



Alpena, Alcona, Montmorency County Farm Service Agency News

August 2010

Alpena-Alcona-Montmorency County FSA Service Center
1900 W. M-32
Alpena, MI 49707

Phone:
989-356-3596, ext 2

Fax:
989-356-2401

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

Website:
www.fsa.usda.gov/mi

County Committee:
Janice Emerick
John Herrick
Edward McKinnon
Daniel Smolinski
Michael Timm
Louella Byelich (Advisor)

County Executive Director:
Kay Lumsden

Farm Loan Manager:
Mack Francoeur

Office Staff:
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GENERAL CRP SIGNUP **ANNOUNCED**

A Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) general signup will be held from **August 2 through August 27, 2010**. CRP is a voluntary program available to agricultural producers to help them use environmentally sensitive land for conservation benefits. Producers enroll in CRP plant long-term, resource-conserving covers to improve the quality of water, control soil erosion and develop wildlife habitat. In return, FSA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance.

CRP participants with contracts expiring on September 30, 2010, may submit offers during this general signup. These participants were mailed a letter directly from the Kansas City Office earlier this month. Any landowner interested in the CRP program may also submit a bid during this general signup.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Producer must have owned or operated land 12 months prior to August 27th, 2010. (There are exceptions to this, contact the office for further information)
- Cropland planted or considered planted 4 of the previous 6 crop years from 2002 – 2007, and is physically and legally capable of being planted.

This is a National Bid Offering and is very competitive. The type of practice or land cover you intend to plant can increase your EBI (environmental benefits index). If you lower your maximum rental rate, you may increase your EBI.

Bring with you to your appointment:

- You will need a signed statement from your current operator stating he understands your bidding for a CRP contract and will release the acreage.
- All owners on the deed will need to sign the offer
- A copy of your deed, if you are a new landowner

All offers submitted are binding and you will have until the end of the signup period (Aug. 27th) to withdraw or modify any offer. If you are accepted at the national level and you decide after the final signup date to withdraw or not continue with your bid, you will be assessed liquidated damages calculated by acres bid x 25% of the rental rate bid.

Your DCP base acres will be permanently reduced for accepted bids. This will reduce the yearly DCP contract payment if your offer is accepted at the national level.

CONTINUOUS CRP AVAILABLE!

The difference between a general signup and the continuous signup is the type of practices and when an application can be taken. Continuous CRP targets smaller amounts of acreage like on filter strips and riparian buffers. The practices are a high environmental priority and do not require a national bid process. Applications for the Continuous CRP program can be taken at any time. Contact the office for further details.

Contact the office for an appointment to sign up for the bid process at 989-356-3596, ext #2.



Dates to Remember

Aug 27 - Final date to process bid for CRP general signup

Sept 6 – Office closed for Labor Day Holiday

Sept 23 – Final date for asparagus producers to apply for TAA for Farmers

Sept 30 – Final date to submit cash leases &/or signatures from landowners for 2010 DCP contract

Sept 30 – Final date to purchase NAP coverage for small grains and forage crops

Oct 11 – Office Closed for Columbus Day Holiday

Nov 11 – Office Closed for Veterans Day Holiday

Nov 25 – Office Closed for Thanksgiving Day Holiday

Dec 24 – Office Closed for Christmas Day Holiday

Dec 31 – Office Closed for New Years Day Holiday

Continues – Farm Storage Facility Loans

Continues – Continuous Conservation Reserve Program & CRP-SAFE

ACCESS TO FSA INFO

Information is available on line via the web. The Customer Statement Guide for first time users is a helpful step by step process to gain access to your FSA information online. Check it out!

<http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/#L2>



IMPORTANT FAV Reminders

Fruit and Vegetable (FAV's) reductions are yet to be determined. Payment reductions will be processed prior to the final payment process in October. You will receive a letter informing you of the payment reduction.

If you over planted dry beans &/or pot toes on contract acres and later determine **NOT TO HARVEST** all your dry bean/potato acreage **PLEASE FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Come into the office and request a measurement service (\$46.00 for the first hour plus \$8.00 for every half hour beyond that) to measure the acreage you will not harvest.
2. Revise your Acreage Report (578) with both the FSA office and your crop insurance agent
3. Destroy the acreage you requested the measurement service on. Left standing is not considered destroyed. Contact the office to begin the measurement service. (only one farm visit will be made to measure the acreage destroyed)
4. The office will recalculate your payment reduction based only on the acreage you will take to harvest.

Conservation Compliance Reminder

All participants in USDA programs are required to have a conservation system in place on all the highly erodible land they operate. Several areas where problems can arise when 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.



Maintenance of DCP/ACRE Program Acres

DCP participants are required to protect all idle contract acres from erosion and weeds. Idle fields designated as "contract acres" must have a sod cover, crop residue, or volunteer grasses. Weeds are not an acceptable cover and must be mowed. Failure to control weeds on contract acres will cost you program benefits if the COC determines the producer failed to demonstrate a good faith effort to control weeds and/or erosion.

MILK INCOME LOSS CONTRACT (MILC)

There is a MILC payment for the month of April, 2010. If you have not already provided the County office with April's production, please do so immediately. This will help us in making your payment as timely as possible.



RISK MANAGEMENT WATCHDOGS!

FSA has been given the opportunity and duty to keep our eyes open for any fraud, waste, and/or abuse of the Federal Crop Insurance Program. We will be working directly with the Risk Management Association (RMA) in clarifying acres and production evidence in situations that involve claims. We also will be assisting them in monitoring crop conditions throughout the growing season. It is extremely important that we keep on top of this and your help is necessary. If there is a question, or if you suspect fraud, waste, or abuse of this program, please feel free to contact your local FSA or RMA office.

2010 COMMODITY LOANS

Commodity loans are an excellent marketing tool for producers with eligible commodities to utilize. Commodity loans are available for harvested eligible commodities that are being stored in an eligible farm storage facility or an approved warehouse until it is sold. A commodity loan can also be utilized on eligible commodities being fed with the arrangement of monthly payments. The loan rate for corn is different if it is being stored as anything other than grain. A loan quantity can be certified by the applicant, or the applicant can pay for a measurement service to be performed by the County Office. Any warehouse stored loans will be required to provide a warehouse receipt at the time the loan is requested. All commodity loans mature in 9 months from the issue date. The interest rate is set at the first of every month and was 2.375% for the month of July.

Please visit your local FSA County Office if you are interested in requesting one of these loans. Signatures are required from the applicant to start the loan process, lien searches are performed on all applicants and spouses, and then signatures are required from all applicants and spouses at the time of closing the loan.

The final availability dates for 2010 crop loans are March 31, 2011 for Wheat, Barley & Oats, and May 31, 2011 for Corn and Soybeans. The loan rates for 2010 crops are as follows:

Corn	\$1.78
Soybeans	\$4.86
Barley	\$1.82
Oats	\$1.38
Soft Red Wheat	\$1.64
Soft White Wheat	\$1.94



NAP Coverage

The Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) was designed to reduce financial losses that occur when natural disasters cause a catastrophic loss of production or prevented planting of an eligible crop by providing coverage equivalent to catastrophic (CAT) insurance. Statute limits NAP to each commercial crop or agricultural commodity, except livestock, for which CAT is not available.

The application deadline date for the 2011 NAP coverage for small grains, fall mint, fall speltz and forage crops is September 30, 2010.

Producers who already have coverage on 2010 NAP crops may choose to continue coverage on the same crop or crops for 2011, if the applicable service fee is submitted by the application closing date. A new CCC-471, application for coverage is not required to be signed when applying for continuous coverage of the same crop or crops.

Producers who choose to add a new crop(s) or delete a crop(s) from previous year's coverage or changing crop shares must file a new CCC-471 with signatures and pay the applicable service fee.

Producers with NAP coverage must remember to complete the following to qualify for benefits:

- Timely file acreage reports and keep track of harvested production using acceptable methods. For example, bale weights or other means of determining quantities of hay are required.
- File a "Notice of Loss" within 15 days of when a loss is apparent, due to drought, hail, etc.

For more information on NAP coverage please contact the County Office.

FOREIGN BUYERS NOTIFICATION

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holding to the Secretary of Agriculture. Foreign persons who have purchased or sold land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA within 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25% of the fair market value of the property.

ANNUAL PAYMENT LIMITATION NOTICE

Payments for all FSA farm programs are governed by payment limitation and payment eligibility requirements. Payment limitations per person for 2010 are \$40,000 for Direct Payments (DCP); \$65,000 for Counter Cyclical Payments (DCP) and ACRE payments; \$50,000 for CRP; no limits for market gains and LDP's; \$100,000 for Disaster Assistance Programs; and \$100,000 for NAP.

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 this County Office in person or by phone at (989)356-3596, ext. 2.

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, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW. Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal relay). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.