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FARM SERVICE AGENCY

HERTFORD COUNTY

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HOLIDAY – The FSA Office will be closed on Friday, July 4 for Independence Day.

ADVISORS TO THE COUNTY COMMITTEE – The State FSA Committee has appointed Katrine Spruill and re-appointed William Ward, Jr. as advisors from March 1, 2008 through February 28, 2009. Advisors meet with the committee at all meetings and their opinions and ideas are requested by the committee.

CONSERVATION PLOTS – Producers who might be interested in establishing plots for quail, or some other type conservation plots, should contact the FSA Office or the NRCS Office for more information. Payment can be earned for 10-15 years, depending on which type plot is established. Hertford County is one of eight counties in northeast North Carolina that has been approved to participate in a new practice designed to enhance high priority wildlife habitat to assist with cost-share to establish and maintain native early successional habitat on cropland to benefit specific bird species. These birds are: Northern Bobwhite Quail, Grasshopper Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, Loggerhead Shrike and Eastern Kingbird. There are requirements as to what has to be planted and the management practices that must be met over the 10 year contract. Although this is as FSA Program, assistance is received from NRCS, NCWRC (North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission) and the local soil and water conservation district. Anyone who might want to receive more information is urged to contact any of these agencies.

OUTREACH PROGRAM – The Hertford County FSA Office is committed to ensuring that all persons are aware of programs and benefits available to them. FSA programs are administered to ensure equal opportunity for participation and services for all persons to the fullest extent of the law. Representatives are available to present information to community and civic groups and organizations. Anyone interested in having an official meet with his/her group, should contact the Hertford County FSA Office at 252-358-7842.

COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTION FOR 2008 – Contained elsewhere in this newsletter is detail information about the committee election that will be held later in the year. However, I want to remind you that all eligible FSA voters in the county are eligible to nominate someone to have their name entered on the ballot that will be mailed sometime in November. While everyone is eligible to file a nomination form, the person nominated **MUST** live in the Murfreesboro/Maney's Neck FSA Communities (LAA 2). The person must be an active farmer and willing to devote the time required to be a committee person if elected. Special emphasis is being made by the Agency to encourage farmers who are considered Socially Disadvantaged (minorities and females) be considered for nomination. Nominees must sign the nomination form agreeing to serve if elected. Nomination period is June 15 through August 1.

2008 PROGRAMS - Although we have not received anything **OFFICIALLY**, we understand from the media, and other sources that the farm bill has been approved. There is much work that has to be done before regulations and instructions can be written. However, as soon as we receive 'discussing material' arrangements will be made to have meetings to explain the programs to producers.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES PLANTED ON PROGRAM LAND – I don't want to talk too much about any restrictions on what, and how much can, or cannot be planted without affecting any payments the new farm bill might include. Based on last year's program, the only restrictions was how much fruit and vegetables could be planted without affecting payments. Previously, you could not plant anymore fruits and vegetables than was the difference between the cropland and DCP base. I have no idea what the program or bases might be called. If you are planning to plant fruits and/or vegetables, you might want to give us a call and let us discuss with you last years restrictions. It could, or could not, be helpful but we'll be glad to talk with you.

OFFICE HOURS – Just a reminder that the office is open to the public **ONLY** from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Since the staff is small, there are certain preparations that must be made **BEFORE** and **AFTER** the office is open to the public, to better serve our farmers. We would appreciate it if you could arrange your calls and visits between the above hours.

ACREAGE REPORTS – Just a reminder that producers are required to report all acreage of any description to FSA no later than June 30. (THIS INCLUDES ACRES ENROLLED IN THE CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP) . Except for the restriction on Fruits and Vegetables, there is no limit on how much of any crop that can be planted. The only requirement is: you

must report acres, date planted and the crop in each field. You will be asked to identify on the map where each crop is planted, or that the field is idle. ALL CROPLAND ON THE FARM MUST BE ACCOUNTED FOR.

CARE OF IDLE LAND – Because of changes in farm programs, many acres are now being left idle each year. Producers are reminded it is still their responsibility to keep these acres free of noxious weeds, volunteer trees or bushes or anything else that would prevent the land from being farmed after applying normal land preparation and practices normal for the area. Failure to do so could affect your DCP payments.

NAP PRODUCTION – Producers who have purchased NAP insurance are reminded they should report the 2007 production from these crops no later than June 30, 2008. This applies whether or not you had a loss. Also, other producers who plant NAP crops, but do not purchase NAP insurance, should also report their production. Without production data reported timely, FSA can only use county yields in determining loss, and this could cause the loss to be less.



***** R E M I N D E R S *****

1. Very, very few acreage reports have been filed. We urge you to mark your maps and return them to FSA just as soon as you possibly can. We really, really need for you to work with us in returning these maps this year. June 30 is final date for crops planted by June 30. Crops planted after June 30 must be reported within 15 days after planting is complete.
2. At this point, we have no information about what the new farm bill contains, but will let you know as soon as we can. But !!! Please do not wait until we get the information on the farm bill to file your acreage report. Because of limited staff to enter the data in the system, it's more important than ever that producers report early. And this would apply to all producers, regardless of the size of their operation.
3. The Livestock Compensation Program (LCP) provides payments to eligible livestock producers who suffered feed losses or increased feed costs because of a natural disaster in 2005-2007. The final date to apply is July 18, 2008.
4. The final date to nominate someone to have their name on the ballot for county committeeperson is August 1, 2008. The person nominated must also sign the form agreeing to serve if elected. Nomination forms received without the signature of the nominee will not be considered an eligible nomination. The nominee should be willing to give the time it takes to be a committeeperson, which is normally a half day meeting each month, plus at least one day of training each year. FSA strives to have all the different groups of farmers represented on the committee, and encourages the nomination of persons from the different racial, ethnic and gender groups.