



January 2013

## Lenawee County FSA Updates

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### Lenawee County FSA Office

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### County Executive Director:

Constance Reid Guffey

### Program Technicians:

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Jessica Mullins      125

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Beth Wagner      106

Jamie Wegner      104

### Farm Loan Manager:

Michael Jordon

## COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTION RESULTS

Congratulations to Dale Terry! Dale was re-elected to represent farmers from Raisin, Ridgeway, Palmyra, Blissfield, Deerfield, Ogden and Riga townships on the county committee. Dale was elected to his second consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area 3 are:

Dale Terry — Elected to the county committee (COC)

James Tipton — 1st alternate to COC.

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

The committee members determined that Mike Feight will serve as the County Committee Chairman, Eugenie Hillard will serve as Vice Chairman and Dale Terry will serve as the Regular Member.

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## USDA URGES PRODUCERS TO COMPLETE AND RETURN THE 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

The USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) mailed the 2012 Census of Agriculture during the last week of December and is asking for the help of farmers and ranchers in collecting accurate data.

The Census of Agriculture is only conducted once every five years and captures a count of all U.S. farms, ranches and those who operate them. Everyone who receives a Census form is required to return the Census form, even if they no longer farm or have never been involved in agriculture. Retired operators who own land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) or Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) are counted as farms and should complete the Census form.

**Farm Loan Officer:**

Rebecca Deline

Results of the Census are used by USDA, university research and extension, state and local officials, agribusinesses, farm organizations and commodity groups to make important policy and business decisions that impact people across the nation.

**Program Technicians:**

Brenda Andrews 113

Jodie Johnson 112

Please return the Census by February 4, 2013. Producers can also complete the Census online at [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov) after receiving the Census form through the mail. Information reported by producers is confidential. The results of the Census show the strength and diversity of U.S. agriculture.

Your answers to the Census can help grow your farm future, shape farm programs and boost services for you, your community and your industry.

For questions or help completing the Census, contact NASS at (888) 424-7828.

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## FARMING OPERATION CHANGES

Producers who have bought or sold land, or added or dropped rented land from their operation must report those changes to the FSA office as soon as possible. A copy of the deed or recorded land contract for purchase property is needed to maintain accurate records with FSA. Failure to do so can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. While making record updates, be sure to update signature authorizations. Making record changes now will avoid delays in program enrollment.

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## 2011 SUPPLEMENTAL REVENUE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM APPLICATIONS

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) will continue to accept Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) applications for 2011 crop losses through June 7, 2013. Under the 2008 Farm Bill, SURE authorizes assistance to farmers and ranchers who suffered crop losses caused by natural disasters occurring through Sept. 30, 2011.

During 2011, all but two Michigan counties received a Secretarial Disaster Designation, whether primary or contiguous, and producers are eligible to apply for SURE benefits if they experienced at least a 10 percent production loss that affects one crop of economic significance.

To meet program eligibility requirements, producers must have obtained a policy or plan of insurance through the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation or obtained Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for all economically significant crops. Eligible farmers and ranchers who meet the definition of a socially disadvantaged, limited resource or beginning farmer or rancher do not have to meet this requirement. Forage crops intended for grazing are not eligible for SURE benefits.

For more information on SURE program eligibility requirements contact your local FSA office or visit the website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/sure>.

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## **NONINSURED CROP DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

The noninsured crop disaster assistance program (NAP) is a program that helps producers reduce their risk when growing food and fiber crops, specialty crops and crops for livestock feed. These benefits are only available for crops for which the catastrophic level of crop insurance is not available. Application for coverage must be filed by the applicable crop's application closing date.

Production records for all crops must be reported to FSA no later than the acreage reporting date for the crop for the following year. FSA requires that any production reported in a loss year be verifiable according to Agency specifications. NAP Losses must be reported within 15 days of the date the loss became apparent.

Many crops have a NAP application closing date of March 15, 2013. Please contact us to discuss NAP coverage.

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## **ALL MICHIGAN COUNTIES ELIGIBLE FOR FSA EMERGENCY LOANS**

As of August 29, 2012, all counties in Michigan were declared a disaster using the new, Fast Track Secretarial Disaster Designation process.

The disaster designation was a direct result of several program improvements announced by Secretary Vilsack on July 11, 2012. The program improvements include a streamlined Secretarial Disaster Designation, known as Fast Track, which automatically qualifies a disaster county once it is categorized as a severe drought for eight weeks according to the U.S Drought Monitor. Other improvements include a reduced interest rate for emergency loans.

All Michigan counties are eligible to apply for low-interest emergency (EM) loans. Emergency loans help producers recover from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding and other natural disasters or quarantine. The current emergency loan interest rate is 2.250 percent.

Producers have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for emergency loan assistance. Emergency loan applications will be accepted through March 12, 2013, for production and physical losses.

On August 22, 2012, Secretary Vilsack announced another modification to the emergency loan program allowing them to be made earlier in the season. For example, in the past emergency loan eligibility was decided after the grazing period to determine pasture losses for livestock producers. Eligible livestock producers will no longer have to wait until the end of the grazing period to obtain a loan. This change will support producers who currently need assistance to help offset high production costs.

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## **FARM STORAGE FACILITY LOAN PROGRAM**

The Farm Storage Facility Loan Program (FSFLP) allows producers of eligible commodities to obtain low-interest financing to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities.

The new maximum principal amount of a loan through FSFL is \$500,000. Participants are required to provide a down payment of 15 percent, with CCC providing a loan for the remaining 85 percent of the net cost of the eligible storage facility and permanent drying and handling equipment. Additional security is required for poured-cement open-bunker silos, renewable biomass facilities, cold storage facilities, hay barns and for all loans exceeding \$100,000. New loan terms of 7, 10 or 12 years are available depending on the amount of the loan. Interest rates for each term rate may be different and are based on the rate which CCC borrows from the Treasury Department.

Payments are available in the form of a partial disbursement and the remaining final disbursement. The partial disbursement will be available after a portion of the construction has been completed. The final fund disbursement will be made when all construction is completed. The maximum amount of the partial disbursement will be 50 percent of the projected and approved total loan amount.

The following commodities are eligible for farm storage facility loans:

- Corn, soybeans, oats or wheat
- Hay
- Renewable biomass
- Fruits (including nuts) and vegetables - cold storage facilities
- Honey

For more information about FSFL please visit your FSA county office or [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

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## HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND AND WETLAND COMPLIANCE

Landowners and operators are reminded that in order to receive payments from USDA, compliance with Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions is required. Farmers with HEL determined soils must apply tillage, crop residue, and rotation requirements as specified in their conservation plan.

Producers should notify FSA prior to conducting land clearing or drainage projects to insure compliance. If you intend to clear any trees to create new cropland, these areas will need to be reviewed to ensure any work will not jeopardize your eligibility for benefits.

Landowners and operators can complete form AD-1026 Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification to determine whether a referral to Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is necessary.

For more information on Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation provisions, contact your local FSA Office or visit the FSA website at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

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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 20250-9450, 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).