

Lenawee County News

**Lenawee County
USDA Service Center**

Lenawee County FSA
1100 Sutton RD
Adrian MI 49221
517-263-7400(phone)
517-265-9121(fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/mi

Hours
Monday - Friday
7:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

County Committee
Alan Gould
Michael Feight
Dale Terry

COC Advisor
Bonnie Hunt

County Committee meets
First Wednesday 8:30 am

Staff
Constance Reid Guffey
County Executive Director
114

Farm Program Section:
Jim Bills 104
Connie Rathbun 108
Debra Shiels 105
Barbara Wagner 107
Beth Wagner 106

Farm Loan Section:
Michael Jordan
Farm Loan Manager 110
Brenda Andrews 113
Rebecca Deline 111
Susan Lerch 112



General Conservation Reserve program (CRP) Signup Announced!

A general sign-up for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) began on August 2nd and will continue through August 27, 2010. During the sign-up period, farmers may offer eligible land for the competitive general sign-up.

In addition to the general sign-up, CRP's continuous sign-up program and Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) will be ongoing. For more information, visit <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/crp>

Agriculture Secretary Vilsack has recorded two public service announcements about CRP, which are available to the public at www.fsa.usda.gov/psa.

CRP is a voluntary program that assists land owners and operators to use their environmentally sensitive land for conservation benefits. Producers enrolling in CRP plant long-term, resource-conserving covers in exchange for rental payments, cost-share, and technical assistance. CRP protects millions of acres of America's topsoil from erosion and is designed to improve the nation's natural resources base. Participants voluntarily remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production to enter into contracts for 10 to 15 years. In exchange, participants receive annual rental payments and a payment of up to 50 percent of the cost of establishing conservation practices.

By reducing water runoff and sedimentation, CRP also protects groundwater and helps improve the condition of lakes, rivers, ponds and streams. Acreage enrolled in the CRP is planted to resource-conserving vegetative covers, making the program a major contributor to wildlife population increases in many parts of the country. As a result, CRP has provided significant opportunities for hunting and fishing on private lands.

Cropland may be offered in this sign-up provided all eligibility requirements are met. Current CRP participants with contracts expiring this fall, may make new offers for contracts to start on 10/01/10.

FSA will evaluate and rank eligible CRP offers using an Environmental Benefits Index (EBI) for judging the environmental benefits to be gained from enrolling the land in CRP. The EBI consists of five environmental factors (wildlife, water, soil, air and enduring benefits) and cost. Decisions on the EBI cutoff will be made after the sign-up ends and after analyzing the EBI data of all the offers.

To be eligible, land had to have been planted or considered planted to an agricultural commodity in four of the years 2002-2007. Land in CRP in those years which is no longer under contract, or land seeded to hay in one of those years is also eligible.

To be eligible, the land must be owned for 12 months prior to the end of signup (some exceptions apply). All land owners must sign the CRP offer and contract. Offers are binding if not withdrawn by August 27, 2010.

Marketing Assistance Loans

A Marketing Assistance Loan (MAL) is available to those who share in the risk of producing an eligible commodity.

To be eligible, a producer must maintain continual beneficial interest in the commodity. Commodity loan eligibility also requires compliance with conservation and wetland protection requirements; acreage reporting, and ensuring that the commodity meets Commodity Credit Corporation minimum grade and quality standards.

FSA offers loans on honey, wool and mohair, an assortment of grains, and other approved agricultural commodities.

2010 Wheat loan rates:
Soft Red \$1.85
White \$2.08



SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS WILL BE MADE UPON REQUEST FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES, VISION IMPAIRMENT, OR HEARING IMPAIRMENT.

IF ACCOMMODATIONS ARE REQUIRED, PLEASE CALL CONSTANCE REID GUFFEY AT: (517)263-7400.

Successful offers will become effective on 10/01/10. Land that is leased may not be taken away from the operator to be enrolled in CRP. Operators must voluntarily give up the land or be offered a share of the CRP contract payment.

CRP covers must be established according to a written conservation plan.

CRP cover maintenance is an annual responsibility. CRP land must be free of noxious weeds/woody vegetation.

At mid-contract, maintenance measures will be required to enhance the cover and bring its diversity back.

Annually, CRP producers must file an acreage report by July 15th.

Steps to making a CRP offer:

- Decided what land to offer. Must be eligible cropland that is physically and legally capable of being cropped.
- Learn about the conservation cover choices and the EBI. Make a decision on the cover you would install on the area should the offer be accepted. We will work with producers to maximize the environmental benefits of a CRP offer. This will increase the chance of acceptance.
- Offers will be highly competitive. Points will be assigned based on soil types, dollar amount bid, and the conservation cover that will be established.

- Producers submitting an offer must complete several documents including CCC-926 Adjusted Gross Income, AD-1026 Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification and CCC-902 Farm Operating Plan
- Producers submitting offers will receive a written response regarding acceptance.

Landowners and operators are encouraged to call for an appointment soon.

Plan to bring the recorded deed or other evidence of ownership to the appointment.

Public meetings will be held on CRP. Please call if interested in attending a meeting.

NAP Deadline Approaching

The Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) can soften financial losses caused by natural disasters, but only if you've applied for coverage and paid the application fee. (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.

The application deadline date for the 2011 NAP coverage for small grains, fall mint, fall speltz and forage crops is September 30, 2010. The deadline is November 20, for asparagus, strawberries and other berries. NOTE: All significant crops must be covered by multi-peril crop insurance or NAP coverage in order to remain eligible for Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE).

**OUTREACH TO
WOMEN AND NEW
PRODUCERS:**

Perhaps you have recently become involved in farming, or have been involved in farming for years with your spouse, but you want to learn more about Farm Service Agency (FSA) programs?

Do you want to better understand the benefits or requirements of a program?

Want to know what we offer specifically for “Beginning Farmers”?

Do you want to be more informed on the County Committee election process and be more involved?

Please join us for informal meetings, especially for you, on any first Monday of the month from 9:00 -10:00 a.m. The topics will vary depending on your interests. There will be informal presentations and discussion.

Please call 263-7400 and press 2. Ask what the topic for the next meeting will be and let us know if you want to reserve a spot.

**MID-CONTRACT MANAGEMENT -
CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM
(CRP) ACRES**

If your CRP cover was planted four or more years ago, you should be completing the Mid-Contract Management. Mid-Contract Management means taking actions to improve the CRP cover. The idea is to manage the cover and to make it more useful for wildlife such as ground nesting birds. As your CRP cover matures it may become thick with a single type of grass, or have thistle problems. The cover may benefit from light disking, grass-specific herbicides, interseeding with legumes or wildflowers, or prescribed burning. These activities will create the plant diversity that was once there.

Conservation plans written since May of 2003 have the requirement for Mid-Contract Management. Producers with older contracts may request to add it to their conservation plans. Once Mid-contract management is in your conservation plan, you can work with NRCS to determine what should be done to improve your CRP cover. FSA will issue the paperwork for cost sharing at 50% of eligible costs up to \$50 per acre, per year, not to exceed \$100 per acre for the life of a 10 year contract or \$125 per acre if your contract is for over 10 years.

The financial and technical assistance described above is available to improve the cover by proper management, mid-contract.

Mid-Contract Management is different from your responsibility for general maintenance of the CRP cover.

CRP cover maintenance is your annual responsibility to maintain the established cover, keeping it free of noxious weeds and woody vegetation. To maintain your CRP cover, you may spot mow between August 1 and 20 (only the specific areas that need weed or brush control). You may mow these areas only once a year and you may do that without contacting FSA.

However, if maintenance is needed earlier in the year, to control thistles before they go to seed for example, write to the County Committee or call FSA for permission to treat these spots. This should be done BEFORE they go to seed. Also contact FSA if you need to mow more than once per year to keep weeds controlled.

FARM LOAN PROGRAMS

At this time, FSA has Emergency Loans available farmers who suffered Production losses resulting from frost, freeze, excessive rainfall, flooding, tornadoes, high winds during the incidence period. Emergency loans are also available for those farmers who experienced a Physical loss as a result of the tornadoes that swept the area in April and May of this year. FSA is still accepting loan applications for all loan programs--Direct Operating, Direct Farm Ownership, Guarantee Farm Ownership and Guarantee Operating. While some of these loan programs may be out of funds at this time, applications are still being processed and added to our waiting lists. For those applicants who meet the Beginning Farmer and/or Socially Disadvantaged Farmer requirements, a limited amount of targeted funding is still available. If you have any questions about any loan program, eligibility requirements, applications or other forms, or need information in general, please contact the Farm Loan staff at (517) 263-7400 and speak with Mike, Becky, Sue or Brenda.

2011 DIRECT AND COUNTER-CYCLICAL PROGRAM (DCP) AND AVERAGE CROP REVENUE ELECTION (ACRE) SIGN UP

Sign up for the 2011 DCP will begin October 1, 2010 and end on June 1, 2011. The annual commodity programs are based on past planting history on a farm. Generally farm operators are eligible for this program and any farm owners sharing in the crops. A farm owner who does not cash rent his land, may enroll in this program even if no crop will be planted. However, idle DCP acres must be protected from erosion and weeds must be controlled throughout the year. Contact the county office to schedule an appointment to enroll.

Farm Storage Facility Loans are available at great rates and terms! For more information please visit your FSA county office or www.fsa.usda.gov

Check the Soil Conservation District website for USDA News from FSA and NRCS! www.lenaweeconservationdistrict.org

SUPPLEMENTAL REVENUE ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS (SURE) PROGRAM

This program replaces past disaster programs for crops. Payments are earned when there is a revenue loss on all of a producer's farms combined.

Lenawee County had a Secretarial Disaster declaration for 2008, therefore, producers who obtained insurance or NAP coverage on all crops of economic significance are eligible to apply for SURE for 2008.

If you had significant crop losses in 2008, you should contact us soon. A revenue loss may qualify for a SURE payment.

DEADLINE IS SEPTEMBER 30, 2010

Interest Rates for July 2010	
7 yr. Farm Storage Facility Loans	2.75%
10 yr. Farm Storage Facility Loans	3.25%
12 yr. Farm Storage Facility Loans	3.50%
August 27, 2010	Final date to apply for CRP General Signup 39
Sept.5, 2010	Offices closed for the observance of Labor Day
Sept 23, 2010	Final date for asparagus producers to apply for TAA for Farmers

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, audiotope, 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.