



Emmet-Charlevoix County News

September 2010

Issue #3

**Emmet-Charlevoix
County USDA Service Center**

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

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

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

The County Committee meets on the second Tuesday of each month starting at 9:30 a.m. Open to the public.

Staff
Sharon Roberts – Program Technician
Bernie Soik – Field Technician

Carmen A. Church –
County Executive
Director

Visit our Web site at:
www.fsa.usda.gov/mi



APPOINTMENTS ARE RECOMMENDED

...your time is valuable, workload is high, staff is limited, so please call ahead! We really appreciate it.

Marketing Assistance Loans

A Marketing Assistance Loan (MAL) is available for producers who share in the risk of producing the crop. To be eligible, a producer must maintain continual beneficial interest in the crop from harvest through the earlier of the date the loan is repaid or CCC takes title to the commodity. Beneficial interest means retaining the ability to make decisions about the commodity; responsibility for loss or damage to the commodity; and title to the commodity. Once beneficial interest in a commodity is lost, the commodity is ineligible for loan — even if the producer regains beneficial interest.

Commodity loan eligibility also requires compliance with conservation and wetland protection requirements; beneficial interest requirements, acreage reporting and ensuring that the commodity meets Commodity Credit Corporation minimum grade and quality standards. For commodities to be eligible they must have been produced by an eligible producer, be in existence and in a storable condition and be merchantable for food, feed or other uses as determined by CCC. The quality of the commodity in farm storage must be maintained throughout the term of the loan.

Producers do not have to participate in the Direct and Counter-Cyclical and/or ACRE Programs to be eligible for commodity loans.

Violating provisions of a marketing assistance loan may trigger administrative actions, such as assessing liquidated damages, calling the loan and denial of future farm-stored loans.

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, 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.
- 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 our office.



OUTREACH TO WOMEN AND NEW PRODUCERS

Perhaps you have recently become involved in farming, or have been involved in farming for years with your spouse, but you want to learn more about Farm Service Agency (FSA) programs?

Do you want to better understand the benefits or requirements of a program?

Want to know what we offer specifically for "Beginning Farmers"? Do you want to be more informed on the County Committee election process and be more involved?

Please join us for informal meetings, especially for you, on any first Tuesday of the month from 9:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m. The topics will vary depending on your interests.

There will be informal presentations and discussion. Please call 231-347-2133, ext. 2. Ask what the topic for the next meeting will be and let us know if you want to reserve a spot.

Acreage Spot Check Determinations and Notification

Each year the Farm Service Agency completes spot checks of acreage reports. Acreage reports are an integral part of farm program participation. Acreage spot checks are completed to ensure accurate acreage reports are used in farm program computations.

FSA will conduct spot checks on a selected number of farms in each state.

All acreage determinations will be completed using the FSA Geographic Information System official acreages.

After farms are spot checked, a Notice of Determined Acreage will be sent to the farm operator. Producer notifications will be issued by FSA as spot checks are completed. Questions concerning determined acres should be directed to your local FSA office for further explanation.

Conservation Compliance Reminder

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

Forms CCC-927 & CCC-928

Recently the County Office sent out forms CCC-927 (2009 and/or 2010 Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information – Individual) and/or CCC-928 (2009 and/or 2010 Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information – Legal Entity) to all producers that earned a payment in 2009. These forms are to be completed and sent directly to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). If the CCC-927 and/or CCC-928 are not sent to the IRS, program payments may have to be refunded. If you have any questions concerning these forms, call 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 holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA.

All individuals who are not U.S. citizens, and have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form (FSA-153) 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.

BANK CHANGES

Current policy mandates that FSA payments be direct deposited into your bank account. Please notify this office of any bank changes to ensure deposits are not delayed.



FAILED CROP ACREAGE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Producer's whose crops fail due to natural disaster conditions are reminded that reporting those acres must be made to the Farm Service Agency at the time of disaster occurrence but no later than 15 days after the disaster condition occurred and prior to disposition of those acres.

PREVENTED CROP ACREAGE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Producer's prevented from planting their crops for any natural disaster condition are reminded that reporting those acres must be made to the Farm Service Agency within 15 days of the final planting date to be considered timely filed.

Failure to file timely may affect your farm crop bases and yields for future programs. If not timely filed the producer must pay a farm visit fee to verify disaster conditions.

The Risk Management Agency also relies on FSA's acreage reports to verify compliance with crop insurance requirements.



Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) Signup Continues

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disaster that incurred in the crop years 2008 through September 30, 2011. To be eligible for SURE payments, a producer is required to obtain crop insurance on all crops in all counties or, if crop insurance is not available, to participate in the Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) except for grazed acreage. However, crop insurance or NAP coverage is no longer required for crops that are not of economic significance or those where the administrative fee required to buy NAP coverage exceeds 10% of the value of the coverage.

Eligible farmers and ranchers who meet the definition of Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, or Beginning Farmer or Rancher are exempt from the risk management purchase requirement.

The following are the conditions that trigger SURE payments:

- At least one crop of economic significance must suffer a 10% production loss due to an eligible disaster condition. A crop of economic significance is a crop that has contributed or would have contributed at least 5% or more of the total expected revenue from all crops on the farm;
- Producers in counties declared disaster counties by the Secretary of Agriculture, or in contiguous counties, or those who show proof of an individual loss of at least 50% are eligible to receive SURE payments for crop production or quality losses. Losses are measured with consideration to the whole-farm revenue, which includes crop insurance

indemnities and commodity program payments, so that producers are not paid more than once for the same loss.

Emmet and Charlevoix County **did** have a Secretarial Disaster declaration for 2008; therefore, producers who obtained crop insurance or NAP coverage on all crops of economic significance will be eligible to apply for SURE. Signup is currently ongoing.

The deadline to apply is September 30, 2010.

As of the date of this newsletter the signup for 2009 SURE has not been announced. Contact Laura for more information.



COC Election

Farmland owners, operators and tenants of legal voting age are eligible to run for office and vote in County Committee (COC) elections.

The Local Administrative Area (LAA) that is up for election this year is LAA #3.

County committees are a critical part of federal program delivery in the County Offices. They help run the FSA programs and make them fit the needs of local farmers.

Ballots will be mailed in early November and must be returned by December 6, 2010.

Our County Office records may not show all of the people who are eligible to vote in the COC Elections. If you think you are eligible but have never received a ballot please contact us so we can get you on the voter list.

Successor-In-Interest

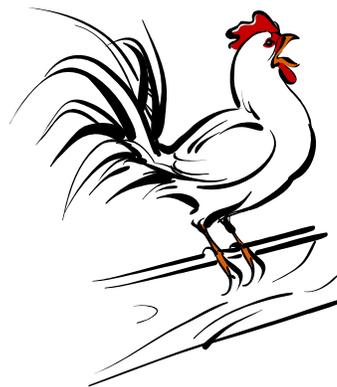
Many FSA programs will allow payments to be made to heirs or successors when a program participant passes away. Additionally, contracts in programs such as CRP must be revised to reflect the successor(s) to a deceased participant's interest.

In the event of an FSA program participant's death, it is important that FSA be notified. Entities and joint operations that participate in FSA programs also need to notify FSA if a shareholder or member passes away. FSA benefits are reported to IRS and maintaining current, accurate records about participants is vital to ensuring that those payments are reported correctly.

FARM LOANS

Interested in getting a FARM LOAN?
 Call Jim Monroe at 231-941-0951,
 for information on the following types:

- Beginning & Limited Resource Farmers
- Rural Youth Loans
- FSA Farm Loans
- Loans for the Socially Disadvantaged



Dates to Remember

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 Final date to apply for 2008 SURE
Sept 30	Final date to purchase NAP coverage for fall seeded 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
Dec 24	Office closed for Christmas
Dec 31	Office closed for New Years Day holiday
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loans
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve Program & CRP Safe

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all of its programs 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, political beliefs, genetic information, 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 the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call toll-free at (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.