

February 2014



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Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, and Leelanau County FSA Updates

Grand Traverse Area FSA Office

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County Executive Director:
Gregory Shy

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Program Technicians:
Caleb Boge
Janet Howes
Jan Malik

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

Next County Committee
Meeting: April 30, 2014 9:00
AM

Important Dates to Remember

- **March 15th** - Final date to purchase NAP coverage on most spring seeded annually planted NAP crops including sweet corn, hops, pumpkins and most vegetables
- **March 15th** - Final date to purchase FCIC crop insurance for annual crops
- **March 31st** - Final date to request a 2013-crop small grains and honey loans or LDP
- **May 12th** - Final date to apply for an Emergency Loan under designation S3584
- **May 26th** - Office closed in observance of Memorial Day
- **May 31st** - Final date to request 2013-crop feed grains, oilseeds loans or LDP
- **September 23rd** - Final date to apply for an Emergency Loan under designations S3622, S3623, or S3636

Power Of Attorney

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office because of work schedules, distance, health, etc...FSA has a power of attorney form available that allows producers to designate another person to conduct business at the office. If interested, contact our office or any Farm Service Agency office for more information.

Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

March 15, 2014 is the last day for producers to apply for coverage on 2014 spring-planted crops.

The noninsured crop disaster assistance program (NAP) is a program that helps producers reduce their risk when growing food and fiber crops, specialty crops and crops for livestock feed. These benefits are only available for crops for which the catastrophic level of crop insurance is not available.

To qualify, a producer must be a landowner, tenant or sharecropper who shares in the risk of producing an eligible crop. To remain eligible for NAP assistance, crop acreage must be reported annually. Failure to report acreage and production information may result in reduced or zero NAP assistance. Be aware that acreage reporting and final planting dates vary by crop and by region. Producers should contact the FSA office where their farm records are maintained for questions regarding local acreage reporting and final planting dates.

Application for Coverage

March 15, 2014 is the last day for producers to apply for coverage on 2014 spring-planted crops using Form CCC-471, Application for Coverage, and pay the service fee at the FSA county office. The application and service fee must be filed by March 15, the deadline date for 2014 spring planted crops.

The service fee applied to the program is \$250 per crop per county, or \$750 per producer per county. The fee cannot exceed a total of \$1875 per producer with farming interest in multiple counties. Limited resource producers may request a waiver of service fees.

Production

Production records for all 2013 NAP covered crops must be reported to FSA no later than the latest acreage reporting deadline for the state which is August 15, 2014. FSA requires that any production reported in a loss year be verifiable according to Agency specifications.

Reporting Nap Losses

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.

The CCC-576 Notice of Loss is used to report low yield, failed acreage and prevented planting, and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. Timely filing a Notice of Loss is required for all NAP covered crops including grasses.

FSA reminds producers who are first-time NAP participants with coverage for the 2014 crop year of production and reporting requirements. These producers need to submit a minimum of four, up to ten years of production in order to establish their 2014 approved yield.

More information about NAP may be found on the FSA website located at www.fsa.usda.gov

Emergency Loans Available

USDA/FSA emergency farm loans are available in Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Otsego and 31 other Counties to all qualified farm operators as a result of losses caused by adverse weather conditions due to one or more of (4) recent Secretarial disaster declarations.

Effective **January 23, 2014**, the United States Department of Agriculture designated 38 primary Michigan counties and 29 contiguous counties as natural disaster areas.

The counties were designated as natural disaster areas **for losses due to drought, excessive rains, and**

cooler than normal temperatures that occurred beginning the earliest of April 1, 2013. Please see the individual designations for details and applicable loss events.

The disaster designation makes available low interest rate loans to farm operators in the designated area. Farm operators who suffered at least 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 3.000 percent.

The **deadline** for filing an EM loan application is **September 23, 2014**.

Secretarial Disaster Designation S3622

Effective January 23, 2014, 27 Michigan counties, including **Charlevoix and Emmet** counties, were designated as natural disaster areas due to losses caused by the combined effects of excessive rain and cooler than normal temperatures occurring April 1, 2013, and continuing. **Antrim, Kalkaska, and Otsego** counties are included among eligible contiguous counties.

Secretarial Disaster Designation S3623

Effective January 23, 2014, **Benzie** county was designated as a natural disaster area due to losses caused by drought with cooler than normal temperatures occurring August 1, 2013, through September 28, 2013. **Grand Traverse and Leelanau** counties are included among eligible contiguous counties.

Secretarial Disaster Designation S3636

Effective January 23, 2014, 10 Michigan counties, including **Antrim, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, and Otsego** counties, were designated as natural disaster areas due to losses caused by the combined effects of excessive rain occurring April 1, 2013 through July 29, 2013, returning October 15, 2013 and continuing. Also included in this designation are eligible losses due to the drought that occurred from July 30, 2013 through October 15, 2013 along with cooler than normal temperatures that spanned the entire disaster period. **Charlevoix and Leelanau** counties are included among eligible contiguous counties.

The **deadline** for filing an EM loan application for the following designation, S3584, is **May 12, 2014**.

Secretarial Disaster Designation S3584

Effective September 11, 2013, 12 Michigan counties, including **Antrim, Grand Traverse, and Leelanau**

counties, were designated as natural disaster areas due to losses caused by frost and freezing temperatures that occurred April 1, 2013 through June 19, 2013. **Charlevoix, Kalkaska, and Otsego** counties are included among eligible contiguous counties.

Farmers who want to apply for an Emergency loan should contact their local FSA office, or the Farm Loan Program staff at the Traverse City USDA Service Center at 1501 South Cass Traverse City MI 49684 or call 231-941-0951 extension 109.

Information about farm loans and loan application forms are also available on-line at:
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=fmlp&topic=landing>

Breaking New Ground

Agricultural producers are reminded to consult with FSA and NRCS before breaking out new ground for production as doing so without prior authorization may put a producer's federal farm program benefits in jeopardy. This is especially true for land that must meet Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions.

Producers with HEL determined soils must apply tillage, crop residue and rotation requirements as specified in their conservation plan.

Producers should notify FSA prior to conducting land clearing or drainage projects to ensure compliance. If you intend to clear any trees to create new cropland, these areas will need to be reviewed to ensure any work will not risk your eligibility for benefits.

Landowners and operators can complete form AD-1026 Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification to determine whether a referral to Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is necessary.

Selected Interest Rates February 2014

- 90-Day Treasury Bill: .125%
- Farm Operating Loans - Direct: 2.000%
- Farm Ownership Loans - Direct: 4.25%
- Farm Ownership Loans - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher: 1.50%
- Emergency Loans: 3.000%
- Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years): 2.250%
- Farm Storage Facility Loans (10 years): 2.875%
- Farm Storage Facility Loans (12 years): 3.000%
- Marketing Assistance Loans: 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).