



JACKSON COUNTY NEWS

Jackson County USDA Service Center

Jackson County FSA
211 W. Ganson St.
Jackson, MI 49201-1241
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www.fsa.usda.gov/mi

Hours
Monday - Friday
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

County Committee
Gaylord Lincoln
Douglas Teller
Thomas Zenz

Advisor
Joseph Luellen

County Committee meets
Third Thursday of the
Month, starting 9:00 a.m.

Staff
Tamela Smith, CED
Rhonda Sauber, PT
Carolyn Crenshaw, PT
Susan Gray, PT
Amy Duxtader, PT

Russ LaFollette, Farm
Loan Manager

John Hancock,
Field Reporter

Steve Videto,
Field Reporter



CRP-SAFE Diverse Grassland Planting

The program, was the result of an agreement between USDA, wildlife management agencies, conservation and commodity groups -such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy, Pheasants Forever, the Michigan Department of Agriculture, and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

A diverse grassland planting consists of a mixture of planted short or tall native grasses and wildflowers reminiscent of the short and tall grass prairies that once were common in southern Michigan. A subset of the short grass planting is a savanna, which includes scattered clumps of planted oak trees.

The goal of SAFE is to create 7,500 acres of diverse grasslands in 18 southern Michigan counties including Jackson. These counties were chosen because they once contained most of the state's native grasslands.

Which producers are eligible?

- Owners or operators of eligible land who meet the adjusted gross income rules
- Producers must be in compliance with Highly Erodible Land and Wetland provisions.
- Operators must have a 10-15 year lease with the landowners to enroll
- All landowners must sign the CRP-1 contracts
- Landowners may not take land under lease from an operator to enroll it in CRP

Land Eligibility

The land must have a cropping history (4 out of 6 years from 1996-2001), and be either a block of 30 acres or more in size or, if a linear habitat, must at least be a minimum of 200 feet wide and 10 acres or greater in size.

Landowners with previously existing CRP enrolled lands may enroll additional contiguous acres under SAFE agreements that meet the above criteria

What are the financial benefits?

- Up to 100% cost share for preparation and establishment of diverse grasslands.
- A one-time signing bonus of \$100 per acre.
- Annual rental payments for enrolled acres including an annual maintenance payment (based on 3 predominant soil types)

Required Management

All Diverse Grassland SAFE contracts must have mid-term contract management activities scheduled that are site specific and will ensure plant diversity, wildlife habitat and protection of soil and water resources.



Farm Reconstitutions

At FSA, farms are "constituted" to group all tracts having the same owner and the same operator under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation take place, a farm reconstitution is necessary. If an owner or operator cannot agree about program participation, like in the case of the new ACRE program, then producers should inquire about a reconstitution of the farm at the local FSA office.

The reconstitution or recons is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by August 1, 2009.

NAP Production Reporting

Production records for individual crops need to be filed with our office to establish an approved NAP yield. If this is the first year you participated in NAP, you can provide production and acreage information from prior years to establish your yield. If you participated in NAP in previous years, you must report your production and acreage on a yearly basis to keep your yield current. Records submitted must be reliable or verifiable. Records need to show crop disposition. We recommend producers submit 2009 production records as soon as harvest is complete. **All production records must be submitted by the subsequent crop year's final acreage reporting date.**

Soybean request for Referendum began May 4, 2009 and continues through May 29, 2009. Please contact this office for additional information.

DCP & ACRE Signup Extended

Signup for the 2009 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment (DCP) Program has been extended until August 14, 2009. FSA will not accept any late-filed applications. Signup in for the ACRE option is also available through August 14, 2009. Remember, you can sign up for DCP now and still be eligible to change to the ACRE program.

FSA computes DCP Program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2009, you may request to receive advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment for each commodity associated with the farm. FSA will issue advance direct payments later this month if requested. Counter-Cyclical payment rates vary depending on market prices and are issued only when the effective price for a commodity is statutorily set below its target price.

The electronic DCP (or eDCP) service will save you time, reduce paperwork and speed up contract processing at FSA offices. It is available to anyone eligible to participate in the DCP Program. To access this on-line service, you must have an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires completion of an online registration form at <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov> followed by a visit to the local USDA Service Center for identity verification.

The ACRE Program

The Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) is a new program authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill that begins in crop year 2009. Through ACRE, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers producers an alternative to Direct and Counter-Cyclical (DCP) payments. The ACRE alternative provides eligible producers a state-level revenue guarantee, based on the 5-year state Olympic average yield and the 2-year national average price.

ACRE payments are made when both state- and farm-level triggers are met. By participating in ACRE, producers elect to forego counter-cyclical payments. Producers also elect to receive a 20-percent reduction in di-

rect payments and a 30-percent reduction in loan rates. The ACRE Program enrollment began on April 27, 2009 and ends August 14, 2009. Producers can choose to participate in ACRE, or stay with DCP.

A decision to elect ACRE binds the farm to the program through the 2012 crop year, the last crop year covered by the 2008 Farm Bill. For more details contact your local FSA office

Disaster Buy-In Waiver Extension

Producers who did not obtain crop insurance or Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for 2008 can pay a buy-in fee through May 18, 2009, to become eligible for 2008 disaster assistance programs authorized by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008.

Farmers have an additional opportunity to become eligible for several programs if they suffered 2008 agricultural losses due to natural disaster.

If you have not already taken the necessary steps to become eligible for the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE), Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP), and the Tree Assistance Program (TAP), you are required to complete the following steps by May 18, 2009:

- Maximum purchase of 3 "buy-in fees" for insurable crops and maximum purchase of 3 "buy-in fees" for non-insurable crops per county per producer. Each "buy-in fee" costs \$100.
- In the case of each insurable crop, excluding grazing land, agree to obtain a policy or plan of insurance for the next insurance year for which crop insurance is available; coverage level should equal 70 percent or more of the yield at 100 percent of the price.
- In the case of each noninsurable crop, agree to file the required paperwork and pay the applicable administrative NAP coverage fee by the applicable state application closing date for the next available year.



NRCS EQIP SIGN-UP

USDA NRCS is currently accepting applications for Environmental Quality Incentives Program with selection dates approaching in July. EQIP is a cost share program that assists agricultural producers with addressing resource issues and concerns on their farm such as erosion, inadequate fertilizer or manure storage and many others.

Some common practices installed through the EQIP are secondary fertilizer and pesticide containment, nutrient and pest management, no-till or mulch till, and manure storage.

With a new practice this year EQIP funds are now available for a producer to hire a Technical Service Provider to write a forest management plan for agricultural lands. Applications will be taken by NRCS on an ongoing basis. **If interested you may contact the NRCS or Jackson Conservation District at 517-784-2800 or 517-782-7404.**

Those who choose to "buy in" under this provision will be considered, for insured crops, to have obtained a policy or plan of insurance for the 2008 crop year at a level of coverage not to exceed 70 percent of the yield at 100 percent of the price. For noninsurable crops, producers will be considered to have a level of coverage equal to 70 percent of the yield. These levels of coverage will be used to calculate the 2008 SURE guarantee.

Producers who meet the definition of "Socially Disadvantaged", "Limited Resource," or "Beginning Farmer or Rancher," are not required to pay the buy-in fee.



Acreage Reporting

Acreage reporting time will soon be here. Filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs.

Failed acreage must be reported within 15 days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date.

Acreage reports are required for many Farm Service Agency programs. For crops other than NAP (Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program) crops, acreage reports are to be certified by the June 30, 2009 deadline on fall seeded small grains and a July 15, 2009 deadline for all other crops.

Acreage reports on crops for which NAP assistance may be paid are due in the county office by the earlier of June 30, 2009 for fall seeded small grains and July 15, 2009 for all other crops, or 15 calendar days before the onset of harvest or grazing of the specific crop acreage being reported. Please call the office to schedule your certification appointment or make arrangements to certify through the mail.

New Commodity Loan Repayment Rates

Since April 15, 2009 FSA began using an improved and more stable system for determining non-recourse marketing assistance loan repayment rates and loan deficiency payment rates for wheat, feed grains, pulse crops, oilseeds, wool, mohair and honey.

The new method reduces the effects daily market volatilities have on loan repayment rates, and provides more certainty for producers who have taken advantage of marketing assistance loans or loan deficiency payments.

The loan repayment rate may now be determined as the **lesser** of the loan rate plus interest and a rate based on: 1) average market prices during the previous 30 days, or 2) an alternative method the secretary may develop. Beginning April 15, 2009, for wheat, corn, grain sorghum, soybeans, barley, oats, canola, flaxseed and sunflower seed, the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) determines and publishes daily loan repayment rates based on the average market prices during the preceding 30 days. At the same time, CCC will announce each day a repayment rate based on the preceding five days. The new method will replace the current one, which is based on the previous day's market rates. **The effective alternative repayment rate will be the lower of either the 30-day average or the 5-day average** The 30-day method will reflect a 30-day moving average of all terminal market prices for the crop, adjusted by the difference between the applicable national loan rate and the county loan rate. The 5-day method will reflect a 5-day moving average of applicable terminal market prices adjusted by applicable county differential and terminal adjustments.

This new loan repayment method will minimize potential forfeitures, accumulation of CCC stocks, CCC storage costs, market impediments and discrepancies in benefits across state and county boundaries. More details on specific crops are available at your county FSA office.



Timely Filing of Loss

The CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and prevented planting and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. A Notice of Loss is required for ALL CROPS COVERED BY NAP INCLUDING GRASSES. For losses on crops covered by the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and crop insurance, you must file a CCC-576 (notice of loss) in the FSA County Office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent or 15 days after the normal harvest date. If filing for prevented planting, an acreage report and CCC-576 must be filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.

Beginning and Limited Resource Farmers

FSA has a program to assist beginning farmers and or members of socially disadvantaged groups to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more that 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's median size.

Each member of an entity must meet the eligibility requirements. Loan approval is not guaranteed.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

Dates to Remember	
May 18 th	Deadline for Extended "Buy-In" for 2008 crop years
May 25 th	Office closed for the Observance for Memorial Day
June 30 th	Last report day for fall seeded small Grains-wheat, oats, etc.
July 3 rd	Office closed for the Observance of Independence Day
July 15 th	Last report day for all other crops.
August 14 th	Last day to signup for DCP and ACRE
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loan
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve Program & CRP-SAFE
INTEREST RATES FOR MAY 2009	
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	4.25%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	4.25%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.5%
Emergency Loans	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility Loans	2.375%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.625%



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To file a complaint of Discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.