



February 2009

District C - Pennsylvania FSA

-- To skip directly to the newsletter for your county, move your mouse to the servicing County Office on the list below and left-click.

Berks
Chester / Delaware
Columbia / Montour
Dauphin
Lancaster
Lebanon
Northumberland
Schuylkill
Snyder / Union



Berks County News

Berks County USDA Service Center

Berks County FSA
1238 County Welfare Rd
Suite 240
Leesport, PA 19533-9710
610-478-7158x2(phone)
610-371-8640 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/

Hours
Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

County Committee
Calvin Beekman, Chairman
James Dietrich, Vice Chair
Martin Moyer, Member
Karen Hoffman, Advisor

County Committee meets
Second Tuesday every
other month

Staff
Theresa Tracey-CED
Bruce Brown-FLM
Kevin Lusch-FLO
Donna Kline-PT
Kathryn Grube-PT
Rose Markowicz-PT
Patricia Quillman-PT
Amy Hamm-PT

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to James R. Dietrich! Jim was re-elected to represent farmers from Albany, Greenwich, Windsor, Tilden, Upper Bern, Perry, Centre, Richmond, Maiden creek, Ontelaunee, Ruscombmanor, Bern, Muhlenberg, Reading, Wyomising townships on the county committee. Jim was elected to his second consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area LAA-2 are:

Jim Dietrich — Elected to the county committee (COC),
Peter A Zettlemoyer — 1st alternate to COC,

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

The committee members held their organizational meeting in January and determined Calvin Beekman will serve as the county committee chairman and Jim Dietrich will serve as vice-chairman.

DCP Sign Up Underway

Sign-up has started for the 2009 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment (DCP) Program for farms with base acres. You can signup online or at local USDA service centers. Signup will continue until June 1, 2009. The June 1, 2009 deadline is mandatory for all participants. FSA will not accept any late-filed applications.

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 and can be accessed at www.fsa.usda.gov/dcp. To access this on-line service, you must have an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires filling out an online registration form at <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov> followed by a visit to the local USDA Service Center for identity verification.

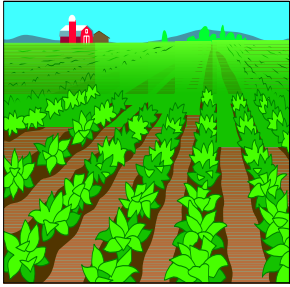
FSA computes DCP Program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2009, you may request to receive advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment for each commodity associated with the farm. FSA will issue advance direct payments later this month. 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.

Producers who are eligible for the DCP Program will also be eligible to enroll in the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program. The enrollment period for the ACRE Program will begin in the spring. You may first enroll in the DCP Program, receive advance direct payments and then later modify your enrollment to include the ACRE program or you may wait and elect to enroll in DCP and ACRE at the same time in Spring 2009.

MILC Sign Up Underway

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The 2008 Farm Bill reauthorizes the MILC Program, which operates similarly to the counter-cyclical payment program for crops, and makes three key changes in program operation. Under the Farm Bill, the MILC payment rate and the per-operation poundage limit are modified, depending on when the milk is produced. In addition, a "feed cost adjuster," is introduced over the life of the 2008 Act, which adjusts the \$16.94 per hundred-weight (cwt.) benchmark price upward depending on the cost of feed rations. When available, MILC payments are based on a payment rate percentage that is multiplied by the difference between a now-flexible target



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For more information on the MILC program, contact your local USDA Service Center.

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For commodity and disaster programs, the AGI limitation was reduced from \$2.5 million AGI from all sources to a three-year average non-farm AGI of \$500,000 such that a person or entity shall not be eligible for such programs if the non-farm AGI exceeds \$500,000. Also, under the new regulations, an individual or entity must have a 3-year average AGI less than or equal to \$750,000 per year from farm income in order to qualify for direct payments issued under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program.

The definition of income derived from farming, ranching and forestry operations was expanded to include, among other items, such items as the packing, storing and transporting of agricultural commodities; production of livestock products; farm-based production of renewable bio-energy; and in some instances, the providing of operational inputs to farmers, ranchers and foresters.

For conservation programs, the average non-farm AGI limitation is \$1 million or less for eligibility with allowances for certain exceptions.

Individuals and entities must be "actively engaged in farming" with respect to a farming operation in order to be eligible for specified payments and benefits. To be "actively engaged in farming," the individual or entity must make significant contributions to the farming operation of: (1) capital, equipment, land, or a combination; and (2) personal labor or active personal management, or a combination.

Public comments on this interim final rule must be submitted to the Department by within 30 days of the date of publication.

Foreign Buyers Notification

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Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, Realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

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The Customer Statement puts a range of USDA services and programs into a single report that's at your fingertips and available online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

It allows USDA customers to view their participation, application and payment status in various commodity and conservation programs; information on farm loans; and conservation plan and land unit information

Loans for Socially Disadvantaged

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) can make and guarantee loans to socially disadvantaged applicants to buy and operate family size farms and ranches. Funds specifically for these loans are reserved each year. A socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of the group without regard to their individual qualities. For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, and Asians and Pacific Islanders. Contact your local FSA Farm Loan Manager or Officer for more details and assistance in applying.

Applications for FSA Loans

Farmers and ranchers that intend to apply to the Farm Service Agency for loan assistance for the upcoming crop year are encouraged to file their applications as early as possible. Filing early will help ensure that your loan is processed and approved as early as possible so that planting decisions can be made. Failure to apply early can result in a delay in processing loans due to the volume of applications that must be processed in date order. Contact your local FSA farm loan manager or officer for more details and assistance in applying.

Youth Loans

Remember FSA makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to establish and operate income producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be initiated, developed, carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organization or with a vocational teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and operated with the assistance of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. Contact your local FSA office for more details

Selected Interest Rates for January 2009	
Farm Operating - Direct	3.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct	4.875%
Limited Resource - Farm Operating	5.00%
Limited Resource - Farm Ownership	5.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.5%
Emergency	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility	2.125%
Commodity Loan	1.625%

Dates to Remember	
2-2 to 2-27-09	Lamb Referendum
2-16-2009	Office Closed – Presidents' Day
2-27-2009	05-07 Crop Disaster Program Signup Deadline
4-6-2009	Conservation/FSA Awards Banquet
6-1-2009	DCP Deadline – No Late-file
Continues	Continuous Conservation Re- serve program

Visit our Web site at
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pa>

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Chester-Delaware County News

West Chester
USDA Service Center

Chester-Delaware County FSA

601 Westtown Road
West Chester, PA 19380
610-696-8750 (phone)
610-696-8795 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov

Hours

Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

County Committee

Tim Barlow, Chm
David Mast, V Chm
Bob Hewitt, Member
Norman Laffey, Member
Richard Hannum, Member
H Sollenberger, Advisor

County Committee meets
March 10 @ 9:30 AM

Staff

Hollis Baker, CED
Lee Warren
Wynn Graydus

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Norman Laffey! Norm was re-elected to represent farmers from E & W Fallowfield, Sadsbury and W Sadsbury, Valley, Londonderry, Highland, W Marlboro and London Grove townships on the County Committee (COC). Norm was elected to his second consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area #3 are:

Norman Laffey — Elected to COC
Nolan King — 1st alternate to COC
Joseph Lusby — 2nd alternate to COC

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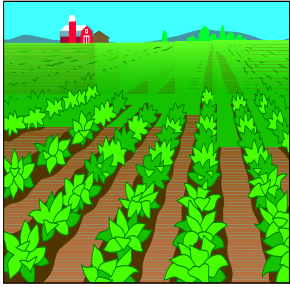
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produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. Contact your local FSA office for more details.

Why should USDA's Farm Service Agency be your lender of first opportunity?

The farming industry has undergone many changes in recent years, resulting in new types of small farming and ranching enterprises. These include value-added farming operations, organic farming, immigrant farming, and the growing of crops for local retailers or direct sale to consumers.

New federal programs have been enacted to stimulate beginning and younger farmers to establish new, or retain ownership of existing, small family farms. These exciting new trends in rural America present the USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) Farm Loan Programs (FLP) with opportunities for increased lending activity in the farming community.

-----So, why should USDA's Farm Loan Programs be your lender of first opportunity?

We are your advocates.

Farm Loan Programs staff are predisposed to award loans, therefore putting the agent on the customer's side. FSA wants to see you succeed. This is evident in our consultative approach, offering low rates and identifying other resources to our clients in an advisory fashion throughout the life of the loan.

We think outside the box.

Our loan staff keep up with the industry trends and constantly look for emerging and non-traditional farm business models. Our commitment to doing things better in the industry provides you with fresh perspectives, alternatives, and creative ways of growing your business.

We offer solutions.

Our staff can refer customers to other public financial aid sources that can serve as a blend with the Farm Loan Programs loan. This results in acquiring more comprehensive resources and a tailored financial solution that works for unique lending situations.

We specialize in:

- Loans for beginning farmers, disaster recovery, operational financing,
- and farm ownership
- Farm planning and counseling

- Supervised credit and assistance through the life of your loan
- Sustained financial planning services

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Farm Operating - Direct	2.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct	3.5%
Limited Resource - Farm Operating	5.00%
Limited Resource - Farm Ownership	5.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.5%
Emergency	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility	2.25%
Commodity Loan	1.50%

Dates to Remember	
3-10-2009	County Committee Mtg-930AM
6-1-2009	DCP Deadline – No Late-file
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve program

Visit our Web site at

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pa>

**For more information re:
the Farm Loan Programs**

Contact your local USDA-FSA Office

MILC payment for March '09: at least \$1.91/cwt

Report small grains by June 15, 2009

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Columbia/Montour County News

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Columbia/Montour
County FSA
702 Sawmill Road
Suite 202
Bloomsburg, PA 17815
570-784-4722 (phone)
570-387-7715 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/pabloo_msbu

Hours

Monday - Friday
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County Committee

David Artman, Chair
Donald Whitenight Jr.
Vice-Chair
Randy Rhoads, Member
John Hartman, Member
Richard Woodruff,
Member
Paula Weatherill, Advisor

County Committee meets
3rd Thursday of the month

Staff

Deanna Juart, CED
David Reedy, PT
Sondra Laubaugh, PT
Lillian Olshefski, PT
Gerald McCarty, FA
Marlin Schock, FA
Richard Miller, FA

MEET THE NEW CED

Open House:
March 24th & 25th

**Farm Loan Officer
available Friday
mornings,
Please call for an
appointment.**



County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Randy Rhoads! Randy was elected to represent farmers in Columbia County from Mifflin, Main, Catawissa, Franklin, Cleveland, Locust, Roaringcreek, Conyng-ham & Beaver Townships on the county committee. The election results for Local Administrative Area #3 are:

Randy Rhoads — Elected to the county committee (COC),
Duane Shuman — 1st alternate to COC.

Congratulations to John Hartman! John was elected to represent farmers in Montour County from Limestone, Anthony & Derry Townships on the county committee. The election results for Local Administrative Area #4 are:

John S. Hartman — Elected to the county committee (COC),
C. Herbert Zeager — 1st alternate to COC,
Donald Bergey — 2nd alternate to COC.

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Dates to Remember:

3-31-09 - Deadline to request a commodity loan on 2008 oats, barley or wheat

6-1-09 - Deadline to request a commodity loan on 2008 corn, soybeans or sorghum

6-1-09 DCP Signup Ends

Ongoing- Continuous Conservation Reserve Program enrollment

Crop Reporting Deadlines:

6-15-2009 – Small Grains

7-15-2009 – All other crops

Coming Events

**4-2-09 Tri-Ag Banquet
Guest Speaker:
Brett Wallingford,
Wildlife Biologist,
PA Game Commission**

Owner/Operator Changes

Please contact the FSA office as soon as you are aware of any owner changes on farms you may be renting. Proof of ownership will be required before any changes can be made in our farm records system. In addition, please notify the office as soon as possible when an operator change takes effect. It is important that your farm records are correct before enrolling into FSA programs.

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Special Accommodations

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NEW EMPLOYEE!!!

Deanna Juart from Indiana County has accepted the position of County Executive Director here in the Columbia/Montour County Office and her appointment officially take effect on March 1, 2009. Deanna has worked for FSA for approximately 10 years in Indiana County. She delivered many of our programs there and recently graduated from the County Executive Director training program. Deanna is anxious to get started here and hopes to meet many of our producers very soon.

****OPEN HOUSE****

Please stop by the office on March 24th or 25th to meet Deanna and visit with the office staff. Refreshments will be served and the staff will be available to assist you in completing your 2009 enrollment forms.



Power of Attorney

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It allows USDA customers to view their participation, application and payment status in various commodity and conservation programs; information on farm loans; and conservation plan and land unit information.

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Remember FSA makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to

establish and operate income producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be initiated, developed, carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organization.

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We specialize in:

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- Farm planning and counseling

March Interest Rates

Commodity Loan
=1.50%

Farm Stored Facility
Loans = 2.25%

Looking for work??

Applications for temporary office and field employment are being accepted on a continuing basis. Applicants should appear in person at the FSA Office to complete an application form.

FSA is an equal opportunity employer.

- Supervised credit and assistance through the life of your loan
- Sustained financial planning services

Commodity Loans

You may use your harvested crop as collateral to obtain a 9 month loan. To be eligible for loan, you must have grown the crop, retain control of and title to the eligible commodity while under loan, certify all acres, have an approved conservation plan, and complete or update all required payment limitation forms with the FSA office.

The commodity must be in approved storage and you must maintain the quality and quantity of the commodity through the life of the loan. If you wish to feed, sell or dispose of any of the commodity at anytime prior to repayment, you must contact the FSA office for prior authorization.

Please contact the office for the current interest rate additional information.

Farm-Storage **Facility Loans (FSFL)**

Loans on new farm storage structures are available through your local FSA office. Eligible structures include grain bins, silos and handling equipment. To be eligible for these loans, you must have a need for additional storage and you must grow and eligible crop. A satisfactory credit history is required and you must demonstrate the ability to repay the debt. The interest rate for loans disbursed in February 2009 was 1.875%. Contact your local county office for the current interest rate and additional details.

Eligibility Determinations

New rules have been implemented for 2009. This will require all participants to file new farm operating plans for 2009. Be prepared to complete the new forms during your next visit.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Dauphin County News

Dauphin County USDA Service Center

Dauphin County FSA
1451 Peters Mountain Rd.
Dauphin, PA 17018
717-921-2378
717-921-2775 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/pa

Hours
Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

County Committee
Kirby Reichert
Dean Knorr
Marlin Brubaker
Ellen Brubaker, MA

County Committee meets
Third Thursday every
other month.

Staff
Eugene Sweigard, CED
Brian Miller, PT
Joan Smith, PT

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Kirby Reichert! Kirby was re-elected to represent farmers from Susquehanna, Lower Paxton, West Hanover, East Hanover, South Hanover, Swatara, Lower Swatara, Derry, Londonderry, and Conewago townships on the county committee. Kirby was elected to his second consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area 3 are:

Kirby Reichert - Elected to the county committee (COC),
Victor Fiore - 1st alternate to COC.

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

The committee members held their organizational meeting in January and determined who will serve as the county committee chairman and vice-chairman.

DCP Sign Up Underway

Sign-up has started for the 2009 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment (DCP) Program for farms with base acres. You can signup online or at local USDA service centers. Signup will continue until June 1, 2009. The June 1, 2009 deadline is mandatory for all participants. FSA will not accept any late-filed applications.

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 and can be accessed at www.fsa.usda.gov/dcp. To access this on-line service, you must have an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires filling out an online registration form at <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov> followed by a visit to the local USDA Service Center for identity verification.

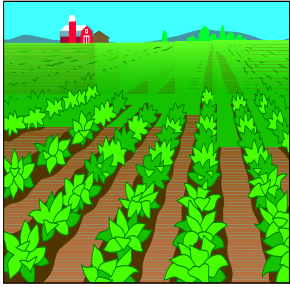
FSA computes DCP Program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2009, you may request to receive advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment for each commodity associated with the farm. FSA will issue advance direct payments later this month. 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.

Producers who are eligible for the DCP Program will also be eligible to enroll in the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program. The enrollment period for the ACRE Program will begin in the spring. You may first enroll in the DCP Program, receive advance direct payments and then later modify your enrollment to include the ACRE program or you may wait and elect to enroll in DCP and ACRE at the same time in Spring 2009.

MILC Sign Up Underway

Signup for the Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC) is underway and will continue through the program's expiration date, Sept. 30, 2012.

The 2008 Farm Bill reauthorizes the MILC Program, which operates similarly to the counter-cyclical payment program for crops, and makes three key changes in program operation. Under the Farm Bill, the MILC payment rate and the per-operation poundage limit are modified, depending on when the milk is produced. In addition, a "feed cost adjuster," is introduced over the life of the 2008 Act, which adjusts the \$16.94 per hundred-weight (cwt.) benchmark price upward depending on the cost of feed rations. When available, MILC payments are based on a payment rate percentage that is multiplied by



the difference between a now-flexible target (\$16.94 per cwt. or higher) and the specific month's Boston Class I price of milk.

The 2008 Farm Bill made changes to the provisions for payment eligibility and adjusted gross income (AGI). If the individual or entity has non-farm AGI greater than \$500,000, the individual or entity is not eligible for MILC benefits.

For more information on the MILC program, contact your local USDA Service Center.

USDA Enacts Changes to Payment Limitations, Income Qualifications, and Implements Direct Attribution

USDA recently published an interim final regulation in the Federal Register announcing changes to both Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) qualifications, program payment limitations, and direct attribution for FSA and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs, which became effective in accordance with the 2008 Farm Bill.

For commodity and disaster programs, the AGI limitation was reduced from \$2.5 million AGI from all sources to a three-year average non-farm AGI of \$500,000 such that a person or entity shall not be eligible for such programs if the non-farm AGI exceeds \$500,000. Also, under the new regulations, an individual or entity must have a 3-year average AGI less than or equal to \$750,000 per year from farm income in order to qualify for direct payments issued under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program.

The definition of income derived from farming, ranching and forestry operations was expanded to include, among other items, such items as the packing, storing and transporting of agricultural commodities; production of livestock products; farm-based production of renewable bio-energy; and in some instances, the providing of operational inputs to farmers, ranchers and foresters.

For conservation programs, the average non-farm AGI limitation is \$1 million or less for eligibility with allowances for certain excep-

tions.

Individuals and entities must be "actively engaged in farming" with respect to a farming operation in order to be eligible for specified payments and benefits. To be "actively engaged in farming," the individual or entity must make significant contributions to the farming operation of: (1) capital, equipment, land, or a combination; and (2) personal labor or active personal management, or a combination.

Public comments on this interim final rule must be submitted to the Department by within 30 days of the date of publication.

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Selected Interest Rates for March 2009

Farm Operating - Direct	2.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct	3.50%
Limited Resource - Farm Operating	5.00%
Limited Resource - Farm Ownership	5.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.5%
Emergency	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility	2.25%
Commodity Loan	1.50%

Dates to Remember

5-25-2009	Office Closed – Memorial Day
6-1-2009	DCP Deadline – No Late-file
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve program

**For more information re:
the Farm Loan Programs**
Contact your local USDA-FSA Office

Visit our Web site at
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Lancaster County News

Lancaster County USDA Service Center

Lancaster County FSA
1383 Arcadia Rd.
Lancaster, PA 17601

Hours
Monday – Friday
8:00 AM-4:30 PM

Phone:
717-397-6235

County Committee

Michael Brubaker
Scott Kreider
Tom Bollinger

Committee meets
2nd Wednesday

Staff

Kathryn Heil, County Executive

Director
Raeann Schatz
Cynthia Snedden
Keith Beattie
Ben Parker

James Tomanelli, Farm Loan Manager

Karl Hess
Tiffany Lutz
Fran Gruver
Alex Brubaker

County Committee

Election Results

Congratulations to Scott Kreider. Scott was re-elected to represent farmers from Local Administrative Area 3 (Southern) on the county committee. This is his second consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area 3 are:

Scott Kreider — Elected to the county committee (COC)

Kenneth Meck — 1st alternate to COC

A. Dale Herr — 2nd alternate to COC

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For more information re: the Farm Loan Programs

Contact your local USDA-FSA Office

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Emergency	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility	1.875%
Commodity Loan	1.375%

Dates to Remember

3-15-2009	Crop Insurance Deadline
5-31-2009	Corn/soybean MAL Deadline
6-1-2009	DCP Deadline – No Late Files
6-15-2009	Small grain Reporting Deadline
7-15-2009	All other crop reporting deadline
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve program

Visit our Web site at
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pa>

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Lebanon County News

Lebanon County USDA Service Center

Lebanon County FSA
2120 Cornwall Road
Suite 3
Lebanon, PA 17042
717-272-3908 (phone)
717-274-0568 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov
Palebanon-
fsa@one.usda.gov

Hours

Monday – Friday
8:00am – 4:30pm

County Committee

Jay Weaver
Edward Heagy
Gerald Hoffer

County Committee meets
next on March 5, 2009

Staff

Julie Holland – CED
Charlene Ziegler – PT
Dianne Younker – PT

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Jay Weaver! Jay was re-elected to represent farmers from Heidelberg, Millcreek, and Jackson townships on the county committee. Jay was elected to his second consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area 2 are:

Jay Weaver — Elected to the county committee (COC),
None — 1st alternate to COC
None — 2nd alternate to COC

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

The committee members held their organizational meeting in January to determine who will serve as the county committee chairman and vice-chairman.

DCP Sign-up Underway

Sign-up has started for the 2009 Direct and Countercyclical Payment (DCP) Program for farms with base acres. You can sign up online or at local USDA service centers. Sign-up will continue until June 1, 2009. **The June 1, 2009 deadline is mandatory for all participants. FSA will not accept any late-filed applications.**

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 and can be accessed at www.fsa.usda.gov/dcp. To access this on-line service, you must have an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires filling out an online registration form at <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov> followed by a visit to the local USDA Service Center for identity verification.

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. 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.

Producers who are eligible for the DCP Program will also be eligible to enroll in the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program. The enrollment period for the ACRE program will begin in the spring. You may first enroll in the DCP Program, receive advance direct payments and then later modify your enrollment to include the ACRE program or you may wait and elect to enroll in DCP and ACRE at the same time in Spring 2009.

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The 2008 Farm Bill reauthorizes the MILC Program, which operates similarly to the counter-cyclical payment program for crops, and makes three key changes in program operation. Under the Farm Bill, the MILC payment rate and the per-operation poundage limit are modified, depending on when the milk is produced. In addition, a “feed cost adjuster” is introduced over the life of the 2008 Act, which adjusts the \$16.94 per hundred-weight (cwt.) benchmark price upward depending on the cost of feed rations. When available, MILC payments are based on a payment rate percentage that is multiplied by





the difference between a now-flexible target (\$16.94 per cwt. or higher) and the specific month's Boston Class I price of milk.

The 2008 Farm Bill made changes to the provisions for payment eligibility and adjusted gross income (AGI). If the individual or entity has non-farm AGI greater than \$500,000, the individual or entity is not eligible for MILC benefits.

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For commodity and disaster programs, the AGI limitation was reduced from \$2.5 million AGI from all sources to a three-year average non-farm AGI of \$500,000 such that a person or entity shall not be eligible for such programs if the non-farm AGI exceeds \$500,000. Also, under the new regulations, an individual or entity must have a 3-year average AGI less than or equal to \$750,000 per year from farm income in order to qualify for direct payments issued under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program.

The definition of income derived from farming, ranching and forestry operations was expanded to include, among other items, such items as the packing, storing and transporting of agricultural commodities; production of livestock products; farm-based production of renewable bio-energy; and in some instances, the providing of operational inputs to farmers, ranchers and foresters.

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tions. Individuals and entities must be "actively engaged in farming" with respect to a farming operation in order to be eligible for specified payments and benefits. To be "actively engaged in farming," the individual or entity must make significant contributions to the farming operation of: (1) capital, equipment, land, or a combination; and (2) personal labor or active personal management, or a combination.

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Youth Loans

Remember, FSA makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to establish and operate income producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be initiated, developed, and carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organization or with a vocational teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and operated with

the assistance of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. Contact your local FSA office for more details.

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For more information re: the Farm Loan Programs

Contact your local USDA-FSA Office

Selected Interest Rates for February 2009	
Farm Operating - Direct	2.125%
Farm Ownership - Direct	3.75%
Limited Resource - Farm Operating	5.00%
Limited Resource - Farm Ownership	5.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.5%
Emergency	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility	1.875%
Commodity Loan	1.375%

Dates to Remember

2-27-2009	05-07 CDP Deadline – No Late-file–
6-1-2009	DCP Deadline – No Late-file–
6-15-2009	Deadline to report small-grains
7-15-2009	Deadline to report corn, soy-beans, Hay, CRP, & CREP
Continues	09-12 MILC signup
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve program

Lebanon FSA recommends that you call to make an appointment prior to coming to the office.

Customers with appointments will be given priority.

Visit our Web site at
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pa>

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Northumberland County

News

Northumberland County
USDA Service Center

Northumberland County FSA

441 Plum Creek Road
Sunbury, PA 17801-6064
570-286-7114 (phone)
570-286-6114 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/**

Hours

Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

County Committee

Alvin Shaffer, Chairperson
Roger Rovenolt, Vice-
Chair
Orville Shultz, Member

County Committee meets
First Wednesday every
other month

Staff

Eugene Sweigard, CED
Sanae Poust, PT
Deborah Wilk, PT
JoAnn Robins, PT

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Roger Rovenolt! Roger was re-elected to represent farmers from Delaware, Lewis, Turbot, East & West Chillisquaque, Point, Watsontow, Milton & Northumberland on the county committee. Roger was elected to his second consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area 1 are:

Roger Rovenolt — Elected to the county committee (COC),
David Moser — 1st alternate to COC,
Thomas Strouse, Jr. — 2nd alternate to COC

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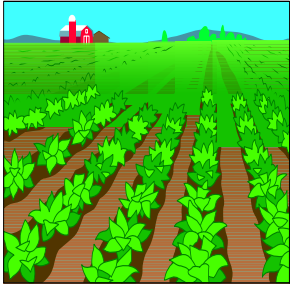
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Limited Resource - Farm Ownership	5.00%
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Emergency	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility	2.25%
Commodity Loan	1.50%

Dates to Remember	
6-1-2009	DCP Deadline – No Late-file
5-1-2009	NAP Insured Hay Crop Report
6-15-2009	Small Grain Crop Report Deadline
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Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve program

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Schuylkill County News

Schuylkill County USDA Service Center

Schuylkill County FSA
1104 Ag Center Drive
Pottsville PA 17901
570-622-1555 (phone)
570-622-1593(fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/papotts
vil

Hours
Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

County Committee
James Hepler, Chairperson
John Halabura, Vice
Chairperson
Daniel Troxell, Member
Doris Brown, Advisor

County Committee meets
Approximately every 6
weeks beginning February
24th.

Staff
Terry L. Stehr, CED
Diane Allison, PT
Sharon Moyer, PT
Christine Maccarone, PT
William Reichert, FA
Steve Paul, FA

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to John Halabura! John was re-elected to represent farmers from Blythe, Branch, Cass, East Norwegian, New Castle, North Manheim, Norwegian, Reilly, Schuylkill, Walker, Washington, Wayne, and West Brunswick Townships on the county committee. John was elected to his 2nd consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area 2 are:

John Halabura — Elected to the county committee (COC),
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Doris Brown — 2nd alternate to COC

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Owner/Operator Changes

Please contact the FSA office as soon as you are aware of any owner changes on farms you may be renting. Proof of ownership will be required before any changes can be made in our farm records system. In addition, please notify the office as soon as possible when an operator change takes effect. No changes may be made until the owner acknowledges operator changes. It's important that the farm records are accurate before signing into any FSA programs.

AGLAND PRESERVATION

Anyone interested in the Agland Preservation Program can contact Elizabeth Hinkel at the Schuylkill Conservation District for an application. Also, to anyone who is unsure of the status of their application, especially those submitted prior to 2007, please feel free to call and inquire about it. Elizabeth can be reached at (570) 622-3742 ext. 117.

If you are interested in the Agland Preservation Program, please keep in mind that farms must be enrolled in their township's Agricultural Security Area, and have an up-to-date NRCS Conservation Plan. They must also contain at least 50% tillable acreage excluding land enrolled in the CRP or CREP programs.

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Dates to Remember:

3-31-09 - Deadline to request a commodity loan on 2008 oats, barley or wheat

6-1-09 - Deadline to request a commodity loan on 2008 corn, soybeans or sorghum

and

DCP and ACRE sign-up ends.

Ongoing- Continuous Conservation Reserve Program Enrollment

Crop Reporting Deadlines:

6/15/2009 – Small Grains

7/15/2009 – All other crops

March Interest Rates; Commodity Loans= 1.50%

Farm Stored Facility Loans= 2.25%



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**For more information
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Program**

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Marketing Assistance Loans

Harvested grain can be put under loan to provide capital and greater marketing flexibility. Loans are for a nine month period and do not have to be repaid before maturity unless the grain is fed or sold. Loans may be requested when the grain is harvested and producers must own or have beneficial interest in the grain as long as the grain is loan collateral.

For commodities to be eligible they must have been produced by an eligible producer, be in existence and in a storable condition and be merchantable for food, feed or other uses as determined by CCC. The quality of the commodity in farm storage must be maintained throughout the term of the loan.

Please call or stop by the office for more information and current loan rates.

Farm-Storage Facility Loans (FSFL)

Loans on new farm storage structures are available through your local FSA office. Eligible structures include grain bins, silos and handling equipment. To be eligible for these loans, you must have a need for additional storage and you must grow and eligible crop. A satisfactory credit history is required and you must demonstrate the ability to repay the debt. The interest rate for loans disbursed in February 2009 was 1.875%. Contact your local county office for the current interest rate and additional details

Eligibility Determinations

New rules have been implemented for 2009. This will require all participants to file new farm operating plans for 2009. Be prepared to complete the new forms during your next visit.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Snyder/Union County News

Snyder/Union County
USDA Service Center

**Snyder/Union County
FSA**

405 West Market St
Middleburg PA 17842
570-837-0007 (phone)
570-837-1038 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/pa

Hours

Monday - Friday
7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

County Committee

Barry Waite, Chair
Mark Mapes, Vice Chair
Lucas Criswell, Member
Linda Fisher, Member
Kenneth Shaffer, Member

County Committee meets
First Tuesday – March,
May, July, September,
November, December

Staff

Mary Kiel, CED
Chip Weaver, FLM
Kathy Colyer, FLO
Clint Smith, FLO
Karen Lauver
Diane Lloyd
Diane Savidge
Tangeree Dreisbach
Lin Prutzman



County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Barry Waite and Linda Fisher! Barry was re-elected to represent farmers from Adams, Centre, Spring, West Beaver, Jackson and Hartley in Union County on the county committee. Linda was elected to represent farmers from Beaver, Middlecreek, Perry and West Perry Townships.

David Woodling is first alternate for Barry. Linda's alternates are John Landis and Roland T Pecht.

Members serve a three year term.

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

DCP Sign-up Underway

Sign-up has started for the 2009 Direct and Countercyclical Payment (DCP) Program for farms with base acres. You can sign up online or at local USDA service centers. Sign-up will continue until June 1, 2009. **The June 1, 2009 deadline is mandatory for all participants. FSA will not accept any late-filed applications.**

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 and can be accessed at www.fsa.usda.gov/dcp. To access this on-line service, you must have an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires filling out an online registration form at <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov> followed by a visit to the local USDA Service Center for identity verification.

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. 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.

Producers who are eligible for the DCP Program will also be eligible to enroll in the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program. The enrollment period for the ACRE program will begin in the spring. You may first enroll in the DCP Program, receive advance direct payments and then later modify your enrollment to include the ACRE program or you may wait and elect to enroll in DCP and ACRE at the same time in Spring 2009.

DCP PROGRAM PROVISIONS

**** Producers are reminded that fruits and vegetables can not be planted on DCP acres without loss of payments.**
**** Producers must report all crop acres to be receive the DCP payment.**
**** Idled acres must be mowed to control weeds.**

Producers who have CRP contracts that expired in 2008 must contact the office to enroll any bases

**** Succession in interest must be reported to the office promptly.**

**** Advance Counter-Cyclical Payments that are not earned due to crop prices will need to be refunded.**

MILC Sign-up Underway

Sign-up for the Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC) is underway. Applications can be accepted through the program's expiration date, Sept. 30, 2012.

The 2008 Farm Bill reauthorizes the MILC Program, which operates similarly to the

counter-cyclical payment program for crops, and makes three key changes in program operation. Under the Farm Bill, the MILC payment rate and the per-operation poundage limit are modified, depending on when the milk is produced. In addition, a “feed cost adjuster” is introduced over the life of the 2008 Act, which adjusts the \$16.94 per hundredweight (cwt.) benchmark price upward depending on the cost of feed rations. When available, MILC payments are based on a payment rate percentage that is multiplied by the difference between a now-flexible target (\$16.94 per cwt. or higher) and the specific month’s Boston Class I price of milk.

The 2008 Farm Bill made changes to the provisions for payment eligibility and adjusted gross income (AGI). If the individual or entity has non-farm AGI greater than \$500,000, the individual or entity is not eligible for MILC benefits.

For more information on the MILC program, contact your local USDA Service Center.

USDA Enacts Changes to Payment Limitations, Income Qualifications, and Implements Direct Attribution

USDA recently published an interim final regulation in the Federal Register announcing changes to both Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) qualifications, program payment limitations, and direct attribution for FSA and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs, which became effective in accordance with the 2008 Farm Bill.

For commodity and disaster programs, the AGI limitation was reduced from \$2.5 million AGI from all sources to a three-year average non-farm AGI of \$500,000 such that a person or entity shall not be eligible for such programs if the non-farm AGI exceeds \$500,000. Also, under the new regulations, an individual or entity must have a 3-year average AGI less than or equal to \$750,000 per year from farm income in order to qualify for direct payments issued under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program.

The definition of income derived from farming, ranching and forestry operations was expanded to include, among other items, such items as the packing, storing and transporting of agricultural commodities; production of livestock products; farm-based production of renewable bio-energy; and in some instances, the providing of operational inputs to farmers, ranchers and foresters.

For conservation programs, the average nonfarm AGI limitation is \$1 million or less for eligibility with allowances for certain exceptions. Individuals and entities

must be “actively engaged in farming” with respect to a farming operation in order to be eligible for specified payments and benefits. To be “actively engaged in farming,” the individual or entity must make significant contributions to the farming operation of: (1) capital, equipment, land, or a combination; and (2) personal labor or active personal management, or a combination.

Public comments on this interim final rule must be submitted to the Department within 90 days of the date of publication.

Foreign Buyers Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA.

Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

Controlled Substance

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium, poppies and other drug producing plants.

Special Accommodations

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the county FSA office staff directly or by phone.

Power of Attorney

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., FSA has a power of attorney form available that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. If you are interested, please contact our office or any Farm Service Agency office near you for more information.

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APPLICATIONS FOR FSA LOANS

Farmers and ranchers that intend to apply to the Farm Service Agency for loan assistance for the upcoming crop year are encouraged to file their applications as early as possible. Filing early will help ensure that your loan is processed and approved as early as possible so that planting decisions can be made. Failure to apply early can result in a delay in processing loans due to the volume of applications that must be processed in date order. Contact your local FSA farm loan manager or officer for more details and assistance in applying.

PAYMENTS REPORTED TO IRS

If you received payments from this office in 2008, you will receive form CCC-1099G intended to help producers report taxable income. It is your responsibility to report this income to the IRS. County Office employees cannot interpret IRS regulations or advise producers about their income tax returns.

EMPLOYMENT APPLICATIONS BEING ACCEPTED

Each year, the FSA Office is required to advertise that applications, which must be filed in person, are being taken on a continuing basis for temporary office and field positions. If, or when a need arises, these applications are used to fill positions. FSA is an equal opportunity employer.

COMMODITY MARKETING ASSISTANCE LOAN (MAL) AND LOAN DEFICIENCY PAYMENT (LDP) ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for commodity MALs and LDPs, you must have:

- Grown the crop
- Certified your crop acres with FSA office
- Have beneficial interest in the crop. This means you have title, risk and control of the crop. If the crop is delivered to a buyer you have lost beneficial interest. If the buyer pays you for the crop, even if it hasn't moved from your farm, you've lost beneficial interest.
- An approved conservation plan with NRCS
- Completed a payment limitation form with FSA
- Complied with the adjusted gross income provisions

For MALs, the commodity must be in approved storage. You must maintain the quality and quantity of the commodity through the life of the loan (9 months). If you wish to feed, sell or dispose of the commodity at anytime prior to repayment of the loan, you must contact the county office for authorization.

If you store your grain for use at a later date, MAL's are a good way to help generate some current cash which you can use to purchase necessary things for your operation.

You must request the MAL or LDP by the final loan availability date, which is:

- March 31 for barley, canola, honey, oats, wheat
- May 31 for corn, grain sorghum, soybeans and sunflower seed

For more information re: the Farm Loan Programs

Contact your local USDA-FSA Office

Visit our Web site at

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Selected Interest Rates for March 2009

Farm Operating - Direct	2.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct	3.50%
Limited Resource - Farm Operating	5.00%
Limited Resource - Farm Ownership	5.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.5%
Emergency	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility	2.25%
Commodity Loan	1.50%

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