

January 2014



Ionia County FSA Updates

Ionia County FSA Office **Farm Record Changes**

431 Swartz Ct, Ste 300
Ionia, MI 48846

Phone: 616-527-2098
NEW Fax: 855-647-4850

Hours: Monday - Friday
8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

County Executive Director
Jenifer A. Taylor

Program Technicians
William Brandt
Carolyn Lindberg
Diana Graef

County Committee Members
Steve Buche
Jeff Sandborn
Amanda Powell

County Committee Advisor
Allison Badder

Farm Loan Manager
Paul E. Wagner

Farm Loan Officer
Sara Possehn

Next County Committee Meeting: January 30, 2014
at 1:00 PM

Has your farm operation had any of the following happen this winter?

- Purchased new ground
- Dropped/picked up a new farm
- Ownership changes/transfers
- Changes in cropland acres
- Changes in the structure of your farm operation
- Future plans to clear wooded areas, remove stumps or improve drainage

NOW is the time to report changes to your FSA office. These changes must be reported timely in order to prepare for any new program sign-ups that may be authorized in the Farm Bill.

Land Clearing and Draining

Agricultural producers are reminded to consult with FSA and Natural Resources Conservation Service (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.

Landowners and operators can complete an AD-1026: Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification form to determine whether a referral to (NRCS) is necessary.

Producers with HELC 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.

1099 Forms Will Be Mailed by January 31st

1099 forms will be mailed out in January to producers who received reportable payments. Please remember that 1099's will NOT be mailed to producers if the total of reportable payments for each Tax Identification Number is less than \$600

FSA Signature Policy

Using the correct signature when doing business with FSA can save time and prevent a delay in program benefits. The following are FSA spousal signature guidelines:

- Spouses may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and CCC programs in which either has an interest, unless written notification denying a spouse this authority has been provided to the county office
- Spouses shall not sign on behalf of each other as an authorized signatory for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations, or other similar entities

For additional clarification on proper signatures contact your local FSA office.

Power Of Attorney

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

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. Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA within **90 days** of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form 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 requirements.

For AFIDA purposes, agricultural land is defined as any land used for farming, ranching or timber production, if the tracts total 10 acres or more. The AFIDA reports must be filed with the FSA county office that maintains reports for the county where the land is located.

For more information regarding AFIDA and FSA programs, contact the FSA office near you or visit the USDA Web site at <http://www.usda.gov>

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).