



NEWSLETTER



June 2012

**Baraga
Houghton
Keweenaw
Ontonagon
Gogebic
FSA Office**

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

Office Staff
Tammy Clisch, PT
Mike Lewis, Field
Susan DeVoe, CED
Bruce Stephenson, Farm
Loan

County Committee
Bruce King
Norm Shimp
Joe Robillard
Glen Longtin
Butch Semmerling

Advisor
Roger Duschene

County Committee Nominations

The election of agricultural producers to the Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to all farmers and ranchers, whether beginning or long-established, large or small operation. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. County committee members are a critical component of the operations of FSA. They help deliver FSA farm programs at the local level. Farmers and ranchers who serve on county committees help with the decisions necessary to administer the programs in their counties. They work to ensure FSA agricultural programs serve the needs of local producers. FSA county committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws. County committee members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions. The COC nomination period runs from June 15, 2012 through August 1, 2012. Election will be held in Baraga County for LAA 3 which covers the entire county.

DCP/ACRE Sign-Up for 2012

2012 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) sign up ended June 1, 2012. Late filed contracts will be taken thru August 1st for those who missed this deadline.

2012 Acreage Reporting Deadline

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.

The certification form FSA-578, Report of Acreage, must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. The producer certification deadline for spring planted crops, forage crops and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is July 15, 2012. Please call for an appointment to report your crop acreage.

Farm Reconstitutions

For FSA program purposes, tracts having the same owner and the same operator are grouped under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation take place, a farm reconstitution is necessary. The reconstitution—or recon—is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by **August 1. Please notify the office of any owner or operator changes.**

Banking Changes?

If you changed banks/credit unions or want your direct deposit into a different account and did not notify FSA, your payment could be delayed. Please let us know promptly to avoid possible payment delay.



FSA Signature Policy

Husbands and wives may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation programs in which either has an interest. This option is automatically available unless a written request for exclusion is made to the county office staff by either spouse. There are exceptions to the rule, where spouses may not sign on behalf of each other for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations or other similar entities. Individual signatures are also required on certain Farm Loan Program and Farm Storage Facility Loan documents. For more clarification on spousal signature authority, feel free to contact your local FSA office.

Special Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment to attend or participate in meetings or events sponsored by the Farm Service Agency. If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in one of our events, please call the FSA county office and we will be happy to make any needed arrangements.

Controlled Substances

Program participants convicted under federal or state law of any planting, cultivating, growing, producing, harvesting or storing a controlled substance are ineligible for program payments and benefits. If convicted of one of these offenses, the program participant shall be ineligible during that crop year and the four succeeding crop years for Direct and Counter-Cyclical payments, price support loans, loan deficiency payments, market loan gains, storage payments, farm facility loans, Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program payments or disaster payments. Program participants convicted of any federal or state offense consisting of the distribution (trafficking) or procession of a controlled substance shall, at the discretion of the court, be ineligible for any or all program payments and benefits permanently depending on prior convictions.

Payment Limitations

Anyone that plans to participate in 2012 programs is required to submit a completed CCC-902, CCC-931, and CCC-901, if applicable, for payment eligibility and payment limitation purposes. All partners, stockholders or members with an ownership interest in the legal entity must make a contribution, whether compensated or not compensated, for active* personal labor, active personal management, or a combination of active personal labor and active personal management to the farming operation;*Note: there are exceptions for spouses. Additional information on payment limitations is available at FSA county offices or online at: www.fsa.usda.gov

Farm Storage Facility Loan Program

The Farm Storage Facility Loan Program (FSFLP) allows producers of eligible commodities to obtain low-interest financing to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities. The new maximum principal amount of a loan through FSFL is \$500,000. Participants are now required to provide a down payment of 15 percent, with CCC providing a loan for the remaining 85 percent of the net cost of the eligible storage facility and permanent drying and handling equipment. New loan terms of 7, 10 or 12 years are available depending on the amount of the loan. Interest rates for each term rate may be different and are based on the rate which CCC borrows from the Treasury Department. Payments are available in the form of a partial disbursement and the remaining final disbursement. The partial disbursement will be available after a portion of the construction has been completed. The final fund disbursement will be made when all construction is completed. The maximum amount of the partial disbursement will be 50 percent of the projected and approved total loan amount. Applications for FSFL must be submitted to the FSA county office that maintains the farm's records. An FSFL must be approved before any site preparation or construction can begin. For more information about FSFL please visit your FSA county office or www.fsa.usda.gov.