

June 2014



# NEWSLETTER



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## Lapeer/Oakland County FSA Updates

### Lapeer/Oakland County FSA Office

700 South Main Street  
Suite 120C  
Lapeer, MI 48446  
Phone: 810-664-0895  
Fax: 855-662-9271

**County Executive Director:**  
Andrew Calcaterra

**Farm Loan Manager:**  
David Hemker

**Program Technicians:**  
Tara Eldridge  
Susan Swosinski  
(Assists with Farm Loan)

**County Committee Members:**  
Jerry Cooper - Chair  
Tom Valentine - V Chair  
John Fogler - Member  
Barbara Knust - Member  
Terry Losh - Member  
Alfonso Castillo - Advisor

**Next County Committee Meeting:** August 15 @ 9:00am

### Lapeer/Oakland County Seeks a Representative for the County Committee

County Committee (COC) elections provide farmers and ranchers the opportunity to represent producers in their community by serving on their local FSA COC. All farmers and ranchers are encouraged to consider running for COC seats.

Significant emphasis continues to be placed on improving diversity on COC's. FSA is working diligently to increase the number of SDA farmers and ranchers nominated for COC using FSA-669A. State and County Offices have actively and successfully been able to place many more SDA candidates' names on ballots. Efforts must be continued and expanded to ensure that SDA farmers and ranchers have every opportunity for election to FSA COC's.

Elections this year will be held in the Local Administrative Area #2 consisting of the townships of; Arcadia, Attica, Burlington, Burnside, Lapeer and North Branch. Eligible persons may submit form FSA-669A, Nominating Petition to the County Office no later than August 1, 2014.

For more information regarding the County Committee System and/or election process please visit your local Farm Service Agency office or online at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections>

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## Microloan Program

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) developed the Microloan (ML) program to better serve the unique financial operating needs of beginning, niche and small family farm operations.

FSA offers applicants a Microloan designed to help farmers with credit needs of \$35,000 or less. The loan features a streamlined application process built to fit the needs of new and smaller producers. This loan program will also be useful to specialty crop producers and operators of community supported agriculture (CSA).

Eligible applicants can apply for a maximum amount of \$35,000 to pay for initial start-up expenses such as hoop houses to extend the growing season, essential tools, irrigation and annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents, marketing, and distribution expenses. As financing needs increase, applicants can apply for a regular operating loan up to the maximum amount of \$300,000 or obtain financing from a commercial lender under FSA's Guaranteed Loan Program.

Individuals who are interested in applying for a microloan or would like to discuss other farm loan programs available should contact their local FSA office to set up an appointment with a loan official.

## Save Time – Make an Appointment with FSA

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As we roll out the Farm Bill programs administered by FSA, there will be related signups and in some cases multiple management decisions that need to be made by you, the producer, in consult with FSA staff. To insure maximum use of your time and to insure that you are afforded our full attention to your important business needs, please call our office ahead of your visit to set an appointment and to discuss any records or documentation that you may need to have with you when you arrive for your appointment. For local FSA Service Center contact information, please visit: <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>.

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## Farm Reconstitutions

When changes in farm 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.

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.

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## Special Accommodations

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the office staff directly or by calling Andrew Calcaterra at (810) 664-0895.

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## FSA Signature Policy

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

- 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.
- Spouses must have a power of attorney on file, or sign personally, for price support loans and for promissory notes.
- When signing as an Agent, authorized by form FSA-211, producer must sign using a "By" or "For" comment as well as their representative capacity. For example "Josephine Farmer, by Joe Farmer, Agent". If the signatory is preprinted on the document, the agent does not have to repeat the name; they may simply sign "By Joe Farmer, Agent".
- Members of businesses, who have authorization to sign for the business, must sign using a "By" or "For" comment, unless preprinted on the document. For example, "ABC Corporation, By Joe ABC, President" or "Joe ABC, for ABC Corporation."

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## Controlled Substance

Any person convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium, poppies and other drug producing plants.

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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).