



Kent, Newaygo, Muskegon Counties' News

May 2010

Issue No. 2

**Kent County FSA
USDA Service Center**
3260 Eagle Park Drive NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49525
616-942-4111 (phone)
616-940-4691 (fax)

**Newaygo/Muskegon
USDA Service Center**
940 Rex Street
Fremont, MI 49412
231-924-2230 (phone)
231-924-9263 (fax)

Web Sites
www.fsa.usda.gov
www.sc.egov.usda.gov
www.fsa.usda.gov/mi

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

Kent County Committee
Terry Nugent
Deb Kober
Fredrick Oesch
Suanne Shoemaker, Advisor

**Newaygo/Muskegon
County Committee**
Craig Zeerip
David Stout
John VandenBrink
James Dunn
Dennis Sikkenga
Jean Stroven, Advisor

County Executive Director
David Bain

Farm Loan Manager
Leslie Wills, Muskegon
Paul Wagner, Kent
Rick Dean, Newaygo

Staff
Kent:
Richard Dunton
Nina Zick
Debbie Diehl

Newaygo/Muskegon:
John Vander Meulen
Lisa Smalligan
Kathy Nelson



CALL NOW! **June 1st Deadline**

2010 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Signup

Enrollment for the 2010 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) has begun and will continue through **June 1, 2010**. Call to schedule your appointment.

USDA computes DCP Program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2010, eligible producers may request advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the calculated direct payment. Also, ask about the ACRE option!

Tree Assistance Program (TAP)

TAP provides financial assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines that were lost by natural disasters occurring on or after January 1, 2008 and before October 1, 2011.

To qualify for TAP, orchardist and nursery growers must:

- Suffer qualifying tree, bush and vine losses in excess of 15% mortality (after adjustments for normal mortality) from an eligible natural disaster for the individual stand
- Have owned the eligible trees, bushes and vines when the natural disaster occurred; however, eligible growers are not required to own the land on which the eligible trees, bushes and vines are planted
- Replace eligible trees, bushes or vines within 12 months from the date the application is approved.

Deadline to apply for 2008 and 2009 claims and claims from January 1 to May 7, 2010 is **July 6, 2010**. Please call for an appointment. Sign up for all dates after May 8, 2010 must be done within 90 calendar days of the disaster, allowing for FSA inspection before removal of trees.

Adjusted Gross Income (AGI)

USDA has a Memorandum of Understanding with the **Internal Revenue Service** to establish an electronic information exchange process for verifying compliance with the adjusted gross income (AGI) provisions for farm programs. Written consent will be required from each producer or payment recipient for the tax review process. No actual tax data will be included in the report that IRS sends to USDA.

The agreement ensures that payments are **not** issued to producers whose AGI exceeds certain limits. The limits set in the 2008 Farm Bill are \$500,000 nonfarm average AGI for commodity and disaster programs; \$750,000 farm average AGI for direct payments; and \$1 million nonfarm average AGI for conservation programs.

Participants in programs subject to average AGI rules must submit form CCC-927 (Individual) and/or CCC-928 (Legal Entity) to the Internal Revenue Service by June 15 to avoid interruption of program benefits. These forms may be obtained from local FSA and NRCS offices or online at:

<http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov>

Prevented Planting

Definition – Failure to plant the crop by the final planting date.....You must have been prevented from planting the crop due to an eligible cause of loss that is general in the surrounding area and that prevents all other producers from planting acreage with similar characteristics.

Reporting – If you wish to receive credit for failed and/or prevented planting crops, you are required to report before destroying the failed crop or 15 days from the final plant date.

Nominations for County Committee Open June 15

County Committee (COC) members are a critical component of the operations of Farm Service Agency (FSA). They help in the delivery of FSA farm programs at a local level, as well as, work to make FSA farm programs serve the needs of local producers.

Since County Committee elections happen once a year, here is a refresher. For election purposes, counties are divided into local administrative areas, or LAAs. Each LAA contributes one producer to serve a three-year term on the Farm Service Agency county committee.

Each year, an election is held in an LAA to replace the committee member whose three-year term is expiring.

Newaygo/Muskegon County will be holding an election for persons to represent LAA 2 and LAA 5

- LAA 2 includes Dayton, Sheridan and Garfield. This position is currently held by Craig Zeerip.
- LAA 5 includes Egelston, Moorland, Casnovia, Sullivan and Ravenna. This position is currently held by John Vandenbrink.

Kent County will be holding an election for a person to represent LAA 2, which includes Tyrone, Solon, Sparta, Algoma, Alpine, Walker, Grand Rapids, and Ada. This position is currently being held by Debra Kober.

Nominations for candidates to run for the FSA county committee election representing producers in Newaygo/Muskegon LAA 2 and LAA5, as well as Kent LAA 2 will be accepted from June 15 through August 2, 2010.

Producers who are eligible to vote in these LAA's and who participate or cooperate in an FSA program and are of legal voting age, may be nominated to serve on the county committee.

Individuals may nominate themselves or others as candidates. Additionally, organizations representing minority and women farmers may nominate candidates. All farmers, ranchers and other agricultural producers are encouraged to participate.

To be valid, the nomination form must be signed by the person being nominated, indicating agreement to serve if elected, and returned to the FSA county office by the close of business on August 2, or postmarked by midnight August 2, 2010.

A nomination form, FSA-669A, is included in this newsletter. More information on the elections, including nomination forms, is available at the county office or online at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections> .

Crop Reporting Time Fast Approaching

The annual reporting of acres for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent loss of benefits for a variety of FSA programs. All cropland acres on the farm must be reported to receive benefits from the following programs:

- Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP);
- Acreage Crop Revenue Election (ACRE);
- Marketing assistance loans and loan deficiency payments;
- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP);
- Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

Form FSA-578, Report of Acreage, must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. Producers need to file their acreage reports by:

- **June 30, 2010** for fall seeded small grain crops;
- **July 15, 2010** for all crops, except fall seeded small grains.

SURE Program Update

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters that occurred in crop years 2008 through 2011. **Currently, FSA is accepting applications on the 2008 SURE program.** Possible qualifications for this program are:

- At least one crop of economic significance suffered a 10% production loss due to an eligible disaster.
- All crops (both insurable and non insurable) of economic significance were insured either by crop insurance or FSA.
- A crop insurance indemnity was received on a crop of economic significance in 2008.

Please call or stop by the FSA Office to enquire about eligibility.

FSA-669A
(03-24-10)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Farm Service Agency

NOMINATION FORM FOR COUNTY FSA COMMITTEE ELECTION

1. NAME OF NOMINEE (<i>Type or Print Nominee's Full Name</i>)		TO BE COMPLETED BY COUNTY FSA OFFICE	
2. ADDRESS OF NOMINEE		4. INITIALS OF EMPLOYEE RECEIVING FORM AND DATE RECEIVED	
		5. COUNTY	
3. NOMINEE'S CERTIFICATION: <i>I hereby agree to have my name placed on the ballot, that I will serve if elected, and if there is a conflict of interest, I will resign such position.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> I DO want to witness the settling of tied votes with another nominee. <input type="checkbox"/> I DO NOT want to witness the settling of tied votes with another nominee.		6. LAA	
		7. STATE	
3A. SIGNATURE OF NOMINEE		8. NOMINATOR'S CERTIFICATION: <i>If this nomination is by other than self, the following eligible voter or representative of a community based organization hereby nominates the afore-named person to be a candidate in the next County FSA Committee election for the county.</i>	
3B. DATE		8A. SIGNATURE OF NOMINATOR	
<input type="checkbox"/> Check here if nominee is a write-in candidate.		8B. DATE	
		<i>(If the individual is self nominating, no signature is required).</i>	

9. TO BE COMPLETED BY NOMINEE

VOLUNTARY INFORMATION FOR MONITORING PURPOSES: The following information is requested by the Federal Government in order to monitor FSA's compliance with federal laws prohibiting discrimination against program participants on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, marital status, handicapped condition, or age. You are not required to furnish this information, but are encouraged to do so. This information will not be used in evaluating your nomination or to discriminate against you in any way.

ETHNICITY	RACE (Choose as many boxes as applicable)	GENDER
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino	<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native	<input type="checkbox"/> Male
<input type="checkbox"/> Not Hispanic or Latino	<input type="checkbox"/> Asian	<input type="checkbox"/> Female
	<input type="checkbox"/> Black or African-American	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	
	<input type="checkbox"/> White	

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THIS FORM

Complete the form as follows:

ITEM 1 Type or Print the nominee's full name. The nominee must be:

- A. Eligible to vote in the designated County FSA Committee election.
- B. Eligible to hold the office of County FSA Committee member.
- C. Willing to serve if elected.

ITEM 2 Enter the nominee's current address.

ITEM 3 The nominee must check one of the boxes to indicate a preference regarding the settling of tied votes.

ITEMS 3A & 3B The nominee must sign and date.

ITEMS 8A & 8B The nominator must sign and date. *(If the individual is self nominating, no signature is required.)*

ITEM 9 Completing this item is voluntary.

ALL FORMS MUST BE RECEIVED IN THE COUNTY OFFICE OR POSTMARKED BY AUGUST 2, 2010.

NOTE: *The following statement is made in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a - as amended). The authority for requesting the information identified on this form is the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Pub. L. 110-246). The information will be used to obtain nominees for election to the County FSA Committee. The information collected on this form may be disclosed to other Federal, State, Local government agencies, Tribal agencies, and nongovernmental entities that have been authorized access to the information by statute or regulation and/or as described in applicable Routine Uses identified in the System of Records Notice for County Personnel Records, USDA/FSA-6. Providing the requested information is voluntary. However, failure to furnish the requested information will result in a determination of ineligibility for nomination for election to the County FSA Committee.*

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0560-0229. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 10 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The provisions of appropriate criminal and civil fraud, privacy, and other statutes may be applicable to the information provided. RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO YOUR COUNTY FSA OFFICE.

Dates to Remember

May 31- Office closed, Memorial Day

June 1 – Final date to request '09 corn & soybean loans

June 1 – DCP/ACRE Enrollment deadline

June 15 – Deadline to submit forms CCC-927/928 to IRS

June 30 – Deadline to report fall-seeded small grains

July 5 – Office closed in observance of Independence Day

July 6 – Final date to submit applications for 2008 & 2009 TAP Claims.

July 15 – Deadline to report all crops except fall-seeded small grain

Aug 1 – Last day to request a farm combination or division

Continues – Farm Storage Facility Loans

Continues – Continuous Conservation Reserve Program & CRP-SAFE

This form is available electronically.

Form Approved - OMB No. 0560-0229

FSA-669A
(03-24-10)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Farm Service Agency

NOMINATION FORM FOR COUNTY FSA COMMITTEE ELECTION

This form allows individuals to nominate themselves or any other person as a candidate. If additional forms are needed, this one may be copied or may be obtained at the County FSA Office or obtained electronically at <http://www.sc.egov.usda.gov>. Each form submitted must be:

- A. Limited to one nominee.
- B. Signed and dated by the nominee in Item 3. Nominee must sign if willing to have his/her name placed on the ballot and agrees to serve if elected.

Note: Name shown on ballot will appear exactly the same as in Agency records.

- C. Delivered to the County FSA Office or postmarked no later than August 2, 2010.
- D. Signed and dated as a write-in candidate if elected as a member and willing to serve on the COC.

The County FSA Committee is responsible for reviewing each form to determine the eligibility of nominees. A person who files this form and is found ineligible will be so notified and have an opportunity to file a challenge.

Persons nominated should actively participate in the operation of a farm or ranch and be well qualified for committee work. A producer is eligible to be a County FSA committee member if the producer resides in the Local Administrative Area (LAA) in which the election is to be held and is eligible to vote.

Federal regulations may prohibit County FSA Committee members from holding certain positions in some farm, commodity, and political organizations if such positions pose a conflict of interest with FSA duties. The positions include functional offices such as president, vice president, secretary, or treasurer; and positions on boards or executive committees. Conflict of interest restrictions also apply to employees, operators, managers, and majority owners of tobacco warehouses. Questions concerning eligibility should be directed to the County FSA Office.

A candidate has the option to request that all voted ballots for an individual county committee election be returned to the respective State Office in lieu of being returned to the county office. This request must be in writing and submitted to the local County Executive Director prior to the announced end of the nomination period.

The duties of County FSA Committee members include:

- A. Administering farm program activities conducted by the County FSA Office.
- B. Informing farmers of the purpose and provisions of the FSA programs.
- C. Keeping the State FSA Committee informed of LAA conditions.
- D. Monitoring changes in farm programs.
- E. Participating in county meetings as necessary.
- F. Performing other duties as assigned by the State FSA Committee

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of Discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW. Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal relay). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, please contact the FSA County Office.