First Community Bank of the Heartland

First Community Bank of the Heartland (FCB), located in Clinton, Kentucky with offices in Western Kentucky and Northwestern Tennessee, has worked with FSA and the guaranteed program since the late 1980’s. FCB has a wide range of agricultural loans in their portfolio, which include, farm production, equipment, real estate, cattle, large poultry and swine confinement loans. There are several applicants that do not meet other lenders’ requirements for down payment, equity, repayment, etc., which is where FCB, with the help of the guaranteed program, is able to step in and help these individuals. The guaranteed program has been very beneficial to our customers and our bank, as well as the communities we serve.

Currently, FCB ranked in the top 50 nationwide in outstanding guaranteed loans. FCB’s loan officers have a combined guaranteed lending experience of over 75 years. One loan officer, Kreg Denton, joined FCB in 2002 and is now a senior loan officer handling the largest guaranteed portfolio of the bank.

“The guaranteed program has improved dramatically since I made my first guarantee loan back in the 1989”, Denton says. “To be honest, it was a paperwork nightmare when I first started but over the years, FSA has streamlined the program and made it so much more user friendly, for the lender, as well as the borrower. This program has allowed FCB to work with several borrowers that we normally would not have been able to help, for a variety of reasons. Several young and beginning farmers that wanted to transition into the family operation or even to start their own farming operation have been able to do so because of the guaranteed program.”

One such individual is Travis Miller, Travis started with a direct operating loan from FSA 15 years ago and then transitioned away from the direct program into the guaranteed program here at FCB. He was able to purchase a 90 acre farm that included a residence and a 4 broiler barn operation and has now expanded his row crop operation to over 2,000 acres. “None of this would have been possible without the help from FCB and the FSA guaranteed program”, stated Travis. “FCB is a great bank to work with and has made the expansion of my operation very smooth. They take care of the majority of the paperwork so I am free to concentrate on the things I need to do to keep my operation moving forward.”

Today, the guaranteed borrowing limit is rather large, $1,399,000, but this does not always meet the needs of borrowers that have diversified operations such as row crop and livestock. “In the area that FCB covers, we have several large livestock confinement
operations and theses facilities can cost over a $1 mil to build, then if the applicant needs to purchase the land and with any other loans they might have, the guaranteed limit can be reached quickly,” Denton states. “But there are other options available, many times FCB has been able to work with FSA to do an unguaranteed loan in conjunction with a guarantee loan. Or, FSA can still be involved with a direct loan to a borrower that also has a guaranteed loan. Some applicants are unaware that they can have a direct loan with FSA as well as a guaranteed loan with a commercial lender. This is another reason the guaranteed program fits so well in our area with so many options to choose from.”

First Community Bank takes pride in being able to help young beginning farmers, individuals wanting to expand their operations and the farmers that have had struggles due to market down-turns and other situations beyond their control. This would not be possible without the guaranteed program and the other FSA programs that are available to farmers and lenders.

Kreg D. Denton  
Senior Vice President  
First Community Bank of the Heartland  
NMLS # 654050  
Tel (270) 665-5777  
www.fcbheartland.com