

October 2012



Having trouble viewing this email? [View it as a Web page.](#)

Grand Traverse, Leelanau, Kalkaska County FSA Updates

DEAR PRODUCERS: Welcome to the new GovDelivery bulletins and updates service from your County FSA office. Note that you are welcome to request to receive bulletins from more than one county and can add or remove individual subscriptions at any time.

Grand Traverse Area FSA Office

Grand Traverse
Kalkaska
Leelanau

Address:

1501 Cass Street, Ste A
Traverse City, MI 49684

Phone: 231-941-0951

Fax: 855-292-1667

County Executive Director:

Gregory Shy

Farm Loan Manager:

James Monroe

Program Technicians:

Caleb Boge
Janet Howes
Jan Malik

2012 Dates to Remember

The following are important deadline dates for the 2012 crop year:

- **October 8th** - Columbus Day Holiday – Office closed
- **October 20th** - Deadline to report prevented planted wheat for 2013 crop year
- **November 1st** - Deadline to submit MILC production evidence
- **November 12th** - Veterans Day Holiday – Office closed
- **November 15th** - Deadline to certify fall-seeded small grains, including winter wheat AND perennial forage (alfalfa and alfalfa mix)
- **November 20th** - Deadline to apply for NAP Policies for all fruit and vegetable perennial crops
- **November 22nd** - Thanksgiving Holiday – Office closed
- **December 1st** - Deadline to apply for NAP Policies for honey and maple sap
- **December 25th** - Christmas Holiday – Office Closed
- **January 1st** - New Year's Day Holiday – Office Closed
- **January 15th** - Deadline to certify apples, blueberries, cherries, grapes, & peaches

New 2013 Crop Reporting Deadline for Wheat and Hay

Fall seeded wheat, small grain and forage crops must be reported at your local FSA office by **November 15, 2012**. Prevented planting on wheat must be reported by **October 20, 2012**. Please mark your calendars!

MILC Program Deadline Nears

Dairy Producer Deadline To Report Production - November 1, 2012.

The current milk support program compensates dairy producers when domestic milk prices adjusted for feed cost fall below a specified level. This program has been in place for fiscal years 2008 through 2012, and will end September 30th 2012. Participating dairy producers submit production evidence and receive payments accordingly. Eligible milk producers that participate in the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) program **must** provide final production evidence and supporting documentation by November 1, 2012. For more clarification on the MILC Program, please contact the Grand Traverse Area FSA Office at (231) 941-0951.

2012 DCP / ACRE Final Payments

DCP / ACRE payments for 2012 will be issued after Oct. 8, 2012. These payments will be deposited directly into participating producers' bank accounts.

Please contact your servicing FSA office of any updates to account changes or EFT information.

If there are any unearned payments, Commodity Credit Corporation will automatically subtract those amounts from the October Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program payments...

NAP Coverage for Uninsurable Crops

Crop Insurance is a way to help offset crop revenue losses but some crops are uninsurable by FCIC and this varies by county. For these types of crops, you can purchase catastrophic type coverage under the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). The cost is \$250 per crop with a maximum of \$750 per county and \$1,875 per producer for multi-county producers.

REMEMBER – Without crop insurance or NAP on all significant crops, you may NOT be eligible for National Disaster Programs.

THE DEADLINE for purchasing your 2013 policies is as follows:

November 20, 2012: Apples, Peaches, Cherries, Blueberries, Raspberries & Strawberries

December 1, 2012: Honey & Maple Sap

Got Hay? Need Hay?

Hay Net is the Farm Service Agency's (FSA) online service for farmers and ranchers to use to share hay need ads and hay availability ads online.

There is a one-time registration process that is to be completed by all users who want to post an ad online. However, producers who wish to only browse the ad listings do not need to register.

To visit the FSA Hay Net site, follow the Hay Net link on <http://www.fsa.usda.gov> and click on Online Services, or click the link below.

[FSA Hay Net](#)

County Committee Elections

Watch your mailbox for your official county office committee election ballot starting early next month. Ballots will be mailed to all eligible voters on November 5, 2012. If for some reason you don't receive a ballot, feel free to notify the county FSA office.

Completed and signed ballots must be returned to the county office by close of business on December 3, 2012.

Farm Safety

Flowing grain in a storage bin or gravity-flow wagon is like quicksand — it can kill quickly. It takes less than five seconds for a person caught in flowing grain to be trapped.

The mechanical aspects of grain handling equipment also presents a real danger. Augers, power take offs, and other moving parts can grab people or clothing.

These hazards, along with pinch points and missing shields, are dangerous enough for adults; not to mention children. It is always advisable to keep children a safe distance from operating farm equipment. Always use extra caution when backing or maneuvering farm machinery. Ensure everyone is visibly clear and accounted for before machinery is engaged.

FSA wants all farmers to have a productive crop year and that begins with putting safety first.

2011 SURE Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program Signup

USDA Announces Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Sign-Up Period for 2011 Crop Losses

WASHINGTON, Sept. 28, 2012—Farm Service Agency Administrator Juan Garcia announced today the sign-up period for the 2011 crop year Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) program will open Oct. 22, 2012. The SURE program is part of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Farm Bill). Under the 2008 Farm Bill, SURE authorizes assistance to farmers and ranchers who suffered crop losses caused by natural disasters occurring through Sept. 30, 2011.

“Any eligible producer who suffered losses during the 2011 crop year is encouraged to visit a local FSA office to learn more about the SURE program and how to apply,” said Garcia.

As of Sept. 30, 2011, the Department’s authority to operate the SURE program expired along with four other, important disaster assistance programs: the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP); the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP); the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP); and the Tree Assistance Program (TAP). Production losses due to disasters occurring after Sept. 30, 2011, are not eligible for disaster program coverage.

To be eligible for SURE, a farm or ranch must have:

- At least a 10-percent production loss on a crop of economic significance;
- A policy or plan of insurance under the Federal Crop Insurance Act or the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for all economically significant crops;
- Been physically located in a county that was declared a primary disaster county or contiguous county by the Secretary of Agriculture under a Secretarial Disaster Designation. Without a Secretarial Disaster Designation, individual producers may be eligible if the actual production on the farm is less than 50 percent of the normal production on the farm due to a natural disaster. A “farm” for SURE purposes means the entirety of all crop acreage in all counties that a producer planted or intended to be planted for harvest for normal commercial sale or on-farm livestock feeding, including native and improved grassland intended for haying.

Producers considered socially disadvantaged, a beginning farmer or rancher, or a limited resource farmer may be eligible for SURE without a policy or plan of insurance or NAP coverage.

Farmers and ranchers interested in signing up must do so before the June 7, 2013 deadline.

For more information on the 2011 SURE program, visit any FSA county office or www.fsa.usda.gov/sure

Farm Loan Programs – Emergency Farm Loans Available

USDA/FSA emergency farms loans are available in Antrim, Grand Traverse, Leelanau, Kalkaska, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego and 65 other Counties to all qualified farm operators as a result of losses caused by adverse weather conditions.

Effective **June 29, 2012**, the United States Department of Agriculture designated 72 Michigan counties as natural disaster areas.

The counties were designated as natural disaster areas **for losses due to the combined effects of blizzards, excessive snow, excessive heat, excessive rain, high winds, hail, freeze, frost, tornadoes, flooding and lightning that occurred January 1, 2012 through May 11, 2012.**

Additionally, **effective August 29, 2012**, the United States Department of Agriculture designated the entire state of Michigan, which includes 83 counties, as a primary natural disaster area.

The counties were designated as natural disaster areas **for damages and losses due to draught and excessive heat that began March 1, 2012, and continues.**

The disaster designation makes available low interest (2.125%) loans to farm operators in the designated area. Farm operators who suffered a 30% loss in crop production caused by the weather conditions and meet other eligibility requirements may qualify for Emergency (EM) loan assistance from FSA.

Emergency loan funds may be used to:

- Restore or replace essential property;
- Pay all or part of production costs associated with the disaster year;
- Pay essential family living expenses;
- Reorganize the farming operation; and
- Refinance certain debts.

All emergency loans must be fully collateralized. Producers can borrow up to 100 percent of actual production or physical losses, to a maximum amount of \$500,000. Loans for crop, livestock, and non-real estate losses are normally repaid within 1 to 7 years; depending on the loan purpose, repayment ability and collateral available as loan security. In special circumstances, terms of up to 20 years may be authorized. Loans for physical losses to real estate are normally repaid within 30 years. In certain circumstances, repayment may be made over a maximum of 40 years. The current annual interest rate for emergency loans is 2.125 percent.

The deadline for filing an EM loan application is March 1, 2013 for the June disaster designation and April 29, 2013 for the more recent August designation.

For more information farm operators should contact their local FSA office or the Farm Loan Program office in the Traverse City USDA Service Center 231-941-0951

Increased Guaranteed Loan Limit

The Farm Service Agency has announced that the loan limit for the Guaranteed Loan Program will increase to \$1,302,000 on Oct. 1, 2012. The limit is adjusted annually based on data compiled by the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

The lending limit increases every year according to an inflation index. The maximum combined guaranteed and direct farm loan indebtedness will also increase to \$1,602,000.

As a reminder, the one-time loan origination fee charged on FSA guaranteed Farm Ownership and Operating loans is 1.5 percent of the guaranteed portion of the loan.

Producers should contact their local FSA County Offices with questions about farm loans.

IRS FORM 1099-G AND 1099-MISC REPORTING

Beginning with calendar year 2012 IRS reporting, Kansas City will be issuing only one IRS Form 1099-G and/or one IRS Form 1099-MISC to each multi-county producer whose total reportable payment for each tax identification number are equal to or greater than \$600.00. This is a change from receiving one 1099 from each county.

Also beginning with calendar year 2012 IRS reporting, Kansas City will no longer generate and mail IRS Form 1099-G and/or IRS Form 1099-MISC to producers if the total of reportable payments for each tax identification number is LESS THAN \$600.00.

Producers receiving less than \$600.00 in combined payments need to consult a tax advisor to determine if these payments must be reported on their tax return.

Grand Traverse Area FSA Office Welcomes New Employee

The Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, and Leelanau county FSA office is pleased to welcome a new employee, Caleb Boge. He will be working with producers concerning both farm program and farm loan program concerns. Caleb comes from a background including three generations of dairy and agricultural producers in the central Michigan area and is looking forward to serving area producers.

Farm Storage Facility Loan Program

The Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program 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 U.S. 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.

The following commodities are eligible for farm storage facility loans:

- Corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley or minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain
- Corn, grain sorghum, wheat, oats or barley harvested as other-than-whole grain
- Pulse crops - lentils, small chickpeas and dry peas
- Hay
- Renewable biomass
- Fruits (including nuts) and vegetables - cold storage facilities.

For more information about FSFL visit the FSA county office or www.fsa.usda.gov.

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. 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. 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 result in liquidated damages, calling the loan and denial of future farm-stored loans.

Electronic Services Available

If a producer has Internet access, program participants can access many services from home 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and receive approval and payment by direct deposit within 48 hours.

To participate in these services, you must meet all program eligibility requirements. Online services have stringent security measures to protect your private information.

To utilize electronic services a producer needs an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires an e-mail address and filling out an online registration form at www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/ followed by a visit to the county office for identity verification.

If you would like assistance establishing your account, just contact your local USDA Service Center.

USDA Announces Hispanic and Women Farmer and Rancher Claims Period Now Open

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced that Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who allege discrimination by the USDA in past decades can file claims between September 24, 2012 and March 25, 2013.

The process offers a voluntary alternative to litigation for each Hispanic or female farmer and rancher who can prove that USDA denied their applications for loan or loan servicing assistance for discriminatory reasons for certain time periods between 1981 and 2000.

As announced in February 2011, the voluntary claims process will make available at least \$1.33 billion for cash awards and tax relief payments, plus up to \$160 million in farm debt relief, to eligible Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers. There are no filing fees to participate in the program.

The Department will continue reaching out to potential Hispanic and female claimants, around the country to get the word out to individuals who may be eligible for this program so they have the opportunity to participate. Call center representatives can be reached at 1-888-508-4429. Claimants must register for a claims package (by calling the number or visiting the website) and the claims package will be mailed to claimants. All those interested in learning more or receiving information about the claims process and claims packages are encouraged to attend meetings in your communities about the claims process and contact the website or claims telephone number.

Website: www.farmerclaims.gov

Phone: 1-888-508-4429

Claims Period: September 24, 2012 - March 25, 2013.

Independent legal services companies will administer the claims process and adjudicate the claims. Although there are no filing fees to participate and a lawyer is not required to participate in the claims process, persons seeking legal advice may contact a lawyer or other legal services provider.

To read Secretary Tom Vilsack's entire news release issued today (9/24/12) click on the following link:

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=2012/09/0309.xml&contentidonly=true>

Selected Interest Rates - October 2012

- 90-Day Treasury Bill: **0.125%**
- Farm Operating Loans - Direct: **1.125%**
- Farm Ownership Loans - Direct: **3.000%**
- Farm Ownership Loans - Joint Financing: **5.000%**
- Limited Resource Loans: **5.000%**
- Farm Ownership Loans - Direct FO Down Pymt: **1.500%**
- Emergency Loans: **2.125%**
- Farm Storage Facility Loans:
 - 7 Yr - **1.125%**
 - 10 Yr - **1.750%**
 - 12 Yr - **2.000%**
- Commodity Loans: **1.125%**

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. 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 20250-9450, 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).