

July 2013



Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau County FSA Updates

Grand Traverse Area FSA Office

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County Committee:
Brent Wagner - Chair
David Noonan - Vice-chair
Bruce Cotton - Member
Joanne Gallagher - Member
Stanley Silverman - Member
Jaunita Send - Advisor

Important Dates To Remember

- **August 1st** - County Committee nominee period closes
- **August 2nd** - 2013 DCP Sign-up ends
- **August 2nd** - Final (extended for 2013 Crop Year only) date to submit acreage reports to be considered timely-filed for the 2013 Crop Year
- **September 2nd** - Office closed in observance of Labor Day
- **September 30th** - Final date to certify Christmas Trees, Nursery, and Turfgrass Sod
- **November 4th** - Election ballots mailed to eligible voters.
- **November 15th** - Last day to report your **2014** Perennial Forage (Alfalfa, Hay, Mixed Hay, and Pasture), Fall-seeded Wheat, Rye, and all other fall seeded fall grains. *
- **December 2nd** - Last day to return completed ballots to your local FSA office.
- **January 1, 2014** - Newly elected county committee members take office.

* **NOTE:** Beginning with the **November 15, 2013** certification deadline for **2014** Crop Year Fall-seeded Small Grains and Perennial Forage certifications, a late filing fee will be assessed on crops certified after their respective reporting deadlines.

New Crop Certification Deadlines 2014 Crop Year

- **November 15** - Perennial Forage (Alfalfa, Hay, Mixed Hay, Pasture), Fall-seeded Wheat, Rye, and all other fall seeded small grains
- **January 2** - Honey
- **January 15** - Apples, Asparagus, Blueberries, Cherries, Grapes, Peaches, Plums, Strawberries, and all other perennial orchard crops
- **February 1** - Maple Sap
- **July 15** - Spring seeded grains, spring planted row crops, and Hops
- **September 30** - Aquaculture, Christmas Trees, Floriculture, Ginseng, Mushrooms, Nursery & Turfgrass Sod

2013 County Committee (COC) Elections / Nominations

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Committees (COC) is an important process locally and a direct link between the agricultural community and the U. S. Department of Agriculture. COC members are a critical component of FSA operations. The intent is to have the COC reflect the makeup of the local producers and represent all constituents. FSA County Committees operate within official regulations and apply their judgment and knowledge in making local decisions on programs such as:

- Commodity price support programs
- Conservation programs
- Incentive, indemnity and disaster payments
- Emergency programs
- Payment eligibility

Nominations for the 2013 Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, and Leelanau County FSA office COC election will be accepted from producers in the following Local Administrative Areas (LAA):

- **LAA #3:** Grand Traverse County - Consists of Acme, East Bay, Garfield, Long Lake, and Whitewater Townships
- **LAA #5:** Kalkaska County – Consists of all Townships in Kalkaska County

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.

The COC nomination period is open from June 17, 2013 through August 1, 2013. The nomination form is available at USDA Service Centers or [online](#). For more information contact your local FSA County Office at (231) 941-0951, extension 2.

Who Can Hold Office?

To hold office as a COC member, a person must meet the basic eligibility criteria such as:

- Be a producer with an interest in a farming or ranching operation
- Participate or cooperate in any FSA program provided for by law
- Be a U.S. citizen
- Be of legal voting age
- Reside in the LAA and County in which the election is being held

Along with the above eligibility requirements, a person must not have been:

- Removed or disqualified from the office of COC member, alternate or employee
- Removed for cause from any public office or have been convicted of fraud, larceny, embezzlement or any other felony
- Dishonorably discharged from any branch of the armed services.

Certify your CRP Acreage ASAP!

Producers who have acreage enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) are encouraged to call the Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, and Leelanau county FSA office to set up an appointment to certify their CRP on an FSA-578 form or CRP-817U. Annual certification of CRP ground is a program requirement. If the acreage has not been certified, then annual rental payments will NOT be issued and the contract may be subject to termination. CRP acreage must be timely certified by the deadline of **August 2nd 2013**.

Reconstitutions

For FSA program purposes, tracts having the same owner and the same operator are grouped under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation take place, a farm reconstitution is necessary.

The reconstitution—or recon—is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by **Aug. 1** for farms enrolled in specific programs.

The following are the different methods used when doing a farm recon:

Estate Method — The division of bases, allotments and quotas for a parent farm among heirs in settling an estate

Designation of Landowner Method — May be used when (1) part of a farm is sold or ownership is transferred; (2) an entire farm is sold to two or more persons; (3) farm ownership is transferred to two or more persons; (4) part of a tract is sold or ownership is transferred; (5) a tract is sold to two or more persons; or (6) tract ownership is transferred to two or more persons. In order to use this method the land sold must have been owned for at least three years, or a waiver granted, and the buyer and seller must sign a Memorandum of Understanding

DCP Cropland Method — The division of bases in the same proportion that the DCP cropland for each resulting tract relates to the DCP cropland on the parent tract

Default Method — The division of bases for a parent farm with each tract maintaining the bases attributed to the tract level when the reconstitution is initiated in the system.

2013 Crop and CRP Acreage Reports

Producers are required to file an FSA-578, Report of Acreage, to certify planted acres by the final dates (listed below) to be considered eligible for the following benefits:

- Direct & Counter Cyclical Program (DCP)
- Average Crop Revenue Election Program (ACRE)
- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
- Commodity Loans
- Loan Deficiency Program (LDP)

- Non-insurable Crop Disaster Program (NAP)

2013 Reporting Dates for spring planted crops:

August 2 (extended), 2013-CRP, Forage seeding and all other spring-seeded crops.

- **Please call for an appointment** so we can pull your records prior to your visit. If we are prepared for your visit it will take less time for you in the office...thank you!!

2013 Crops past the Reporting Dates:

November 15, 2012-Perennial Forage, and other Fall seeded Grains (including wheat and rye)

- Due to a change in certification dates, there is a one-time waiver of the late file fee for 2013 fall-seeded crops not timely certified by the November 15, 2012 deadline. If you planted alfalfa, wheat or rye last fall but have not reported it, you may still report it without penalty. However, the deadline to report alfalfa, wheat, and rye planted this fall (**for the 2014 Crop Year**) will be November 15, 2013. A late file penalty will be assessed if you miss this deadline.

Due to budgetary concerns, **reminder postcards to certify your acreage will NOT be sent**. Please remind your friends and neighbors.

Selected Interest Rates for July 2013

90-Day Treasury Bill; 0.125%

Farm Operating Loans — Direct; 1.250%

Farm Ownership Loans — Direct; 3.25%

Emergency Loans; 2.250%

Farm Ownership-Limited Resource Loans; 5.00%

Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher; 1.50%

Farm Storage Facility Loans; 1.50% (7 yrs.), 2.125% (10 yrs.), 2.375% (12 yrs.)

Commodity Loans 1996-Present; 1.125%

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).