



February 2009

Emmet-Charlevoix County News

USDA Service Center

**Emmet-Charlevoix
FSA Office**
2235 E. Mitchell Rd.
Petoskey, MI. 49770
www.fsa.usda.gov

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

County Committee
Shane Kilpatrick-
Chairperson
Beverly Hinkley-Vice-
Chairperson
Wilson Boss-Member

The County Commit-
tee meets the second
Tuesday of each
month starting at 9:30
a.m.

County Office Staff
Sharon Roberts,
Program Technician

**County Executive
Director**
Carmen A. Church,

carmen.church@mi.usda.gov

FSA for Kids
www.fsa.usda.gov/fsakids



2009 Direct and Counter Cyclical Program

Producers have until June 1st to enroll in DCP for 2009. Beginning with 2009, program regulations no longer provide for a “late filed” signup period. Applications will not be approved unless all producers with a share in the contract have signed the DCP contract and submitted all applicable documentation by June 1, 2009.

ACRE Program

An enrollment date has not been set yet for ACRE. Farms enrolled in DCP can be cancelled and subsequently enrolled in ACRE.

Changes to 10 acre rule for 2009

Program rules for 2009 allow farms with 10 or less base acres to be combined with other farms and thus earn a DCP payment. Established farm reconstitution rules will apply. Farms with 10 or less base acres remain ineligible to participate in the Direct and Counter Cyclical Program, unless the farm is owned and operated solely by a Socially Disadvantaged or Limited Resource Producer. Producers must request these farm combinations.

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Beverly Hinkley! Bev was elected to represent farmers from Resort, Bear Creek, Springvale, Hayes, Bay, Evangeline, Melrose, Chandler, and Hudson townships on the county committee. She was elected to a 3 year term. The election results for LAA 2 are:

Beverly Hinkley — Elected to the county committee (COC),

FSA appreciates all the voters who took the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

The committee held their organizational meeting in January. Meetings will be conducted the second Tuesday each month, beginning at 9:30 a.m. Wilson Boss (Bud) was elected to serve as chairperson and Beverly Hinkley was elected to serve as vice-chairperson. The meetings are open to the public.



Dates To Remember

February 2nd -27th – Lamb Referendum

February 27 – CDP signup deadline.

March 15 - Sales closing date for most spring planted NAP crops

June 1 - 2009 DCP enrollment ends

Controlled Substance

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a 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 Limits & Direct Attribution

For commodity and disaster programs under the new farm bill, the AGI limitation was reduced from \$2.5 million from all sources to a three-year average **non-farm AGI of \$500,000**. A person or entity shall not be eligible for commodity, price support and disaster programs if the non-farm AGI exceeds \$500,000. Also, under the new regulations, an individual or entity must have a 3-year average AGI farm income less than or equal to \$750,000 per year from farm income in order to qualify for direct payments issued under DCP.

For conservation programs, the average nonfarm AGI limitation is \$1 million or less for eligibility. However, an individual or entity who has non-farm AGI in excess of \$1 million remains eligible for conservation programs only if 66.66 percent or more of the total AGI is derived from farming, ranching and forestry operations. In addition, the AGI limitation for conservation programs may be waived on a case-by-case basis if it is determined that environmentally sensitive land of special significance would be protected.

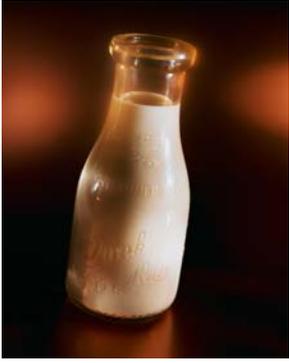
Program payments are limited by direct attribution to individuals or entities. A legal entity is defined as an entity created under Federal or State law that owns land

or an agricultural commodity, product or livestock. Through direct attribution, payment limitation is based on the total payments received by the individual, both directly and indirectly. Qualifying spouses are eligible to be considered separate persons for payment limitation purposes, rather than being automatically combined under one limitation.

Individuals and entities must be "actively engaged in farming" with respect to a farming operation in order to be eligible for specified payments and benefits. To be "actively engaged in farming," the individual or entity must make significant contributions to the farming operation of: (1) capital, equipment, land, or a combination thereof; and (2) personal labor or active personal management, or a combination thereof. For more detailed information contact your local FSA office.

Power of Attorney

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., FSA has a power of attorney form available that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. If you are interested, please contact our office or any Farm Service Agency office near you for more information.



Farm Record Changes

If you have purchased or sold land, leased additional land or changed tenants, please notify the FSA office so farm records may be updated.

For Land Purchases:

A copy of the deed is required.

All landowners must furnish their tax ID # if they are enrolling in a program.



MILC Sign Up Underway

Signup for the Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC) is underway and will continue through the program's expiration date, Sept. 30, 2012.

The 2008 Farm Bill reauthorizes the MILC Program, which operates similarly to the counter-cyclical payment program for crops, and makes three key changes in program operation. Under the Farm Bill, the MILC payment rate and the per-operation poundage limit are modified, depending on when the milk is produced. In addition, a "feed cost adjuster," is introduced over the life of the 2008 Act, which adjusts the \$16.94 per hundredweight (cwt.) benchmark price upward depending on the cost of feed rations. When available, MILC payments are based on a payment rate percentage that is multiplied by the difference between a now-flexible target (\$16.94 per cwt. or higher) and the specific month's Boston Class I price of milk.

The 2008 Farm Bill made changes to the provisions for payment eligibility and adjusted gross income (AGI). If the individual or entity has non-farm AGI greater than \$500,000, the individual or entity is not eligible for MILC benefits.

For more information on the MILC program, contact your local USDA Service Center.

Customer Statement

January signals the beginning of a new year, and a time to start thinking about filing taxes. Producers who have signed up for a USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account will be able to access their farm data via their Customer Statement.

The Customer Statement puts a range of USDA services and programs into a single report that's at your fingertips and available online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

It allows USDA customers to view their participation, application and payment status in various commodity and conservation programs; information on farm loans; and conservation plan and land unit information.

CDP Deadline Announced

The deadline to signup for the 2005 through 2007 Crop Disaster Program (CDP) is February 27, 2009. Eligible crops include all crops for which you had crop insurance or a NAP policy on. You must have suffered a 35% loss. Please contact the office if you wish to file an application.

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.

Foreign Buyers Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA.

Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural 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 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

Special Accommodations

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

NAP Deadlines

March 15th is the deadline to purchase NAP coverage on most spring planted crops. The service fee is \$250 per crop per county. Coverage must be purchased in order to be eligible for the new SURE (disaster) program. Insurable crops must have a crop insurance policy purchased on them to be eligible for SURE also. Please call the office for more details.

Also, remember to report your 2008 production for any NAP crops.

Lamb Referendum

The USDA will be conducting a lamb referendum to let lamb producers vote on whether to continue the Lamb Checkoff Program. Voting will take place at Farm Service Agency offices beginning Feb.2, 2009 and continuing through Feb. 27, 2009.

To be eligible to vote, you must provide documentation that shows you were engaged in the production, feeding, or slaughtering of lambs during 2008. Please contact the office to obtain the required forms.