

April 2012



Lenawee County FSA Updates

DEAR PRODUCERS: Welcome to the new GovDelivery bulletins and updates service from your Lenawee County FSA office. Note that you are welcome to request to receive bulletins from more than one county and can add or remove individual subscriptions at any time.

Lenawee County FSA Office

Address:
1100 Sutton RD
Adrian MI 49221

Phone: 517-263-7400
Fax: 517-265-9121

Hours: 7:00 AM - 4:30 PM

**County Executive
Director:**
Constance Reid Guffey

Program Technicians:

Brenda Andrews
Jodie Johnson
Debra Shiels
Jessica Squires
Barbara Wagner
Beth Wagner
Jamie Wegner

Farm Loan Manager:
Michael Jordon

Farm Loan Officer:
Rebecca Deline

County Committee (COC)
Michael Feight, Chairman
Dale Terry, Vice Chair
Eugenie Hillard, Member
Bonnie Shepherd, Advisor

FSA Moving to Electronic Information

As you know Farm Service Agency offices are moving toward a paperless operation. Please mention to your fellow producers that they are asked to enroll in the new GovDelivery system which will provide notices, newsletters and electronic reminders instead of a hard copy through the mail. They may receive e-mail updates by going to the USDA GovDelivery sign-up page found at the following web address:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe>

FSA, like many other organizations, is trying to work smarter and be more efficient. Moving to electronic notifications via email will help conserve resources and save taxpayer dollars.

County Committee ballots will continue to be mailed to all eligible producers.

COC Advisor Named

The Lenawee County FSA County Office Committee (COC) has named Bonnie Shepherd of Onsted as COC Advisor. As the COC Advisor she will be a voice for under-represented groups and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in the community. County Committee members and their County Executive Directors, reach out to producer groups to find the right person to serve as Advisor.

Advisors serve for a 12 month period not to exceed nine consecutive years. They attend each COC meeting, including executive sessions and they participate. One of their primary responsibilities is to increase awareness of and participation in FSA activities, including elections. They help develop interest and incentives for socially disadvantaged group members to consider FSA work as a career. Advisors also solicit candidates from socially disadvantaged groups for nomination during the election process.

Welcome New Employees

We recently were approved to fill two vacant Program Technician positions! Please welcome Jamie Wegner, formerly in the Hillsdale County office and Jessica Squires, formerly in the Monroe County office. We are thrilled to have these experienced new employees to serve you. See Jamie for farm changes and Jessica for commodity loans and CRP cost share issues.

DCP/ACRE Signup Reminder

2012 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) enrollment runs through June 1, 2012. Please call for an appointment now! Any farm records changes must be completed before enrollment. Please review your operation and your leases and give us a call. Here are some IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

- All producers planting on **DCP base** acres must be identified on the DCP/ACRE contract and receive a proportionate share of DCP/ACRE payment for the farm.
- Changes on the farm after enrolling June 1 in DCP/ACRE **must** be reported to your local FSA office. Changes may include:
 - Ownership changes
 - Producer changes (Individuals and Entities)
 - Change in crop shares arrangements

Note: Changes cannot be made after Sept. 30, 2012.

PLEASE NOTE: Your maps on which to certify your crops will be given to you at your appointment.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Participants

Please give us a call soon and we will get your certification ready for your signature. Remember that everyone sharing in the CRP contract must sign form FSA-578 annually in order to remain eligible for payments. Final deadline is July 15th, but we would appreciate you coming in within the next couple of weeks. Also, please review your conservation plan and the cost share documents we sent to you after contract approval. Make sure you are current with any practice installations and mid-contract management of your CRP acres. Thank you very much!

Conservation Compliance Reminder

Farm Service Agency programs require compliance with sodbuster and swampbuster provisions. These provisions require producers to follow an approved conservation system on all highly erodible land planted to an annual crop as determined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Be sure to have determinations made on any new land you plan to plant to annual crops. If you plan to plant a different crop on your current cropland, check with NRCS to assure the new crop will qualify under your conservation system. Swampbuster provisions state that converting a wetland to make possible the planting of a crop will result in the loss of **all USDA benefits**. To avoid this possibility it is strongly recommended that producers check with NRCS before starting to work new land or the fields.

Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE)

Sign-up for 2010 SURE losses continues through **June 1, 2012**. The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters that incurred in the crop year 2010. SURE is available to eligible producers on farms in counties with Secretarial disaster declarations, including contiguous counties, that have incurred crop production or quality losses, or both, and includes all crops grown by a producer nationwide, except grazed crops.

Marketing Assistance Loans

Marketing Assistance Loans, also referred to as Commodity Loans, are available to producers who share in the risk of producing the crop. To be eligible, you must maintain beneficial interest in the crop through the time of application. Once beneficial interest in a commodity is lost, the commodity is ineligible for loan — even if you regain beneficial interest. 2011 crop soybean and corn loans are available through May 31st.

Loans for the Socially Disadvantaged

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operating or help purchase or improve farms or ranches. While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided priority funding for socially disadvantaged applicants. A socially disadvantaged applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of a group. FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility

requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere

Beginning and Limited Resource Farmers

FSA assists beginning farmers and or members of socially disadvantaged groups to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

§ Has operated a farm for not more that 10 years

§ Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm

§ Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA

§ Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's median size.

Additional program information, loan applications and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may visit

www.fsa.usda.gov

Come Visit us at Ag-Expo!

For more information about these and other FSA Programs please stop by our booth at this year's MSU Ag Expo, July 17-19. Go to www.agexpo.msu.edu for details of this event! We hope to see you there.

For more information on bulletin subjects or details regarding your GovDelivery subscription with the Name County FSA Office, contact Constance Reid Guffey, County Executive Director at constance.guffey@mi.usda.gov or 517-263-7400.

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