

Farm Service Agency

December 2006

Issue No. 2

Van Buren/Kalamazoo Farm Service Agency NEWSLETTER

Van Buren FSA

1035 E. Michigan Ave.
Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-657-7055
269-657-4925 FAX

County Committee

Timothy Hood, Member
Doug Meachum, Vice Chair
Chester Ray, Chair
Felipe Llerena, Advisor

Staff

David DeBlecourt, FLM
Debi Gavrun, PT
Mary Jo Hendrixson, PT
Pamela Merwin, PT
Carolyn Skeen, PT
Ron Slaughter, PT
James L. Vogt, CED

Kalamazoo FSA

1911 W. Centre Ave.
Portage, MI 49024
269-327-0940
269-327-2456 FAX

County Committee

Thelma Buckham, Member
Bem Fritz, Vice Chair
Steve Kirklin, Chair
Oscar Hudson, Advisor

Staff

Phillip DeYoung, FLM
Jean Gagliardo, FA
Marnie Plucienik, PT
Matthew Skrzypek, FA
James L. Vogt, CED

FSA Website

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

Hours

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



DCP SIGNUP UNDERWAY

The **annual** sign up for the 2007 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) continues through **June 1, 2007**. **APPOINTMENTS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED.** After June 1st, there is a \$100 late fee per farm.

The DCP program has a two-tiered payment system, Direct Payments and Counter-Cyclical Payments. The Direct Payment is a guaranteed amount. The Counter-Cyclical Payment (CC) is not guaranteed and is dependent upon the 12-month market price. If the 12-month market price goes up the payment may be less than the maximum allowable CC amount, or even zero.

A 22% advance of the Direct payment can be requested for any month December through September of the program year. The final portion of the Direct payment will be issued October 2007 if all eligibility requirements are met. An advance Counter-Cyclical payment may also be requested. This would be paid in October 2007 and February 2008, with the understanding that any unearned payment would need to be refunded.

DAVE DeBLECOURT RETIRES FROM THE VAN BUREN OFFICE!

"I began my career with Farmers Home Administration in August of 1969 after I had graduated from Western Michigan University. My training began in Allegan FmHA Office, then transferring to Paw Paw in October 1969. After completing my training, I was assigned to Hillsdale in July 1970 to become the County Supervisor serving Hillsdale and Jackson Counties.

"My next assignment was a transfer to Cassopolis in January of 1973. Then in December of 1973, I transferred to Allegan where I worked for 8 years.

"When the County Supervisor position became available in Paw Paw, I accepted this position in December 1981 and continued to serve our farmers in this county for the next 25 years.

"After completing over 37 years with Farmers Home Administration/Farm Service Agency, I have decided to retire on January 3, 2007. It is certainly with mixed feeling I have made this decision. There have been wonderful challenges and rewards in working in ag credit.



"One especially memorable experience I was given was the opportunity to work with other Farm Service Agency employees who came from all over the USA to work in Washington, DC, on the Consent Decree class action law suit filed against USDA. This work detail began in October 1999 and continued through August 2002. During this time, I rotated between Washington and the County Office every 2-3 weeks.

"It is hard to believe that this 37-year career is complete. I have worked with so many great producers, borrowers, co-workers, and others in the agriculture and credit field. But it is time for me to move on to other experiences and opportunities and spend more time with my family. I thank the Lord for these past 37 years."

Our congratulations and best wishes to Dave on his upcoming retirement.

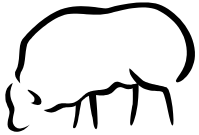
An Open House is scheduled for Dave on December 27th, 2006, from 12pm to 3pm at the Van Buren Office. Please stop by to say goodbye to Dave.

MEASUREMENT SERVICE FEE CHANGE

The fee for measuring things such as field acreages and grain bins has been increased to a basic farm visit fee of \$30 plus \$16 for the first hour and \$8 for every 30 minutes after the first hour. There will be a charge for a minimum of one hour. *The minimum measurement service fee will now be \$46.00.*

DCP REMINDERS

- Report any farming operation changes so that we can keep your record current. This includes changes in landownership or operators.
- Farm changes that require farm reconstitutions should be reported as soon as possible so we can update your records prior to 2007 DCP sign up. Farm divisions should be considered when you do not have a firm lease. We cannot enroll a farm with changes pending, so please let us know of your changes well before your appointment to sign up.
- Do you have a signed lease from the landowner? A signed rental agreement or the landowner's signature on the DCP contract is required. A cash rent certification may be used if you rented the land last year, however, an advance payment cannot be issued for the farm until July 1, 2007.
- All farmers who produce a crop on the base acres are entitled to share in the DCP payment. **Landowners who do not have a risk in growing the crop are not eligible to receive a DCP payment.**
- Plan to update your payment limitation documents and other program eligibility records.



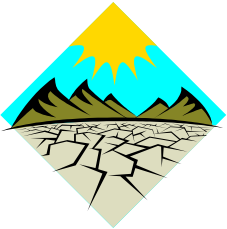
WOOL & MOHAIR LOAN & LDP DEADLINE: JAN. 31, 2007

The final date to request a loan or LDP on wool or mohair harvested in 2006 is January 31, 2007. The market price has been below the loan rate, so there has been a loan deficiency payment in effect.

EMERGENCY LOANS AVAILABLE

Southwestern Michigan farmers who suffered significant damage and production loss due to natural disasters may be eligible for low interest emergency loans from the Farm Service Agency. These loans carry an interest rate of 3.75%.

To qualify an applicant must: be an established family farm operator who was operating and managing a farm at the time of the disaster; be a citizen of the United States or legal resident alien; have training and/or experience necessary to repay the loan; have repayment ability; provide evidence of having suffered a qualifying loss of at least 30% in any single crop which constitutes an essential part of the total farming operation; intend to continue the farming operation after the disaster; must demonstrate a credit history satisfactory to FSA; be unable to obtain suitable credit from a lender other than FSA when offering all assets owned as collateral to such lender; and provide collateral to secure an emergency loan.



Production Losses: Eligible farmers can use emergency loan funds to address losses in crop production that were the result of the natural disaster.

Physical Losses: Eligible farmers can use emergency loan funds to repair or rebuild essential farm buildings, clean debris or prepare land for replanting, and to replace livestock, supplies, and harvested crops on hand or in storage that was lost.

The following table shows the current disaster declarations, the counties affected, disaster descriptions, and the final dates to apply. Kalamazoo County producers should contact Phil DeYoung at 269-781-4263 and Van Buren County farmers should contact David DeBlecourt at 269-657-7055 to make application.

<i>Designation Code & Declaration Date</i>	<i>Counties Affected</i>	<i>Disaster Description</i>	<i>Dates of Disaster</i>	<i>Final Date To Apply</i>
S2451 11/09/2006	Kalamazoo & Van Buren	Frost and freeze events	04/25/2006- 10/15/2006	07/09/2007
S2460 11/14/2006	Kalamazoo & Van Buren	Storms containing excessive rain, flooding, hail, and high winds.	04/26/2006	07/15/2007

FARM STORAGE FACILITY LOANS

Special low cost government loans for storage facilities are now available for producers to build or remodel farm storage facilities for a variety of commodities, including wheat, soybeans and corn. The current interest rate for December is 4.625 percent.

The 7-year Farm Storage Facility Loans are available for the purchase and installation of eligible storage facilities, permanently affixed drying or handling equipment, or remodeling existing facilities. Eligible facilities include new conventional-type cribs or bins and new and remanufactured oxygen-limiting and other upright silo-type structures.



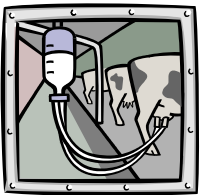
All farm storage facility loans are secured by a promissory note and security agreement. For loans exceeding \$50,000 or where a borrower's aggregate outstanding loan balance exceeds \$50,000, a lien on real estate will be required. The maximum amount that may be borrowed is 85 percent of the net cost of the storage or handling equipment, up to \$100,000 for each borrower. A minimum down payment of 15 percent is also required.

COMMODITY LOANS AVAILABLE

Marketing assistance loans provide producers interim financing at harvest time to meet cash flow needs without having to sell their commodities when market prices are typically at harvest-time lows. Loans mature on the last day of the ninth calendar month following the month in which the loan is approved. The current interest rate is 6.000% and the loan rates are as follows:

<i>County</i>	<i>Soft Red Wheat</i>	<i>Soft White Wheat</i>	<i>Oats</i>	<i>Corn</i>	<i>Soybeans</i>	<i>Sunflower Seed</i>	<i>Canola</i>
Kalamazoo	\$2.64/bu	\$2.46/bu	\$1.40/bu	\$1.87/bu	\$4.91/bu	\$9.03/cwt	\$8.36/cwt
Van Buren	\$2.64/bu	\$2.51/bu	\$1.40/bu	\$1.87/bu	\$4.92/bu	\$9.10/cwt	\$8.43/cwt

REMINDER OF MILCX PRODUCTION START MONTH SELECTION POLICY



Producers in a dairy operation participating in MILCX program **must** select a month of commercially-marketed production for which CCC shall begin issuing payments to the dairy operation for the 2007 fiscal year. If the production start month for 2006 on the applicable CCC-580X is never modified by the producers in the dairy operation, then the production start month will remain in effect for 2007. ***This means that if your production start month for 2006 MILCX was March 2006, then you will not receive a 2007 MILCX payment until March 2007, unless you request a change in the start month.***

If the dairy producer does **not** want to change the start month for 2007, the month indicated on CCC-580X for FY 2006 will remain in effect and no action is necessary. Changes to MILCX production start month selected by the dairy operation **must** be submitted to the County Office on or before the 14th of the month before the month originally selected by the dairy operation as their MILCX production start month. If the 14th of the month falls on a weekend, the dairy operation production start month selection **must** be made on the last workday preceding the weekend.

FREE PESTICIDE DISPOSAL

Do you have old, out-of-date or unusable pesticides stored in your barn or garage? Would you like a safe disposal option?

Kalamazoo County's Clean Sweep & Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Center offers FREE disposal of herbicides, insecticides and fungicides to any grower in Michigan. This program is available through the Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program. Growers in Van Buren and Kalamazoo Counties (and any other county in Michigan) can use this free service. No appointment is needed, nor is there any paperwork to fill out. There is no limit to how much you can bring in. However, if you have large quantities (over 250 lbs.) or have 55-gallons drums, call the Center to discuss the best time to come in.



For more information, either contact the friendly folks at Kalamazoo County Clean Sweep & HHW Center, 269-383-8741 or the Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program representative in your County. If you live in Kalamazoo County and would like more information, please call Linda Zabik at the Kalamazoo Conservation District office at 269-327-1258 or email linda.zabik@mi.nacdnet.net. Van Buren County producers should contact Kyle Mead at the Van Buren Conservation District office at 269-657-4030 or email kyle.mead@macd.org. Easy, convenient and free, Clean Sweep can help you to clean up your farm and protect the groundwater!



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
VAN BUREN FARM SERVICE AGENCY
1035 EAST MICHIGAN AVENUE
PAW PAW, MICHIGAN 49079

PRESORTED STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
LANSING, MI
PERMIT NO. 19

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

December 25, 2006	Christmas Day Holiday – Offices Closed
January 1, 2007	New Year's Day Holiday – Offices Closed
January 5, 2007	County Committee Advisor Nominations Due
January 10, 2007	Kalamazoo County Committee Meeting
January 15, 2007	Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Holiday – Offices Closed
January 16, 2007	Van Buren County Committee Meeting
January 31, 2007	Deadline to Request 2006-Crop Wool and Mohair Loans & LDPs
February 1, 2007	Deadline to Purchase NAP Coverage for Onions
February 14, 2007	Kalamazoo County Committee Meeting
February 19, 2007	George Washington's Birthday Holiday – Offices Closed
February 20, 2007	Van Buren County Committee Meeting
March 15, 2007	Deadline to Purchase NAP Coverage for Spring-Seeded Vegetables
March 31, 2007	Deadline to Request 2006-Crop Wheat, Oats, Barley, Canola & Honey Loans & LDPs
Ongoing	Farm Storage Facility Loans

eGOV CUSTOMER REGISTRATION PROCESS

1. Access your website of interest:
 - USDA Customer Statement <http://customerstatement.usda.gov>
 - Electronic LDP Signup http://www.fsa.usda.gov/egov/eldp_default.htm
 - Electronic DCP Signup http://www.fsa.usda.gov/egov/edcp_default.htm
2. Create an online user profile and apply for Level 2 access
3. Respond to the verification email within 7 days of receipt.
4. Visit the County Office in person and provide photo identification to the Local Registration Authority in order to receive Level 2 Activation.
5. Access Level 2 applications within 1 hour after profile has been activated.

SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the Kalamazoo or Van Buren County Office in person or by phone.

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.