



# Mason, Oceana, Lake & Manistee County News

June 2010

Issue No. II

Mason-Oceana-Lake –  
Mansitee County FSA  
USDA Service Center  
655 N. Scottville Rd.  
Scottville, MI 49454-9569  
231-757-3707 ext. 2  
231-757-4133 ( fax)

### Web Sites

www.fsa.usda.gov  
www.sc.egov.usda.gov  
www.fsa.usda.gov/mi

### Hours

Monday – Friday  
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

### County Committee

John LaPointe, Chairperson  
Chuck Schade, Vice-Chair  
Curtiss Berndt, Member  
James Bush, Member  
Ed Kolbe Jr., Member  
Shirley MacKenzie, Advisor

### Staff

Debbie Schulz, Program Tech.  
Beth Saxton, Program Tech.  
Rick Dean, FLM  
Larry Cleary, FLM (Manistee)  
Kathi Lerg, CED

### Dates to Remember

**June 15** – Deadline to submit forms CCC-927/928 to IRS  
**June 30** – Deadline to report fall-seeded small grains  
**July 5** – Office closed in observance of Independence Day  
**July 15** – Deadline to report all crops except fall-seeded small grain  
**Aug 1** – Last day to request a farm combination or division  
**Continues** – Farm Storage Facility Loans  
**Continues** – Continuous Conservation Reserve Program & CRP-SAFE



### Congratulations

Beth Areklet has changed her name to Beth Saxton. Beth became the bride of Brett Saxton in April. Congratulations Beth and Brett.

### Prevented Planting:

Prevented planting is to be reported no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date.

### Failed Acreage:

Reports of failed acreage must be filed before disposition of the crop, and producers must be able to establish to the satisfaction of the county committee that the crop failed and was prevented from being replanted through the normal planting period because of natural disaster conditions.

### Sodbusting

Sodbuster violations are unauthorized tillage practices on highly erodible lands that converted native vegetation such as grassland, rangeland or woodland, to crop production after Dec. 23, 1985.

Farmers and ranchers should be aware that if they use highly erodible land for crop production without proper conservation measures, they risk losing eligibility to participate in most USDA programs.

Before producers clear, plow or otherwise prepare areas not presently under crop production for planting, they are required to file an AD-1026, indicating the area to be brought into production.

If Natural Resources Conservation Service indicates on a CPA-026 that the area will be highly erodible land, the producer will be required to develop and implement a conservation plan on the affected acreage, before bringing land into production.

In addition, producers and the producer's affiliates have to file an AD-1026 with the staff in the administrative or control county office before any farm program payments can be made. The AD-1026 is the producer's signed certification that HELC, as well as wetland conservation, provisions will not be violated.

### Controlled Substances

Program participants convicted under federal or state law of any planting, cultivating, growing, producing, harvesting or storing a controlled substance are ineligible for program payments and benefits.

If convicted of one of these offenses, the program participant shall be ineligible during that crop year and the four succeeding crop years for direct and counter-cyclical payments, price support loans, loan deficiency payments, market loan gains, storage payments, farm facility loans, Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program payments or disaster payments.

Program participants convicted of any federal or state offense consisting of the distribution (trafficking) of a controlled substance shall, at the discretion of the court, be ineligible for any or all program payments and benefits:

- for up to 5 years after the first conviction
- or up to 10 years after the second conviction
- permanently for a third or subsequent conviction.

Program participants convicted of federal or state offense for the possession of a controlled substance shall be ineligible, at the discretion of the court, for any or all program benefits, as follows:

- up to 1 year upon the first conviction
- up to 5 years after a second or subsequent conviction.

### Maintenance of DCP/ACRE Program Acres

DCP participants are required to protect all idle contract acres from erosion and weeds. Idle fields designated as "contract acres" must have a sod cover, crop residue, or volunteer grasses. Weeds are not an acceptable cover and must be mowed. Failure to control weeds on contract acres will cost you program benefits if the COC determines the producer failed to demonstrate a good faith effort to control weeds and/or erosion.

### Appointments

Effective July 1, Rick Dean, FLM will no longer be maintaining regular hours in this office. Office visits will be available by appointment only.

## **Nominations for County Committee Open June 15**

County Committee (COC) members are a critical component of the operations of Farm Service Agency (FSA). They help in the delivery of FSA farm programs at a local level, as well as, work to make FSA farm programs serve the needs of local producers.

Since County Committee elections happen once a year, here is a refresher. For election purposes, counties are divided into local administrative areas, or LAAs. Each LAA contributes one producer to serve a three-year term on the Farm Service Agency county committee.

Each year, an election is held in an LAA to replace the committee member whose three-year term is expiring. Manistee County will be holding an election for a person to represent LAA 1, which includes all of Manistee County plus Grant, Free Soil, Sherman & Victory Twp. in Mason County. This position is currently held by Curtiss Berndt. Also Lake County (LAA2), which includes all of Lake County plus Meade, Sheridan, Branch & Logan Twp. in Mason County. This position is currently held by John LaPointe.

Nominations for candidates to run for the FSA county committee election representing producers in Local Administrative Area 1 and 2 will be accepted from June 15 through August 2, 2010.

Producers who are eligible to vote in LAA 1 & 2 and who participate or cooperate in an FSA program and are of legal voting age, may be nominated to serve on the county committee.

Individuals may nominate themselves or others as candidates. Additionally, organizations representing minority and women farmers may nominate candidates. All farmers, ranchers and other agricultural producers are encouraged to participate.

To be valid, the nomination form must be signed by the person being nominated, indicating agreement to serve if elected, and returned to the FSA county office by the close of business on August 2, or postmarked by midnight August 2, 2010.

A nomination form, FSA-669A, is included in this newsletter. More information on the elections, including nomination forms, is available at the county office or online at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections>.

### **Farm Reconstitutions**

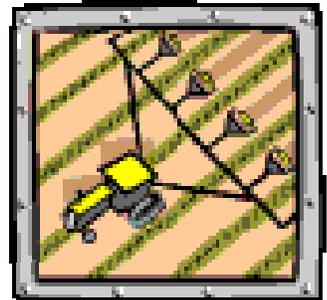
For FSA program purposes, tracts having the same owner and the same operator are grouped under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation take place, a farm reconstitution is necessary. The reconstitution—or recon—is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by **August 1** for farms enrolled in specific programs. 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.



<b>FSA-669A</b> (03-24-10)	<b>U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE</b> Farm Service Agency
<h2 style="margin: 0;">NOMINATION FORM FOR COUNTY FSA COMMITTEE ELECTION</h2>	

1. NAME OF NOMINEE (Type or Print Nominee's Full Name)	TO BE COMPLETED BY COUNTY FSA OFFICE	
2. ADDRESS OF NOMINEE	4. INITIALS OF EMPLOYEE RECEIVING FORM AND DATE RECEIVED	
3. NOMINEE'S CERTIFICATION:	5. COUNTY	
3A. SIGNATURE OF NOMINEE	6. LAA	7. STATE
3B. DATE	8. NOMINATOR'S CERTIFICATION:	

*I hereby agree to have my name placed on the ballot, that I will serve if elected, and if there is a conflict of interest, I will resign such position.*

I DO want to witness the settling of tied votes with another nominee.

I DO NOT want to witness the settling of tied votes with another nominee.

*If this nomination is by other than self, the following eligible voter or representative of a community based organization hereby nominates the afore-named person to be a candidate in the next County FSA Committee election for the county.*

Check here if nominee is a write-in candidate.

*(If the individual is self nominating, no signature is required).*

**9. TO BE COMPLETED BY NOMINEE**

**VOLUNTARY INFORMATION FOR MONITORING PURPOSES:** The following information is requested by the Federal Government in order to monitor FSA's compliance with federal laws prohibiting discrimination against program participants on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, marital status, handicapped condition, or age. You are not required to furnish this information, but are encouraged to do so. This information will not be used in evaluating your nomination or to discriminate against you in any way.

<b>ETHNICITY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Not Hispanic or Latino	<b>RACE (Choose as many boxes as applicable)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African-American <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	<b>GENDER</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
--	---	---

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THIS FORM**

- Complete the form as follows:
- ITEM 1** Type or Print the nominee's full name. The nominee must be:
    - A. Eligible to vote in the designated County FSA Committee election.
    - B. Eligible to hold the office of County FSA Committee member.
    - C. Willing to serve if elected.
  - ITEM 2** Enter the nominee's current address.
  - ITEM 3** The nominee must check one of the boxes to indicate a preference regarding the settling of tied votes.
  - ITEMS 3A & 3B** The nominee must sign and date.
  - ITEMS 8A & 8B** The nominator must sign and date. *(If the individual is self nominating, no signature is required.)*
  - ITEM 9** Completing this item is voluntary.

**ALL FORMS MUST BE RECEIVED IN THE COUNTY OFFICE OR POSTMARKED BY AUGUST 2, 2010.**

**NOTE:** *The following statement is made in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a - as amended). The authority for requesting the information identified on this form is the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Pub. L. 110-246). The information will be used to obtain nominees for election to the County FSA Committee. The information collected on this form may be disclosed to other Federal, State, Local government agencies, Tribal agencies, and nongovernmental entities that have been authorized access to the information by statute or regulation and/or as described in applicable Routine Uses identified in the System of Records Notice for County Personnel Records, USDA/FSA-6. Providing the requested information is voluntary. However, failure to furnish the requested information will result in a determination of ineligibility for nomination for election to the County FSA Committee.*

*According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0560-0229. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 10 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The provisions of appropriate criminal and civil fraud, privacy, and other statutes may be applicable to the information provided. RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO YOUR COUNTY FSA OFFICE.*

Mason, Oceana, Lake Manistee County  
FSA Office  
655 N. Scottville Rd.  
Scottville, MI 49454-9569



PRESORTED STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
LANSING, MI  
PERMIT #19

This form is available electronically.

Form Approved - OMB No. 0560-0229

**FSA-669A**  
(03-24-10)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Farm Service Agency

## NOMINATION FORM FOR COUNTY FSA COMMITTEE ELECTION

This form allows individuals to nominate themselves or any other person as a candidate. If additional forms are needed, this one may be copied or may be obtained at the County FSA Office or obtained electronically at <http://www.sc.egov.usda.gov>. Each form submitted must be:

- A. Limited to one nominee.
- B. Signed and dated by the nominee in Item 3. Nominee must sign if willing to have his/her name placed on the ballot and agrees to serve if elected.  
  
**Note:** Name shown on ballot will appear exactly the same as in Agency records.
- C. Delivered to the County FSA Office or postmarked no later than August 2, 2010.
- D. Signed and dated as a write-in candidate if elected as a member and willing to serve on the COC.

The County FSA Committee is responsible for reviewing each form to determine the eligibility of nominees. A person who files this form and is found ineligible will be so notified and have an opportunity to file a challenge.

Persons nominated should actively participate in the operation of a farm or ranch and be well qualified for committee work. A producer is eligible to be a County FSA committee member if the producer resides in the Local Administrative Area (LAA) in which the election is to be held and is eligible to vote.

Federal regulations may prohibit County FSA Committee members from holding certain positions in some farm, commodity, and political organizations if such positions pose a conflict of interest with FSA duties. The positions include functional offices such as president, vice president, secretary, or treasurer; and positions on boards or executive committees. Conflict of interest restrictions also apply to employees, operators, managers, and majority owners of tobacco warehouses. Questions concerning eligibility should be directed to the County FSA Office.

A candidate has the option to request that all voted ballots for an individual county committee election be returned to the respective State Office in lieu of being returned to the county office. This request must be in writing and submitted to the local County Executive Director prior to the announced end of the nomination period.

The duties of County FSA Committee members include:

- A. Administering farm program activities conducted by the County FSA Office.
- B. Informing farmers of the purpose and provisions of the FSA programs.
- C. Keeping the State FSA Committee informed of LAA conditions.
- D. Monitoring changes in farm programs.
- E. Participating in county meetings as necessary.
- F. Performing other duties as assigned by the State FSA Committee.

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, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

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

**Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, please contact 231-757-3707 ext. 2**