



# GRAND TRAVERSE, KALKASKA, and LEELANAU COUNTY News

Grand Traverse,  
Kalkaska, Leelanau  
County  
USDA Service Center

Grand Traverse,  
Kalkaska, Leelanau  
County FSA  
1501 Cass ST, Suite A  
Traverse City, MI 49684  
231-941-0951 (phone)  
231-929-7890 (fax)  
www.fsa.usda.gov/mi

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

**County Committee**  
Brent Wagner, Chairman  
Gregory Send, V. Chairman  
Jim Bardenhagen, Member  
Bruce Cotton, Member  
David Noonan, Member  
Joanne Gallagher, Advisor

County Committee meets  
2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday at 9:00 am

**Staff**  
Greg Shy, CED  
Julie Isabell  
Jan Malik  
Mary Coleman  
Jim Monroe, FLM  
John Neff



## Acreage Reporting

Acreage reporting time will soon be here. Filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs.

Failed acreage must be reported within 15 days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date.

Acreage reports are required for many Farm Service Agency programs. For crops other than NAP (Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program) crops, acreage reports are to be certified by the June 30, 2009 deadline for small grains and July 15, 2009 for all other crops.

Acreage reports on crops for which NAP assistance may be paid are due in the county office by the earlier of June 30, 2009 for small grains, July 15, 2009 for all other crops, or 15 calendar days before the onset of harvest or grazing of the specific crop acreage being reported.

## DCP Signup Extended

The Secretary of Agriculture has responded to producers' concerns about needing more time to make an informed decision on ACRE and has extended the enrollment deadline for both the DCP and ACRE till August 14, 2009. Please call the office for an appointment so that we can discuss program details with you.

## The ACRE Program

The Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) is a new program authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill that begins in crop year 2009. Through ACRE, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers producers an alternative to Direct and Counter-cyclical (DCP) payments. The ACRE alternative provides eligible producers a state-level revenue guarantee, based on the 5-year state olympic average yield and the 2-year national average price.

ACRE payments are made when both state- and farm-level triggers are met. By participating in ACRE, producers elect to forgo counter-cyclical payments. Producers also elect to receive a 20-percent reduction in direct payments and a 30-percent reduction in commodity loan rates. The ACRE sign-up beginning date has not been announced, however, the final date to enroll is August 14, 2009. Giving producers time to decide to participate in ACRE, or remain enrolled in DCP.

A decision to elect ACRE binds the farm to the program through the 2012 crop year, the last crop year covered by the 2008 Farm Bill. For more details please contact the FSA office.

## NAP Production Reporting

Production records for individual crops need to be filed with our office to establish an approved NAP yield. If this is the first year you participated in NAP, you can provide production and acreage information from prior years to establish your yield. If you participated in NAP in previous years, you must report your production and acreage on a yearly basis to keep your yield up-to-date. Records submitted must be reliable or verifiable. Records need to show crop disposition. We recommend producers submit 2009 production records as soon as harvest is complete. **All production records must be submitted by the subsequent crop year's final acreage reporting date.**



## 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. FSA 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. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties. County government offices, realtors, attorneys and others are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

## RECORD CORRECTIONS AND RECONS

Producers are being encouraged to get all their records updated with our office **before sign-up into any programs.**

If you are either adding or dropping land from what you were operating last year, we are asking that you give us a call and let us know of the changes as soon as possible.

## Timely Filing of Loss

The CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and prevented planting and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. A Notice of Loss is required for **ALL CROPS COVERED BY NAP INCLUDING GRASSES.** For losses on crops covered by the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and crop insurance, you must file a CCC-576 (notice of loss) in the FSA County Office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent or 15 days after the normal harvest date.

If filing for prevented planting, an acreage report and CCC-576 must be filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.

## Disaster Buy-In Waiver Extension

Producers who did not obtain crop insurance or Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for 2008 crops can pay a buy-in fee through May 18, 2009, to become eligible for 2008 disaster assistance programs authorized by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008.

Farmers have an additional opportunity to become eligible for several programs if they suffered 2008 agricultural losses due to natural disaster.

If you have not already taken the necessary steps to become eligible for the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE), Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP), and the Tree Assistance Program (TAP), you are required to complete the following steps by May 18, 2009:

- Pay a \$100 "buy-in" fee per crop. The maximum fee is \$300 per county, per producer, not to exceed \$900 for multi-county producers.
- In the case of each insurable crop, excluding grazing land, agree to obtain a policy or plan of insurance for the next insurance year for which crop insurance is available;

- Coverage level should equal 70 percent or more of the yield at 100 percent of the price.
- In the case of each noninsurable crop, agree to file the required paperwork and pay the applicable administrative NAP coverage fee by the applicable state application closing date for the next available year.

Those who choose to "buy in" under this provision will be considered for insured crops to have obtained a policy or plan of insurance for the 2008 crop year at a level of coverage not to exceed 70 percent of the yield at 100 percent of the price. For noninsurable crops, producers will be considered to have a level of coverage equal to 70 percent of the yield. These levels of coverage will be used to calculate the 2008 SURE guarantee.

Producers who meet the definition of "Socially Disadvantaged", "Limited Resource," or "Beginning Farmer or Rancher," are not required to pay the buy-in fee.

## Beginning and Limited Resource Farmers & Ranchers

FSA has a program to assist beginning farmers and or members of socially disadvantaged groups to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's average size.



## FSA Down-payment Program

FSA has a special loan program to assist socially disadvantaged and beginning farmers in purchasing farm property. Retiring farmers may use this program to help transfer their land to future generations.

To qualify, the applicant must make a cash down payment of at least 5 percent of the purchase price. This direct loan portion has a maximum loan amount of \$225,000. The loan has a very low fixed interest rate with a 20-year repayment term.

## 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

Each member of an entity must meet the eligibility requirements. Loan approval is not guaranteed.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

## Direct and Guaranteed Loans

The Farm Service Agency is committed to providing family farmers with loans to meet their farm credit needs. If you are having trouble getting the credit you need for your farm, or regularly borrow from FSA, direct and guaranteed loans are available now.

Ask your lender about an FSA loan guarantee if you've had a setback and your lender is reluctant to extend or renew your loan. Producers are encouraged to apply early so that a loan can be processed and funded in a timely manner.

Most of our loan programs have special funding available for minority, female or beginning farmers.

FSA employees will help you complete the necessary application and other forms, and help you understand what information is required, where to find it or who to contact to get it.

## Rural Youth Loans

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA) makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to establish and operate income producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be initiated, developed, carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organization or with a vocational teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and operated with the assistance of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. To find out more about FSA loan programs, contact the county office staff.

## County Committee Election and Nominations

The County Committee (COC) is made up of 5 members who represent farmers from 5 Local Administrative Areas or LAAs. Each member serves a three year term and is eligible to serve three consecutive terms. Due to the odd number of LAAs, either one or two members are elected to serve each year.

This year a COC election will be held for LAA#2 (Centerville, Cleveland, Empire, Elmwood, Glen Arbor, Kasson, and Solon Twp.). Dave Noonan is the current COC member representing LAA#2.

All eligible voters are urged to consider seeking nominations for this important position. All agricultural producers and owners of agricultural land are eligible to vote. A farmer's spouse who is listed on the deed is also eligible to vote. Minority and female farmers are encouraged to take part in this important nomination process. County Committee meetings are held at 9:00 a.m. on the second Wednesday of each month at the FSA office.

A nominating petition can be obtained from the web-site below or by request to the FSA office. This petition must be signed by the nominee and returned to the FSA office by August 1, 2009. Additional information about the County Committee election can be found at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/publications/elections>.

Committee members are a critical component of the day to day operations of FSA. They help deliver FSA farm programs at the local level. Farmers who serve on the committee help decide the kind of programs their counties offer. They work to make FSA agricultural programs serve the needs of the local producers. Committees make the following decisions:

Commodity loans and payments  
Establishment of yields  
Conservation programs  
Farm disaster assistance



**CROP  
 REPORTING  
 TIME IS  
 NEAR**

*It will soon be time to report your crops to us. When you have finished planting, give us a call for an appointment to file an FSA-578. The wheat and fall seeded crop reporting deadline is June 30<sup>th</sup> and spring seeded crops must be filed by July 15<sup>th</sup>.*

**Banking Changes?**

If you have changed banks and not notified FSA, your payment could be delayed. Payments are electronically transferred into your bank account, if we are not aware of changes to your account and routing numbers, there could be problems. In order to make timely payments, you need to notify the office if you close your account or if another financial institution purchases your bank. It is important that any changes in producer's account such as type account, bank mergers, routing number or account numbers, be provided to the county office promptly to avoid possible payment delay.

Dates to Remember	
May 18 <sup>th</sup>	Buy-In Waiver Extension
June 30	Fall seeded Crop Certification Deadline
July 15 <sup>th</sup>	NAP Production Reporting Date
July 15 <sup>th</sup>	Spring seeded Crop Certification Deadline
August 14 <sup>th</sup>	DCP/ACRE Enrollment Ends
Notice of Loss	15 Days From Occurrence
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loans
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve Program

Visit our Web site at:  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/mi](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mi)



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