

July 2014



NEWSLETTER



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Lenawee County FSA Updates

Lenawee County FSA Office

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Constance Reid Guffey

Program Technicians:
Debra Shiels ext. 105
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County Committee Members:
Michael Feight - Chair
Dale Terry - Vice Chair
Genie Hillard - Member
Stephanie Thompson - Advisor

Farm Loan Manager:
Michael Jordon

Program Technicians:
Brenda Andrews ext. 113
Jodie Johnson ext. 112

**Next County Committee
Meeting:** August 28 at 8:00
am

Marketing Assistance Loans (MAL) Available on Wheat

Short-term financing is available by obtaining low interest commodity loans for eligible harvested production. A nine-month Marketing Assistance Loan provides financing that allows producers to store production for later marketing. The crop may be stored on the farm or in the warehouse. The interest rate for July is 1.125 percent. Crop certification is required.

Loans are available for producers who share in the risk of producing the eligible commodity and maintain beneficial interest in the crop through the duration of the loan. Beneficial interest means retaining the ability to make decisions about the commodity, responsibility for loss because of damage to the commodity and title to the commodity. Once beneficial interest in a commodity is lost, it is ineligible for a loan, even if you regain beneficial interest. 2014 loan rates for Lenawee County are: Wheat (SRW) \$2.56; Wheat (White) \$2.46

Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Compliance

Landowners and operators are reminded that in order to receive payments from USDA, they must be compliant with Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions. 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 ensure 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 (HELC) 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 a FSA County Office or visit the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov.

The USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA) recently published an interim rule in the Federal Register to make changes to the crop insurance program, and frequently asked questions regarding the conservation compliance changes are available at: http://www.rma.usda.gov/help/faq/farmbill_interim.html

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 to purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, FSA has provided priority funding for members of socially disadvantaged groups. 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 the group without regard to his or her individual qualities. For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

Water Quality Cruise and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Information

On Friday, August 22nd the Washtenaw Conservation District, NRCS, Farm Bureau, and NFWF have partnered to host a boat cruise meeting on the Maumee River from 9am – noon. Participants will board the 65' Sandpiper to gain a firsthand look at water quality in the Maumee River, pass by the grain elevators and learn more about harmful algae blooms, MAEAP and Conservation Practices to protect water resources. The Farm Service Agency will be presenting information on CRP and other information on the Farm Bill programs. There is no fee to attend, but participants must pay for their own lunches. Registration is required by Thursday August 7th to attend. Please call the Washtenaw Conservation District (734) 761-6722 or Washtenaw Farm Bureau (734) 944-1469.

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 Constance Reid Guffey at 517-263-7400 extension 114.

Last Call for FSA County Committee Nominations

Nominate yourself or a candidate of your choice to serve on your local county committee. We especially encourage the nomination of beginning farmers and ranchers, as well as women and minorities. Organizations representing minorities and women also may nominate candidates. This is your opportunity to contribute to how

federal programs are delivered in Lenawee County. FSA county committees work closely with county executive directors and make decisions on disaster and conservation programs, emergency programs, commodity price support loan programs and other agricultural issues. Members serve three-year terms. Nationwide, there are about 7,800 farmers and ranchers serving on FSA county committees. To be eligible to serve on an FSA county committee, a person must participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA, be eligible to vote in a county committee election and reside in the local administrative area where the person is nominated. The election this year will be for producers in Local Administrative Area (LAA) II, consisting of the following townships: Rollin, Hudson, Dover, Madison, Medina, Seneca and Fairfield. The current County Committee person from this area is Genie Hillard of Jasper. County Committees are a vital link between the farm community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. To become a candidate, an eligible individual must sign the nomination form, FSA-669A. The form and other information about FSA elections are available online at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections>. Nomination forms are also available at the office and must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on Friday, August 1, 2014.

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).