

# MICHIGAN



## Farm Service Agency

Michigan State Newsletter • June 2007

### Michigan Farmers:

Welcome to the 2007 Spring Michigan Farm Service Agency Newsletter. Spring has finally arrived in Michigan and everyone is busy in the fields getting seed planted and fields sprayed. This has been a different kind of spring this year with the late snow and freeze to warmer temperatures and rain to make everything, it seems, pop out of the ground overnight. County Offices are also busy updating information needed to qualify customers for the programs they have signed up for. This is a time consuming process, so please be patient with County Office staff and provide them with the information they are asking for in a timely manner to make things go quicker for all involved.

Signup for 2007 DCP continues at all county FSA offices and will be available through August 3, 2007. If you would like to save an annual trip to your FSA county office to sign up for the Direct and Counter Cyclical Program, you may do so by utilizing FSA's electronic DCP service. For more information about eGov and online services, please contact your local County Office.

The Farm Service Agency is continuing to digitize maps on our computers. This employs a Geographic Information System (GIS), a computer-based tool for capturing, storing, mapping and analyzing geographic farm data. FSA will use GIS to replace the old manual system of hard copy maps and aerial photographs. This digital technology is faster and more accurate than the old way, and saves taxpayers money over the long term. You will be involved in this process, to review these maps for accuracy. GIS gives us the tools to provide quicker, more accurate information to producers and reduce the amount of time the producer must spend in the FSA office.

There are many new items inside this newsletter, so be sure you take the time to carefully read each article. Included is important information regarding the County Committee election and nomination process. Form FSA-669A "Nomination Form For County Farm Service Agency (FSA) Committee Election" included in this newsletter, allows individuals to nominate themselves or any other person as a candidate. Also included is a table that contains the Local Administrative Areas (LAAs) by Service Center that are up for election this year.

Have a safe spring and remember safety on and off the roads and highways. Moving farm equipment on public roads can be a dangerous business. Caution, courtesy and special attention will help ensure the safety of motorists, passengers, and operators of slow-moving farm equipment.....BE SAFE!

Nancy Dietz  
State Executive Director  
Michigan Farm Service Agency



**REMINDER:**  
Farm Service Agency  
Employment Opportunities  
Check out employment  
opportunities with the FARM  
SERVICE AGENCY at the following  
<http://www.usajobs.opm.gov>

### Farm Loan Programs

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers loans for farmers and ranchers to purchase farmland and finance agricultural operations. FSA loan programs are designed to help farmers who are temporarily unable to obtain private or commercial credit. In many cases, applicants are beginning farmers who have insufficient net worth to qualify for financing through a commercial lender. In other instances, borrowers might have suffered setbacks from natural disasters or might be persons with limited resources.

Farm ownership loans or farm operating loans may be obtained as direct loans for a maximum of up to \$200,000. Guaranteed loans can reach a maximum indebtedness of \$899,000. Emergency loans are always direct loans for farmers who may have suffered physical or production losses in disaster areas designated by a Presidential or Secretarial disaster declaration. Rural Youth Loans, Loans to Beginning Farmers and loans for socially disadvantaged applicants are also available through FSA.

For detail information, loan eligibility or the different available loan programs, just contact the county office staff for an appointment with a farm loan manager.



# Farm the Best, Conserve the Rest

## Enroll your Environmentally Sensitive Cropland into the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP)



The Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP) is a voluntary enrollment program in which landowners and operators are given the opportunity to establish conservation covers on environmentally sensitive cropland to reduce soil erosion, improve wildlife habitat and food sources. Acreage is placed under contracts that range from 10 to 15 years in length. In return, the participant receives annual rental and maintenance payments, incentive payments for certain practices, and cost-share for practice establishment.

To be eligible for the CCRP, participants and acreage must meet certain eligibility requirements. Provided that the eligibility

requirements are met, FSA will automatically accept enrollment acreage into the CCRP. As the program name implies, land can be enrolled on a continuous basis any time of the year.

The CCRP is but one component of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Periodically, the USDA conducts whole field enrollment opportunities into the Conservation Reserve Program that are known as General Sign-ups. Under General Sign-ups, individual acreage enrollment offers are selected under a competitive process based on a score known as the Environmental Benefits Index (EBI). The last CRP General Sign-up, the 33rd, ended on April 28, 2006. Eligible cropland that was not accepted during that general sign-up can be re-offered during the next general sign-up or offered under the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP).

For more information on the CRP and CCRP enrollment requirements, available practices and program payments, please contact your local FSA office or visit our website at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dafp/cepd/crp.htm>.

## Linkage Requirements for Crop Disaster Program

If you received disaster benefits on an insurable crop that you did not have insured, or on a non-insurable crop that you did not carry Non-Insurable Crop Disaster Assistance (NAP) coverage on you are required to purchase insurance (greater than CAT) or NAP, as applicable on that crop for the next 2 available crop years.

Sales closing dates are fast approaching for both Insurance coverage and NAP coverage. For NAP coverage obtained from your local FSA Office the following application closing dates are:

September 30<sup>th</sup> for small grains including winter wheat, rye, fall barley, fall speltz, fall mint, and forage (production); November 20<sup>th</sup> for apples, apricots, asparagus, blueberries, sweet & tart cherries, cranberries, grapes, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums, raspberries, rhubarb, and strawberries; December 1<sup>st</sup> for honey and maple sap.

There is a service fee of \$100.00 per crop per administrative county; or \$300.00 per producer per administrative county not to exceed a total of \$900.00 per producer. This fee must be paid each year no later than the application closing date to remain eligible for your disaster payments.

Contact your local FSA office for more information and application closing dates for your specific crops. For crops that are insurable in your specific county contact your insurance agent for sales closing dates or your local FSA office for a list of agents that service your county.

## Marketing Assistance Loans, LDPs

Marketing assistance loans and loan deficiency payments can mean the difference between a good year and a not-so-good year. With that in mind, it is important to comply with the rules.

To be eligible for loans and LDPs, you must comply with the conservation and wetland protection requirements; report how you use cropland acreage on the farm and retain beneficial interest while the loan is outstanding; and ensure that the commodity meets CCC minimum grade and quality standards. Beneficial interest means you retain the ability to make decisions about the commodity and have title to the commodity. Once beneficial interest in a commodity is

lost, the commodity may be ineligible for loan or LDP even if you regain beneficial interest. For commodities to be eligible for loans or LDPs, 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 quantity of the commodity in farm storage must be maintained throughout the term of the loan. Loans mature the last day of the 9th month in which they are disbursed. Loans can be issued on commodities as soon as they are harvested. The final date to obtain Loans or LDP's is March 31, 2008 for small grains and May 31, 2008 for feed grains.

### Selected Interest Rates for June 2007

90-Day Treasury Bill	5.000%
Farm Operating Loans —Direct	5.125%
Farm Ownership Loans —Direct	5.375%
Farm Ownership Loans —Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	4.000%
Emergency Loans	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility Loans	4.625%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	5.875%

## Did you suffer a major weather-related disaster in 2006?

If so, FSA's Emergency Loan program may be able to help. Michigan is currently covered by three (3) Emergency designations due to weather conditions occurring in 2006. Several requirements must be met to qualify, including the inability to get credit at conventional rates and terms from another lender and documentation you suffered a 30% production loss due to the specific weather event covered by one of the Secretarial designations. If you were impacted by these weather events, you have a limited amount of time to apply for Emergency loan assistance. Here are the three designations;

**Application deadline, July 9, 2007** – Designation S2450, Drought conditions, occurring between June 1, 2006 and September 30, 2006.

**Application deadline, July 9, 2007** – Designations S2451, Frost and Freeze conditions, occurring between April 25, 2006 and October 15, 2006.

**Application deadline, July 16, 2007** – Designation S2460, Storms, excessive rain, flooding, hail and high winds, beginning April 26, 2006.

You may also want to check out FSA's Disaster Assistance Programs page found at: [www.disasterhelp.gov/suite/portal/index.jsp](http://www.disasterhelp.gov/suite/portal/index.jsp)

### Appointments Recommended

We recommend you call to make an appointment before coming to the office to conduct business. This will enable us to prepare any necessary paperwork and research issues before your appointment. We realize how important your time is, and this will reduce the amount of time that you have to wait in the office. *We appreciate your patience and remember farm safety this spring!*

### Tools for Farm Loan Programs borrowers!

FSA direct loan borrowers can now check the status of their accounts any time, day or night, using a new toll-free telephone number. The number is (888) 518-4983.

The new, user-friendly system provides direct loan borrowers with the following information:

- ⇒ Loan number
- ⇒ Original loan amount
- ⇒ Current unpaid principal
- ⇒ If delinquent, the amount of the delinquency
- ⇒ Due date of the next installment
- ⇒ Principal and interest amount of the next scheduled installment
- ⇒ Date last payment was received
- ⇒ Interest paid in current calendar year
- ⇒ Interest paid in prior loan year.

You will need your Tax ID number (usually your social security number) and personal identification number, PIN (which you create during your initial call) to access your confidential records. You will need your PIN each time you access the system and can change you PIN as often as you like.

For payoff information, or special circumstances, please contact your Farm Loan Manager.

### CCC-633 EZ, "LDP Agreement and Request"

The CCC-633EZ was developed to encompass field-direct LDP's, basic LDP's, wool, mohair, and unshorn pelts. Page 1 of the form contains the Terms and Conditions. Subsequent pages are requests for LDP's.

Page 1 must be: Completed by the producer and submitted to the County Service Center before losing beneficial interest in the commodity. Received in the County Service Center on or before any subsequent CCC-633EZ pages are submitted for payment. Submitted before the final loan/LDP availability period.

Subsequent pages:

Page 2 is for all harvested commodities  
Page 4 is for wool, mohair, and unshorn pelts.

### Foreign Buyers Notification

Foreign investors, who buy, sell or hold a direct or indirect interest in U.S. agriculture land must report their holdings and transactions to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. The reporting requirement became law in 1978 when the Agricultural Foreign Investment Discloser Act (AFIDA) was signed into law.

Failure to timely file an accurate report within 90 days of the transaction to their local Farm Service Agency office can result in a penalty with fines up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the agricultural land.

### Non-Discrimination Statement

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, SW., Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

## Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) Advance Payment Percentages

On February 8, 2006, the President signed the Agricultural Reconciliation Act of 2005 into law which provides for modifications to the DCP direct advance payment percentages for fiscal years 2006 and 2007. The 2005 Act amends the 2002 Farm Bill by providing that “At the option of the producers on a farm, up to 40 percent of the direct payment for the 2006 crop year shall be paid in advance, and up to 22 percent of the direct payment for the 2007 crop year shall be paid in advance”.



Prior to the passage of this Act, advance direct payments were at the 50 percent level. The provisions of the Act are applicable for DCP contracts enrolled after February 8, 2006, when the law was signed into law. Such guaranteed advance payments may be made to producers in any month from December through September of the contract period. Producers requesting these advance payments to purchase seed and fertilizer for planting their crops should be aware of these reductions so they can plan accordingly.

## CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of 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.

## Payment Eligibility and Limitation

For most programs administered through FSA, the individual, entity, or entity member is not eligible to receive program benefits if the average adjusted gross income exceeds \$2.5 million and less than 75% of your average adjusted gross income is derived from farming, ranching or forestry operations. USDA payments and benefits are subject to payment eligibility such as “actively engaged in farming” requirements; cash-rent tenant rule; permitted entity restriction; foreign person rule; average adjusted gross income limitation and payment limitation provisions.

Although annual filings are not required, documents used to determine eligibility are reviewed annually. It is each participant’s responsibility to timely

notify the County Office by filing revised farm operating plans and/or supporting documentation, as applicable. Failure to do so may adversely affect eligibility and/or limitation. These changes may include renting a new farm, giving up a farm, buying or selling land or other changes. In addition, entities such as corporations, limited liability companies, trusts and estates are required to provide names, address, and ID number of members and notify FSA of interests as of April 1 and whenever member interests change.

Following are programs requiring payment eligibility or limitation determination, including the maximum payment limitation:

Commodity(s)/Crop(s)	Program/Payment Type	Program Year Limitation
Wheat, barley, oats, corn, grain sorghum, soybeans, minor oilseeds	Direct and Counter Cyclical Programs (DCP), direct payment	\$40,000
	DCP counter-cyclical payments	\$65,000
	Loan Deficiency Payment & Market Gains	\$75,000
Wool, mohair, and honey		\$75,000
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)		\$50,000
Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)		\$100,000
Trade Adjustment Act (TAA)		\$10,000 (may be adjusted downward if DCP counter-cyclical payment are received)
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)		\$450,000 in aggregate for all contracts for FY 2002-2007
Tree Assistance Program (TAP)		\$75,000

# Michigan Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Expanded to Improve Lake Erie Water Quality

The US Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency and the Michigan Department of Agriculture recently announced a significant expansion of a key Michigan farmer-focused initiative to restore water quality and wildlife habitat in Michigan and benefit Lake Erie. The expansion opens up the Michigan CREP to farmers in critical portions of the Lake Erie Watershed in the southern Michigan counties of Branch, Hillsdale, Lenawee and Monroe. In addition to expanding the program geographically, the recent revisions will enable the Michigan CREP to tackle the flow of suspended sediment and nutrients into more of southern

Michigan's rivers and streams and ultimately into the Western Basin of Lake Erie, the shallowest, warmest and most productive lake in the Great Lakes system.

As the name implies, the Michigan CREP is an enhanced version of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and offers farmers and landowners more and better options and increased financial incentives to help improve water quality and wildlife in the region.

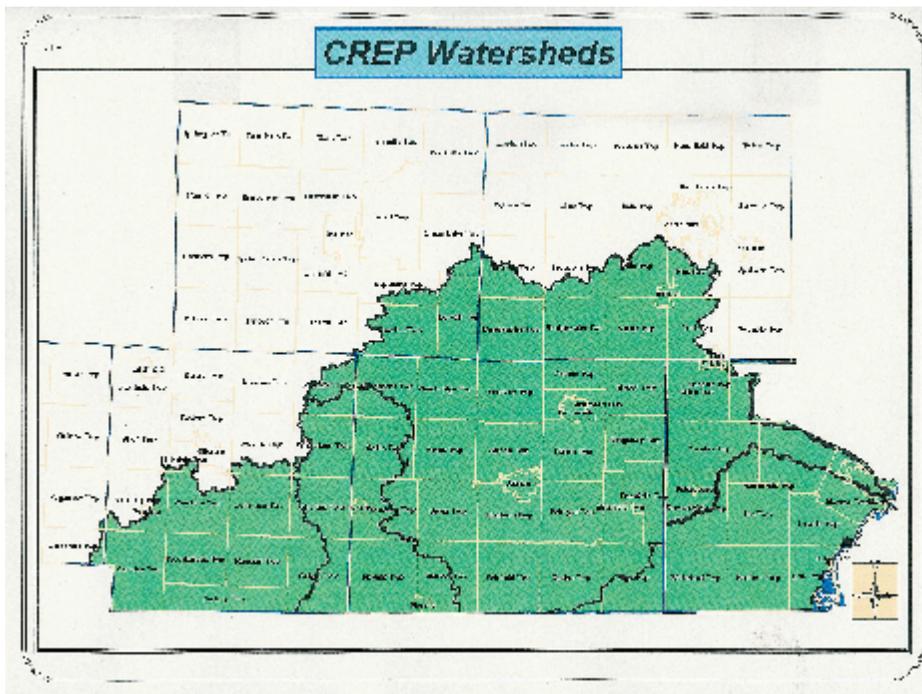
For more information about the revised MI CREP, producers in the expanded Counties should contact their local Farm Service Agency staff.

## FSA Targets Funds for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers (SDA)

This special financing program is available for those who are part of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because their identity as members of the group without regard to their individual qualities. SDA members include women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian and Pacific Islanders.

SDA loan applicants do not receive automatic approval. Individuals must be U.S. citizens with a satisfactory credit history; have sufficient education, training or experience managing or operating a farm; possess the legal capacity to incur debt; and be unable to obtain credit elsewhere. A positive cash flow and adequate security are also required. Other criteria may also apply.

For more information on this special program, please contact your local Farm Loan Manager.



## Unauthorized Disposition

If loan grain has been disposed of through feeding, selling or any other form of disposal without county office approval, it is considered unauthorized disposition. The financial penalties are severe and a producer's name will be placed on a loan violation list for at least a two-year period. Always call the office before any loan grain is fed or sold.

## REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

The Farm Service Agency's Inventory Property Web site provides an online guide to government-owned real estate and potential foreclosure sales information, which includes farm/ranch properties, houses, lots and buildings. The site provides access to detailed information about each of the properties and links to other USDA Web sites providing a variety of services. The inventory property's "For Sale" web site is <http://www.resales.usda.gov>

## Conservation Compliance Reminder

All participants in USDA programs are required to have a conservation system in place on all the highly erodible land that they operate. Several areas where problems can arise with complying with a conservation system are: renting new cropland, purchasing new cropland, breaking out additional cropland, shortening an established cropping rotation, planting new crops, and changing or removing existing conservation practices. It is very important that you contact the FSA office BEFORE doing any of the above. Also, it is very important that you contact your local County office BEFORE modifying (tiling, draining, dredging, filling or leveling) any wetland or drainage ditch. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in loss of all Federal payments and program eligibility.

## Michigan 2007 COC Election Table

Service Center	LAA	Townships and/or County
Allegan	LAA #3	Watson, Martin, Gun Plain, Casco, Lee, Trowbridge, Otsego, and Cheshire
Alpena-Alcona-Montmorency	LAA #1	Montmorency County
	LAA #3	Ossineke, Sanborn and Wilson Townships of Alpena County
Antrim-Otsego	LAA #2	Chestonia, Jordon, Star, Mancelona and Warner
Arenac	LAA #2	Mason, Turner, Whitney, Augres and Sims
Baraga-Houghton-Ontonagon-Keweenaw	LAA #1	Keweenaw County and Calumet, Schoolcraft, Torch Lake, Stanton and Adams Townships of Houghton County
	LAA #2	Chasell, Portage, Elm River and Laird Townships of Houghton County
Barry	LAA #3	Baltimore, Maple Grove, Barry, Johnstown and Assyria
Bay	LAA #3	Frankenlust, Portsmouth, Merritt, and Hampton
Berrien	LAA #1	Hagar, Coloma, Watervliet, Benton, Bainbridge, Sodus and Pipestone
Branch	LAA #1	Sherwood, Union, Matteson, Bronson, and Noble
Calhoun	LAA #2	Leroy, Newton, Fredonia, Athens, Burlington and Tekonsha
Cass	LAA #2	Silver Creek, Wayne, Pokagon, Howard, and Milton Townships
Chippewa-Mackinac-Luce	LAA #1	McMillian, Columbus, Lakefield, and Pentland Townships of Luce County; Portage, Newton, Garfield, Hudson, Hendricks, Moran and Brevort Townships of Mackinac County
Clinton	LAA #1	Bingham, Duplain, Essex, Greenbush and Ovid
Delta-Alger-Schoolcraft-Marquette	LAA #2	Schoolcraft County
	LAA #5	Alger County
Eaton	LAA #1	Roxand, Oneida, Chester, Benton, and Carmel
Emmet-Charlevoix	LAA #3	Charlevoix, Norwood, Marion, Eveline, Peaine, St. James, South Arm, Wilson and Boyne Valley of Charlevoix County
Genesee	LAA #1	Clayton, Flushing, Montrose, Mt. Morris and Vienna
Gladwin-Clare	LAA #4	Arthur, Grant, Sheridan, and Surrey Townships of Clare County
	LAA #5	Winterfield, Summerfield, Frost, Franklin, Redding, Greenwood, Hayes, Hamilton, Freeman, Lincoln, Hatton, and Garfield Townships of Clare County
Grand Traverse-Kalkaska-Leelanau	LAA #3	Acme, East Bay, Garfield Long Lake, Peninsula, Whitewater
	LAA #5	Kalkaska County
Gratiot	LAA #3	Wheeler, Emerson, Lafayette, North Star, Hamilton, and Elba
Hillsdale	LAA #3	Reading, Cambria, Camden, Woodbridge, Ransom and Amboy
Huron	LAA #3	Huron, Gore, Bloomfield, Sigel, Paris, Rubicon, Sand Beach, and Sherman
Ingham-Livingston	LAA #2	Alaiedon, Aurelius, Delhi, Vevay, Onondaga and Leslie
	LAA #3	Bunker Hill, Ingham, Stockbridge and White Oak
Ionia	LAA #2	Keene, Boston, Berlin, Campbell, and Odessa
Iosco	LAA #2	Tawas, Sherman, Grant and Alabaster

### County Committee Elections

It's county committee election time, and this newsletter is your guide to the 2007 election.

Since this only happens once a year, here is an election refresher. For election purposes, counties are divided into *local administrative areas*, or LAAs. Each LAA contributes one producer to serve a three-year term on the Farm Service Agency county committee.

Most counties are divided into three LAAs. Combined counties may have three to five LAAs.

Each year, an election is held in an LAA to replace the committee member whose three-year term is expiring. In counties with three LAAs, one seat is up for election. In combined counties in some years, two seats may be up for election.

The three steps in the election process are the call for nominations, the election and installing the new committee member.

### Who Can Hold Office

To hold office as a county committee member, a person must meet the basic eligibility criteria.

- Participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA
- Be eligible to vote in a county committee election
- Reside in the LAA in which the person is a candidate
- Not have been:
  - Removed or disqualified from the office of county committee member, alternate or employee
  - Removed for cause from any public office or have been convicted of fraud, larceny, embezzlement or any other felony
  - Dishonorably discharged from any branch of the armed services.

For more information about county committee elections, contact your local county office staff.

## Michigan 2007 COC Election Table

Service Center	LAA	Townships and/or County
Isabella	LAA #3	Vernon, Wise, Isabella, Denver and Chippewa
Jackson	LAA #2	Springport, Tompkins, Rives, Parma, Sandstone and Blackman
Kalamazoo	LAA #3	Prairie Ronde, Schoolcraft, Brady and Wakeshma
Kent	LAA #2	Tyrone, Solon, Sparta, Algoma, Alpine, Walker, Grand Rapids, and Ada
Lapeer-Oakland	LAA #3	Goodland, Inlay, Almont, Dryden, Metamora and Hadley townships in Lapeer County
	LAA #4	Groveland, Holly, Rose, Springfield, Highland, White Lake, Milford, Commerce, Lyon and Novi townships in Oakland County
Lenawee	LAA #1	Woodstock, Cambridge, Rome, Franklin, Adrian, Clinton, Tecumseh. And Macon
Mason-Oceana-Lake-Manistee	LAA #1	Manistee County, plus Grant, Freesoil, Victory and Sherman townships in Mason County
	LAA #2	Lake County, plus Meade, Sheridan, Branch and Logan townships in Mason County
Mecosta	LAA #2	Austin, Aetna, Big Rapids, Deerfield, Mecosta, and Morton
Menominee-Dickinson-Iron	LAA #1	Faithorn, Meyer, Spalding, Harris and Gourley
Midland	LAA #1	Warren, Jerome, Edenville, Lincoln, Hope, and Mills
Monroe	LAA #1	Ash, Berlin, Exeter, London, and Milan
Montcalm	LAA #3	Montcalm, Sidney, Eureka, Fairplains, Bushnell and Bloomer
Newaygo-Muskegon	LAA #2	Dayton Sheridan and Garfield
	LAA #5	Egelston, Moorland, Casnovia, Sullivan, and Ravenna
Ogemaw-Oscoda-Roscommon-Crawford	LAA#2	West Rose, Rose, Goodar, Cumming, Hill, Churchill, Logan, Mills and Richland Townships of Ogemaw County.
Ottawa	LAA #1	Chester, Wright, Polkton, the portions of Spring Lake, Crockery and Allendale North of the Grand River and the portion of Tallmadge Township North and East of the Grand River
Presque Isle-Cheboygan	LAA #2	Burt, Tuscarora, Mentor, Wilmot, Mullett, Koehler, Ellis, Nunda, Waverly, Walker and Forest Townships of Cheboygan County
	LAA #5	Pulawski, Metz, Posen, Krakow, Presque Isle Townships of Presque Isle County
Saginaw	LAA #2	Kochville, Carrollton, Saginaw, Ziwaukee, Spaulding, Buena Vista, Blumfield, Bridgeport, Frankemuth, Taymouth, and Birch Run
St. Clair - Macomb	LAA #3	Lynn, Brockway, Mussey, Emmett and Berlin
St. Joseph	LAA #1	Constantine, Fabius, Florence, Flowerfield, Mottville, and White Pigeon
Sanilac	LAA #3	Flynn, Elk, Buel, Lexington, Maple Valley, Speaker, Fremont and Worth
Shiawassee	LAA #1	Fairfield, Middlebury, Owosso, Perry, Sciota, and Woodhull
Tuscola	LAA #2	Gilford, Denmark, Juinata, Tuscola, Vassar, Arbela and Millington
Van Buren	LAA #1	South Haven, Geneva, Covert, Bangor, Hartford, Keeler, and Hamilton
Washtenaw-Wayne	LAA #2	Augusta, Lodi, Pittsfield, Saline, York and Ypsilanti Townships
	LAA #4	Brownstown, Canton, Huron, Northville, Plymouth, Romulus, Sumpter, Taylor and Van Buren
Wexford-Benzie-Missaukee-Osceola	LAA #2	Bloomfield, Pioneer, Norwich West, Norwich East, Caldwell, Forest, West Branch, Enterprise, Aetna, Butterfield, Clam Union, and Holland

### **Who Can Vote**

Agricultural producers of legal voting age can vote if they participate or cooperate in any FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises and conducts the farming operations on an entire farm can also vote.

No one can be denied the right to vote because of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital or family status.

### **Election Timetable**

June 15 Nomination period begins.

Aug. 1 Deadline to submit nomination forms.

Nov. 2 Ballots are mailed to eligible voters.

Dec. 3 Deadline to return completed ballots to FSA county office.

Jan. 1, New committee members and alternates take office 2008

### **Election**

The county committee election is held by mail. Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters beginning Nov. 2, and must be returned to the FSA county office by the close of business on Dec. 3, or postmarked by midnight Dec. 3, 2007. The election of responsible agricultural producers to FSA county committees is important to ALL farmers and ranchers with large or small operations. It is crucial that every eligible producer take part in this election because county committees are a direct link between the farm community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Committee members are a critical component of the day-to-day operations of FSA. They help deliver FSA farm programs at the local level. Farmers who serve on committees help decide the kind of programs their counties will offer. They work to make FSA agricultural programs serve the needs of local producers.

**Make a Difference: Nominate and Vote**

**FSA-669A**  
(03-08-06)

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
Farm Service Agency

## **NOMINATION FORM FOR COUNTY FARM SERVICE AGENCY (FSA) COMMITTEE ELECTION**

The County FSA Committee election will be held this year on the first Monday of December. Ballots will be mailed to voters not less than 4 weeks before the election.

This form allows individuals to nominate themselves or any other person as a candidate. If additional forms are needed, this one may be copied or may be obtained at the County FSA Office or obtained electronically at <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov>. Each form submitted must be:

- A. Limited to one nominee.
- B. Signed and dated by the nominee in Item 4. Nominee must sign if willing to have his/her name placed on the ballot and agrees to serve if elected.

**Note:** Name shown on ballot will appear exactly the same as in Agency records.

- C. Delivered to the County FSA Office or postmarked no later than August 1.

The County FSA Committee is responsible for reviewing each form to determine the eligibility of nominees. A person who files this form and is found ineligible will be so notified and have an opportunity to file an appeal in accordance with 7 CFR Part 780.

Persons nominated should actively participate in the operation of a farm or ranch and be well qualified for committee work. A producer is eligible to be a County FSA committee member if the producer resides in the Local Administrative Area (LAA) in which the election is to be held and is eligible to vote.

Federal regulations may prohibit County FSA Committee members from holding certain positions in some farm, commodity, and political organizations if such positions pose a conflict of interest with FSA duties. The positions include functional offices such as president, vice president, secretary, or treasurer; and positions on boards or executive committees. Conflict of interest restrictions also apply to employees, operators, managers, and majority owners of tobacco warehouses. Questions concerning eligibility should be directed to the County FSA Office.

A candidate has the option to request that all voted ballots for an individual county committee election be returned to the respective State Office in lieu of being returned to the county office. This request must be in writing and submitted to the local County Executive Director prior to the announced end of the nomination period.

The duties of County FSA Committee members include:

- A. Administering farm program activities conducted by the County FSA Office.
- B. Informing farmers of the purpose and provisions of the FSA programs.
- C. Keeping the State FSA Committee informed of LAA conditions.
- D. Monitoring changes in farm programs.
- E. Participating in county meetings as necessary.
- F. Performing other duties as assigned by the State FSA Committee

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs 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.

**FSA-669A**  
(03-08-06)

**U.S. Department of Agriculture**  
Farm Service Agency

**NOMINATION FORM FOR COUNTY FSA COMMITTEE ELECTION**

1. NAME OF NOMINEE (Type or print Nominee's Full Name)		<b>TO BE COMPLETED BY COUNTY FSA OFFICE</b>
2. ADDRESS OF NOMINEE		
<b>3. NOMINEE'S CERTIFICATION</b>  <i>I hereby agree to have my name placed on the ballot, that I will serve if elected, and if there is a conflict of interest, I will resign such position.</i>  <input type="checkbox"/> I DO want to witness the settling of tied votes with another nominee.  <input type="checkbox"/> I DO NOT want to witness the settling of tied votes with another nominee.		5. INITIALS OF EMPLOYEE RECEIVING FORM AND DATE (MM-DD-YYYY)
		6A. COUNTY
		6B. LAA NO.
4A. SIGNATURE OF NOMINEE		7. STATE
4B. DATE (MM-DD-YYYY)		<b>DATE OF ELECTION IS 1st MONDAY OF DECEMBER OF EACH CALENDAR YEAR</b>

**8. TO BE COMPLETED BY NOMINEE**

**VOLUNTARY INFORMATION FOR MONITORING PURPOSES:** The following information is requested by the Federal Government in order to monitor FSA's compliance with federal laws prohibiting discrimination against program participants on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, marital status, handicapped condition, or age. You are not required to furnish this information, but are encouraged to do so. This information will not be used in evaluating your nomination or to discriminate against you in any way.

<b>ETHNICITY</b>	<b>RACE (Choose as many boxes as applicable)</b>	<b>GENDER</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Not Hispanic or Latino	<input type="checkbox"/> America Indian or Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African-American <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> White	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THIS FORM**

Complete the form as follows:

- ITEM 1** Type or Print the nominee's full name. The nominee must be:
  - A. Eligible to vote in the designated County FSA Committee election.
  - B. Eligible to hold the office of County FSA Committee member.
  - C. Willing to serve if elected.
- ITEM 2** Enter the nominee's current address.
- ITEM 3** The nominee must check one of the boxes to indicate a preference regarding the settling of tied votes.
- ITEM 4** The nominee must sign and date.
- ITEM 8** Completing this item is voluntary.

**ALL FORMS MUST BE RECEIVED IN THE COUNTY OFFICE OR POSTMARKED BY AUGUST 1.**

**NOTE:** The following statement is made in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a) and the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, as amended. The authority for requesting the following information is 7 CFR Part 7. The information will be used to obtain nominees for County FSA Committee.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0560-0229. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 5 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO YOUR COUNTY FSA OFFICE.

# What is CRP Mid-Contract Management?



Before Mid-Contract Management

Mid-contract Management of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage are activities that must be performed on certain practices to ensure the original plant diversity, wildlife benefits, and protection of the soil and water resources are present for the life of the contract.

For CRP practices with grasses, legumes, and wildflowers, research has shown that typically 3-4 years after establishment the site becomes dominated by a thick growth of grasses. To ensure wildlife habitat benefits in these sites, management is required to encourage legumes and wildflowers, and to ensure the grass is not too thick to limit small wildlife species from traveling through the cover to meet their needs.

When CRP practices with trees reach an average diameter of at least 5 inches, the site must be evaluated to ensure the trees are not too crowded, for crowding hampers adequate growth and fruit and nut production for wildlife.

Effective May 12, 2002 all new CRP General Sign-up, Continuous CRP, and Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) contracts are required to perform management activities as part of their approved conservation plan. Participants with contracts that were approved prior to May 12, 2002, may have their conservation plan revised to include mid-contract management practices and be eligible for cost share for those practices.

The following management activities are available for management of CRP INTRODUCED GRASSES AND LEGUMES (brome grass, timothy grass, clover, alfalfa, etc.): PRESCRIBED BURNING, LIGHT DISKING, GRASS SPECIFIC HERBICIDES, and/or INTERSEEDING INTRODUCED LEGUMES.

For CRP NATIVE GRASSES (little and big bluestem, switchgrass, Indian grass, etc.) and WILDFLOWERS: PRESCRIBED BURNING, LIGHT DISKING, GRASS SPECIFIC HERBICIDES, and/or INTERSEEDING NATIVE WILDFLOWERS, are the available allowable management activities.

Mid-Contract Management of CRP acreage is distinct and separate from maintenance. Maintenance of CRP cover is required if untreated pests (weeds, insects, brush, tress etc.), pose a threat to the existing planted cover, are adversely impacting non-CRP acreage, or if the planted cover is no longer providing erosion control. Most CRP practices receive an annual maintenance rate that is paid to participants to off-set the costs of required maintenance.

Contact your local FSA Service Center for detailed information on Mid-Contract Management Practice options.



After Mid-Contract Management

## Wetland Blue Dot Identifiers

Before the implementation of the FSA Common Land Unit (CLU) project, maps created for producers contained labels and delineations of Natural Resource Conservation Service wetland determinations. The move to using CLU and other digital data to create producer maps brought about the blue dot to represent these wetland determinations. **A blue dot on a map provides no information other than the fact that a determination exists in the area.** The intent of the blue dot is simply to provide a wetland symbol on producer maps until a wetland layer, including delineations of the wetland area, can be completed by NRCS.

In response to concerns expressed about the use of the blue dot symbols, some changes will be made to how wetland determinations are identified on maps. Wetland types will be grouped into the following three categories referred to as Wetland Determination Identifiers on CLU maps:

- **“Restricted Use”** (W, CW, CW+YR, AW/W, GFW, GFW+YR, RSW, RSW+YR, RPW), which is represented by a **red octagon**
- **“Limited Restrictions”** (FW, FWP, CWNA, AW/FW, CWTE, TP, WX, MIW, MW, MWM, CMW, NI, OW, Easement), which is represented by an **upside-**

**down yellow triangle**

- **“Exempt from Conservation Compliance Provisions”** (PC, NW, PC/NW, CC, NW/NAD, AW), which is represented by a **green square**.

All FSA producer maps will feature the following disclaimer: *“Wetland identifiers do not represent the size, shape, or specific determination of the area. Refer to your original determination (CPA-026 and attached maps) for exact wetland boundaries and labels, or contact NRCS.”*

Additional information on map wetland identifiers can be provided by either FSA or NRCS staff.

### Wetland Determination Identifiers

- Restricted Use
- ▼ Limited Restrictions
- Exempt from Conservation Compliance Provisions

## Reporting Crop Acreage

The annual requirement of reporting to the FSA office can be referred to as crop reporting, acreage reporting, or crop certification. Filing an accurate and timely report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent loss of benefits for a variety of Farm Service Agency programs. All cropland on the farm must be reported to receive benefits from the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, marketing assistance loans and Loan Deficiency Payments.



Conservation Reserve Program acreage must be reported to receive annual rental payments. And, crop acreage for Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) must also be reported.

Crop reports, form FSA-578, Report of Acreage, must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. Producers are required to file reports by June 30 for fall seeded small grains and July 16 for all other crops.

**Prevented Planting:** Prevented planting needs to be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date.

**Failed Acreage:** Reports of failed acreage must be filed before disposition of the crop. And producers must be able to establish to the satisfaction of the county committee that the crop failed and was prevented from being replanted through the normal planting period because of natural disaster conditions.

## Maintaining Farm Stored Grain Quality

At times producers find themselves struggling to find adequate grain storage. Overfilled grain storage bins can lead to grain quality problems.

Bins are ideally designed to hold a level volume of grain. When bins are overfilled and grain is heaped up, airflow is hindered and the chance of spoilage increases.

Producers who take out marketing assistance loans and use the farm-stored grain as collateral should remember that they are responsible for maintaining the quality of the commodity for the term of the loan.

The Farm Storage Facility Loan Program offers producers low interest financing for the purchase of new grain storage and drying equipment. Producers may be eligible to finance up to \$100,000 for the purchase of grain storage and drying equipment.

For information about grain storage options visit your FSA office.



### Special Accommodations

Special Accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact their local FSA County Office.

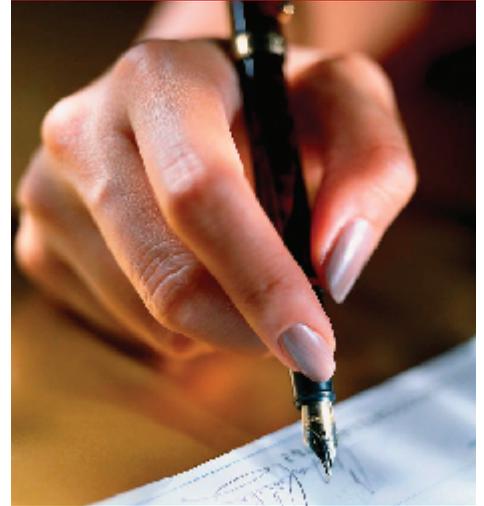
### Farm Record Changes

If you have sold or bought land, changed tenants, or rented additional land for 2007, please notify your local FSA Office so farm records can be updated.

#### For land purchased:

- A copy of the deed is required.
- All landowners must furnish their tax ID number if they are enrolling in a program.

## Signature Authority Requirement



County Offices are required to verify that a signature authority is on file in the county office before accepting a signature on any program or related documents on behalf of another.

Producers can present evidence of signature authority such as presentation of the original document, such as corporate charter, bylaws, court orders of appointment, trust agreement, last will and testament, or articles of partnership.

The FSA-211, Power-of Attorney form can also be completed to grant signature authority to another individual or entity.

Spouses may sign documents on behalf of each other for many FSA and CCC programs in which either has an interest, unless written notification denying a spouse this authority has been provided to the county office. This procedure does not apply to the commodity loan, farm loan programs or Loan Deficiency Program. Spouses must have an FSA-211 on file to sign commodity loan documents or loan deficiency applications on behalf of each other.

Spouses may not sign FSA-211 on behalf of the other as an authorized signatory for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations or other similar entities.

Producers need to contact their local county office for specific signature authority documents needed.

### Dates to Remember

**June 29, 2007**

Final date to file applications for the Tree Assistance Program (TAP) for tree losses due to fire blight.

**June 30, 2007**

Final date to certify fall seeded small grain planted acreage

**July 4, 2007**

Offices closed in observance of Independence Day

**July 9, 2007**

Last date to file Emergency Loan application Disaster S2450 and S2451

**July 16, 2007**

Final date to certify all crops, except fall seeded small grains

Last date to file Emergency Loan application Disaster S2460

**August 3, 2007**

Deadline to enroll DCP contracts without late fees.

## Local youth may qualify for special loan program

FSA can make loans to rural youths to establish and operate income-producing projects in connection with their participation in 4-H clubs, Future Farmers of America, and similar organizations.

Each project must be part of an organized and supervised program of work. The project must be planned and operated with the help of the organization adviser, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan size is \$5,000 although most youth loans are much smaller.

To qualify, you must be:

- ⇒ between 10 and 20 years old;
- ⇒ live in a town of less than 10,000 people;
- ⇒ be unable to obtain a loan from other sources; and
- ⇒ conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work

Applicants must also be capable of planning, managing, and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project adviser. The project adviser must recommend the project and the loan, and agree to provide adequate supervision.

If this special Youth Loan programs sounds like it will fit your needs, please contact your local Farm Loan Manager.

## Bank Account Changes?

As of January 1, 1999, all FSA payments are supposed to be electronically transferred into your bank account. In order to make timely payments, you need to notify the office if you close your account or if another financial institution purchases your bank. Payments can be delayed if we are not aware of changes to your account and routing numbers.