is still prohibited.



USDA's 2025 Prospective Plantings Report was released Monday, March 31. (Lori Hays)

WHEN THE SUN(TERRA) GOES DOWN

Sunterra Farms has filed notice for protection under federal bankruptcy and insolvency laws while it financially restructures itself amidst U.S. legal and financial troubles. The Alberta-based company got its start in hog breeding in the 1970s and later expanded into meat processing, food processing, and retail. In the U.S., Sunterra Enterprises, Sunwold Farms Inc., Sunterra Farms Iowa Inc., and Lariagra Farms South Inc. are named in a lawsuit, alleging a check kiting scheme. This is a term used to describe a scheme in which checks are knowingly written on an account that has insufficient funds and covered with checks drawn on another account that also has insufficient funds. Allegedly, 3,000 bad checks were written in nine months. Compeer Financial filed a lawsuit against three South Dakota hog farms requesting the court to appoint a receiver to oversee the production of 110,000 hogs. Pipestone Management was appointed as the receiver. However, when Pipestone went to Sunterra's Beresford, SD office to gather necessary financial information, the information was missing. Sunterra has been ordered to appear for a hearing in Sioux Falls on Friday, April 4, to show why they cannot comply with the receiver order.

APP OF MONTH



Dext, formerly known as ReceiptBank, is a bookkeeping automation platform that helps businesses digitize, categorize, and integrate financial data, like receipts and invoices. It helps its users save time by reducing manual entry. It integrates with QuickBooks. The basic version costs \$24/ month.

THE CODE

We're going to detour from the fiduciary duty series and circle back to client confidentiality. Client confidentiality is extremely important. If there is a "Ten Commandments for Attorneys," client confidentiality is at the top of the list. Client confidentiality is the legal and ethical obligation for all attorneys to keep all information about their clients' business private, unless the client allows the release of information or it is shared to prevent a crime. How can client confidentiality be broken? Suppose you are a board member of a cooperative. You are attending your quarterly board meeting. The board's attorney decides to share specific information about a client who is not present or a member of the board. Perhaps he does this to make another attorney look bad, or merely to "puff up" his own importance. This attorney has just broken client confidentiality. He could be subject to disciplinary action by the state bar if he is reported. And if he discusses another client's information with you, you can count on him to share *your* information with others, *too*. Remember, you can pick your clients, you can pick your nose, but you shouldn't pick your client's nose.



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Strawberry Cookie Cobbler

The Strawberries

6 ½ cups fresh/frozen strawberries, halved
⅓ cup brown sugar
1 tablespoon cornstarch
3 tablespoons salted butter
2 teaspoons vanilla extract

The Cookie Topping

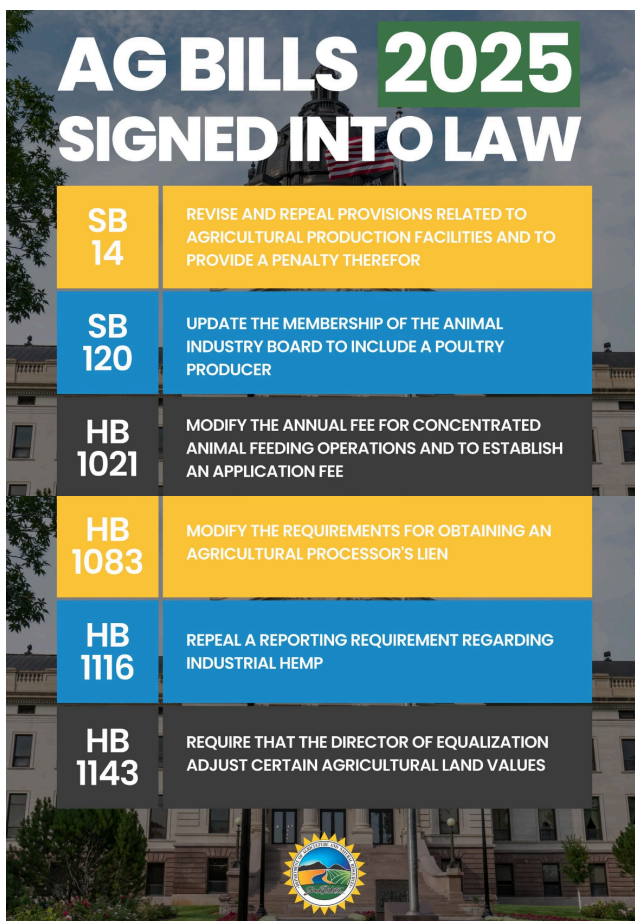
1 stick salted butter, melted
1 cup brown sugar
1 large egg
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup old-fashioned oats
½ teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
4 tablespoons salted butter
2 tablespoons maple syrup or honey

Directions

Preheat the oven to 350° F. Combine the strawberries, brown sugar, cornstarch, and butter in a pot over high heat. Bring the berries to a boil and cook for 5-10 minutes until bubbling. Remove from the heat and add the vanilla; mix well. Meanwhile, make the cookie. In a bowl, whisk together one stick of melted butter, brown sugar, an egg, and vanilla. Add the flour, oats, baking soda, and salt. Move the fruit mixture to an oven-safe pan (I used a pie pan so it looks more like a cookie). Sprinkle the cookie dough over the fruit. Bake for 35-40 minutes. Serve with whipped cream or ice cream. Recipe by Half Baked Harvest.

SD LEG RECAP

By SD Dept. of Ag & Natural Resources



EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

April 18 // Crucifixion (Office Closed)
April 20 // Easter
April 21 // The Lord's Supper (Office Closed)
April 22/ Hanson/Davison Co. EMS Vote
April 22 // Resurrection (Office Closed)
May 26 // Memorial Day (Office Closed)
May 27 // The Meeting on the Meeting
May 29 // Ascension Day (Office Closed)

CONTACT US

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the meeting on **THE MEETING**

Learn the skills you need to effectively conduct a meeting

**Recommended attendees: President, VP &
Secretary-Treasurer**

Imagine you have been elected by your peers and now you are expected to run the Colony's annual meeting. You have always watched the former officer do it but no one has ever told you what to do and why you have to do it.

Does this story sound like you have lived it? Well, you are not alone. In this seminar, we will teach you the what and the why. We will also explore suggestions for annual meeting agendas, proper notice, and other relevant topics. Jim Connors is a high school agriculture/FFA teacher turned professor. He is also a certified parliamentarian. He travels the nation teaching organizations how to run a meeting effectively. In the afternoon, Kiera will review the bylaws and explain how to follow them.

 **Tuesday, May 27**

 **10 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

 **The Shoffice**

 **\$45/person**

Cost includes coffee, snacks, noon meal, speaker, and take-home materials.

SEMINARS
— FOR —
STEWARDS

**RSVP to Kiera Leddy or Daneen Petty
605-924-0271 or 702-277-3401**

***You do not need to be a client of Leut Services to attend.
Open to Hutterite Colonies only.***