

December 2013



Eaton County FSA Updates

December Topics

- New County Committee Election Ballots to be Mailed
 - Marketing Assistance Loans
 - 2014 Acreage Reporting Dates
 - Microloan Program
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Eaton County FSA Office **New County Committee Election Ballots to be mailed**

551 Court House Dr.
Charlotte, MI 48813

Phone: 517-543-1512
Fax: 855-647-0823

County Executive Director:
Mark Van Buren

Program Technicians:
Lori Aseltine
Heather Kennedy
Michael McManus
Rebecca Southern

County Committee Members
Dale Stewart-Chairman
Jonnie Morris-Vice Chairman
Duane Smuts-Member
Maxine Pixley-Advisor

Farm Loan Manager
Paul Wagner
616-527-2098

Farm Loan Officer
Sara Possehn

Next County Committee Meeting:
January 23, 2014 at
9:00 am

The County Committee Election ballots that were mailed to producers on Nov. 4 were incorrectly printed with the producer's name and address on the back of the ballot. County committee elections must use a secret ballot so the misprinted ballots cannot be used. Please destroy or recycle the misprinted ballot. If you have already voted, your ballot will be destroyed unopened. New ballots will be mailed to producers on December 20, 2013. These ballots will indicate that they are the corrected ballot in several places, including on the outside of the mailing, on the ballot and on the outside of the return envelope. The corrected ballot must be returned to the County FSA Office or postmarked by January 17, 2014. All newly elected county committee members will take office February 18, 2014. All county committee members whose term expires on Dec. 31, 2013, will have their term extended to January 31, 2014.

Marketing Assistance Loans

Short-term financing is available by obtaining low interest commodity loans for eligible harvested production. A nine-month Marketing Assistance Loan provides financing that allows producers to store production for later marketing. The crop may be stored on the farm or in the warehouse.

Loans are available for producers who share in the risk of producing the eligible commodity and maintain beneficial interest in the crop through the duration of the loan. Beneficial interest means retaining the ability to make decisions about the commodity, responsibility for loss because of damage to the commodity and title to the commodity. Once beneficial interest in a commodity is lost, it is ineligible for a loan, even if you regain beneficial interest.

2014 Acreage Reporting Dates

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for Michigan:

November 15: Perennial Forage, Fall-Seeded Small Grains
January 15: Apples, Blueberries, Cherries, Grapes, Peaches
July 15: Cabbage Planted 3/31-5/31, Beans (Adzuki, Black Turtle, Cranberry, Great Northern, Dark Red Kidney, Light Red Kidney, White Kidney, Pinto, Small Red, White/Navy, Tebo, Yellow Eye), Forage Seeding, all other crops
August 15: Beans (all other), Cabbage (Planted 6/1-7/20)

Producers now have until January 15, 2014, to report crops that have a November 15, 2013, or December 15, 2013, reporting deadline without paying a late-file fee. Crops under this waiver include wheat and native and improved grasses intended for grazing or haying. The Risk Management Agency (RMA) did not grant a waiver so producers need to consult their crop insurance agent for deadlines for insured crops.

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit the County FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline.

Late file fees will be assessed for crops reported after the dates listed.

Microloan Program

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) developed the Microloan (ML) program to better serve the unique financial operating needs of beginning, niche and small family farm operations.

FSA offers applicants a Microloan designed to help farmers with credit needs of \$35,000 or less. The loan features a streamlined application process built to fit the needs of new and smaller producers. This loan program will also be useful to specialty crop producers and operators of community supported agriculture (CSA).

Eligible applicants can apply for a maximum amount of \$35,000 to pay for initial start-up expenses such as hoop houses to extend the growing season, essential tools, irrigation and annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents, marketing, and distribution expenses. As financing needs increase, applicants can apply for a regular operating loan up to the maximum amount of \$300,000 or obtain financing from a commercial lender under FSA's Guaranteed Loan Program.

Individuals who are interested in applying for a microloan or would like to discuss other farm loan programs available should contact their local FSA office to set up an appointment with a loan official.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).