



# Kent, Newaygo, Muskegon Counties' News

**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



**CRP Signup Underway**  
The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is the USDA's largest private-lands voluntary conservation program. CRP helps agricultural producers convert environmentally sensitive agricultural land to achieve conservation benefits. Certain practices are available on a continuous basis, however, it has been 5 years since the last competitive general CRP signup took place.

**Producers can offer land for CRP general signup August 2 through August 27, 2010.**

To be eligible for CRP, the producer must have owned or operated the land for at least 12 months prior to the close of the CRP signup, August 27, 2010. Land must be cropland which has been planted or considered planted to an agricultural commodity four of the six crop years from 2002- 2007, and which is physically and legally capable of being planted in a normal manner to an agricultural commodity. Alfalfa and other multiyear grasses and legumes grown in a rotation not to exceed 12 years may be eligible for this year.

Benefits to CRP include:

- improved and increased wildlife habitat
- improved water quality
- increased soil quality
- reduce soil erosion
- increase air quality

In return for planting long-term resource conserving covers, FSA provides CRP participants annual rental payments, maintenance payments, cost-share and technical assistance.

**APPOINTMENTS ARE  
ENCOURAGED...your time  
is valuable, workload is high, staff  
is limited, so please call ahead!  
We really appreciate it.**

## Commodity Loans

Producers are reminded that commodity loans are available for 2010 corn, soybeans, wheat, oats, barley, and grain sorghum at the following loan rates:

### **Kent**

|             |        |
|-------------|--------|
| Corn        | \$1.91 |
| Soybeans    | \$4.92 |
| Red Wheat   | \$1.76 |
| White Wheat | \$2.02 |
| Oats        | \$1.38 |
| Barley      | \$1.82 |

### **Muskegon**

|             |        |
|-------------|--------|
| Corn        | \$1.84 |
| Soybeans    | \$4.91 |
| Red Wheat   | \$1.79 |
| White Wheat | \$2.00 |
| Oats        | \$1.38 |
| Barley      | \$1.82 |

### **Newaygo**

|             |        |
|-------------|--------|
| Corn        | \$1.84 |
| Soybeans    | \$4.91 |
| Red Wheat   | \$1.74 |
| White Wheat | \$2.00 |
| Oats        | \$1.38 |
| Barley      | \$1.82 |

## Conservation Compliance Reminder

All participants in USDA programs are required to have a conservation system in place on all the highly erodible land that they operate. Several areas where problems can arise with complying with a conservation system are: renting new cropland, purchasing new cropland, breaking out additional cropland, shortening an established cropping rotation, planting new crops, and changing or removing existing conservation practices. It is very important that you contact the FSA office BEFORE doing any of the above. Also, it is very important that you contact your local County office BEFORE modifying (tiling, draining, dredging, filling or leveling) any wetland or drainage ditch. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in loss of all Federal payments and program eligibility.

## -Attention Landowners-

FSA is finding that many of you are transferring your property into trusts.

Regulations require FSA to record revisions when land changes hands, even if it's from an individual to his or her trust. FSA requires proof of ownership to update farm records. This ensures that FSA program contracts list the correct landowner.

*If you're to the point of recording deeds in your trust's name, contact FSA immediately.*

Program payments may be delayed if information is not kept current.



## NAP Coverage

The Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) was designed to reduce financial losses that occur when natural disasters cause a catastrophic loss of production or prevented planting of an eligible crop by providing coverage equivalent to catastrophic (CAT) insurance. Statute limits NAP to each commercial crop or agricultural commodity, except livestock, for which CAT is not available.

**The application deadline date for the 2011 NAP coverage for small grains, fall speltz and forage crops is September 30, 2010.**

Producers who already have coverage on 2010 NAP crops may choose to continue coverage on the same crop or crops for 2011, if the applicable service fee is submitted by the application closing date. A new CCC-471, application for coverage is not required to be signed when applying for continuous coverage of the same crop or crops.

Producers who choose to add a new crop(s) or delete a crop(s) from previous year's coverage or changing crop shares must file a new CCC-471 with signatures and pay the applicable service fee.

Producers with NAP coverage must remember to complete the following to qualify for benefits:

- Timely file acreage reports and keep track of harvested production using acceptable methods. For example, bale weights or other means of determining quantities of hay are required.
- File a "Notice of Loss" within 15 days of when a loss is apparent, due to drought, hail, etc.

For more information on NAP coverage, please contact your nearest FSA office.

## 2008 SURE SIGNUP – DEADLINE (9/30/10) ANNOUNCED

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disaster that incurred in the crop years 2008 through September 30, 2011. To be eligible for SURE payments, a producer is required to obtain crop insurance on all crops in all counties or, if crop insurance is not available, to participate in the Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) except for grazed acreage. However, crop insurance or NAP coverage is no longer required for crops that are not of economic significance or those where the administrative fee required to buy NAP coverage exceeds 10% of the value of the coverage. Eligible farmers and ranchers who meet the definition of Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, or Beginning Farmer or Rancher are exempt from the risk management purchase requirement.

The following are the conditions that trigger SURE payments:

- At least one crop of economic significance must suffer a 10% production loss due to an eligible disaster condition. A crop of economic significance is a crop that has contributed or would have contributed at least 5% or more of the total expected revenue from all crops on the farm;
- Producers in counties declared disaster counties by the Secretary of Agriculture, or in contiguous counties, or those who show proof of an individual loss of at least 50% are eligible to receive SURE payments for crop production or quality losses. Losses are measured with consideration to the whole-farm revenue, which includes crop insurance indemnities and commodity program payments, so that producers are not paid more than once for the same loss.

Kent, Newaygo, and Muskegon Counties **did** have a Secretarial Disaster declaration for 2008; therefore, producers who obtained crop insurance or NAP coverage on all crops of economic significance will be eligible to apply for SURE.

**The deadline to apply for 2008 SURE is September 30, 2010.**



## Program Announcements - Deadlines

FSA is not immune to the pressures of drastically reduced budgets especially as it relates to communication with farmers. For the foreseeable future, local county office newsletters will be published sporadically at best and should NOT be relied upon as a single source for general FSA program information or for specific FSA program deadlines.

FSA will however, continue the long standing practice of timely issuing press releases and other materials to local media outlets for publication or broadcast, and on, state and national levels, maintain public websites with pertinent up-to-the-minute FSA information. These websites are:

[www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) and [www.fsa.usda.gov/mi](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mi)

In a related effort to enhance communication, we encourage those with email addresses to share them with us, if they would like, so we can build a data base to allow for potential transmission of information through that media.

## FSA Farm Loans

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers loans for farmers to purchase farmland and finance agricultural operations. FSA loan programs are designed to help producers who are temporarily unable to obtain private or commercial credit. In many cases, applicants are beginning farmers who have insufficient net worth to qualify for financing through a commercial lender. In other instances, borrowers might have suffered setbacks from natural disasters or might be persons with limited resources.

**Farm Ownership or Farm Operating Loans** may be obtained as direct loans for a maximum of up to \$300,000. **Guaranteed Loans** can reach a maximum indebtedness level of \$1,090,000. **Emergency Loans** are always direct loans for farmers who may have suffered physical or production losses in disaster areas designated by either a Presidential or Secretarial disaster declaration. **Rural Youth Loans, Socially Disadvantaged Loans and Beginning Farmer Loans** are also available.

| Selected Interest Rates for August 2010                                 |        |
|---|--------|
| Limited Resource Loans  | 5.000% |
| Farm Operating Loans — Direct   | 2.500% |
| Farm Ownership Loans — Direct   | 4.625% |
| Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher | 1.5%   |
| Emergency Loans (Actual Loss)   | 3.750% |
| Farm Storage Facility Loans 7yr   | 2.750% |
| Farm Storage Facility Loans 10 yr                                       | 3.250% |
| Farm Storage Facility Loans 12yr  | 3.500% |
| Commodity Loans 1996-Present  | 1.375% |

## Foreign Landowner 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. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA.

Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 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, real estate agents, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

## Transition Incentives Program

The Transition Incentives Program (TIP) was created to encourage retired or retiring owners or operators to transition their Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres to beginning or socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers.

TIP sign-up began on Monday, May 17, 2010. If all program requirements are met, TIP provides annual rental payments to the retiring farmer for up to two additional years after the date of the expiration of the CRP contract, provided the transition is not to a family member.

To be eligible, TIP requires that the retired or retiring farmer or rancher:

- Have land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) that is in the last year of the contract.
- Agree to allow the beginning or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher make conservation and land improvements in accordance with a sustainable farm conservation plan.
- Agree to sell, or have a contract to sell, or agree to long-term lease (a minimum of 5 years) the land under CRP contract to a beginning or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher by Oct. 1 of the year the CRP contract expires.

Generally, TIP only applies to contracts that expire on September 30, 2010, or later. However, retired or retiring owners or operators with CRP contracts that expired on September 30, 2008, and September 30, 2009, may be eligible to enroll in TIP. To learn more about this program, producers interested in applying and participating in TIP should stop by the county office or visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)

## Help Wanted

The Kent County FSA office is taking applications for intermittent office help. This position is to assist in carrying on its mission to service to the farmers of Kent County.

Work is on a call in basis as funding is available. Please call the Kent office at 616-942-4111 if interested.

**ATTENTION ASPARAGUS PRODUCERS  
 Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) for Farmers  
 Applications should be made by September 23, 2010**

Available Benefits:

- Free technical training to develop business plans
- Up to \$4,000 to implement initial business plan
- Up to an additional \$8,000 for developing a long-term business plan

Basic Eligibility Requirements:

- Produced and shared in the risk of producing asparagus in 2009
- Produced and shared in the risk of producing asparagus in 2006, 2007 or 2008
- Provide sales receipts of total production to show either lower production in 2009 or lower prices received in 2009
- Must meet FSA Average Adjusted Gross Income provisions

Where to Apply:

- File For FSA 229-1, sales receipts and other documents with your Farm Service Agency Office

| Dates to Remember |  |
|-------------------|--|
| August 27         | Final date to apply for CRP General Sign-up 39 |
| September 6       | Office Closed for Labor Day                    |
| September 30      | NAP Sales Closing Date for Fall Crops          |
| September 30      | Final date to apply for SURE                   |
| Continues         | Farm Storage Facility Loans                    |
| Continues         | Continuous Conservation Reserve Program        |

Visit our Web site at:  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/mi](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mi)



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, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.