

February 2014



Topics for February

- DATES TO REMEMBER
- FARMING OPERATION CHANGES
- BEGINNING FARMER LOANS
- EMERGENCY LOANS AVAILABLE
- HISTORICAL AERIAL IMAGERY IS AVAILABLE THROUGH APFO
- INTEREST RATES FEBRUARY 2014

Mecosta County FSA Updates

Mecosta County FSA Office

18260 Northland Drive
Big Rapids, MI 49307

Phone: 231-796-2659
Fax: 855-647-0818

County Executive Director:
Travis Murray

Farm Loan Manager:
Larry Cleary

Program Technicians:
Sherry Adams
Towna Aris
Shelley Lobert

Next County Committee Meeting: June 13 at 9:30 am

DATES TO REMEMBER

- **March 15th** - Final date to purchase NAP coverage on most spring seeded annually planted NAP crops including sweet corn, hops, pumpkins and most vegetables
- **March 15th** - Final date to purchase FCIC crop insurance for annual crops
- **May 26th** - Office closed in observance of Memorial Day
- **May 31st** - Final date to request 2013-crop feed grains, oilseeds loans or LDP

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 save time in the spring.

BEGINNING FARMER LOANS

FSA assists beginning farmers 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 than 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 also visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

FSA assists beginning farmers 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 than 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 also visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

Emergency Loans Available

Emergency farm loans are available through FSA in Mecosta and surrounding counties to all qualified farm operators as a result of losses caused by adverse weather conditions due to one or more recent Secretarial disaster declarations.

The counties were designated as natural disaster areas **for losses due to rain and cooler than normal temperatures beginning April 1, 2013 and losses due to drought, excessive rains, high winds, and cooler than normal temperatures that occurred during the latter part of summer and fall of 2013. Please see the individual designations for details and applicable loss events.**

The disaster designation makes available low interest rate loans to farm operators in the designated area. Farm operators who suffered at least a 30% loss in crop production caused by the weather conditions and meet other eligibility requirements may qualify for Emergency (EM) loan assistance from FSA.

Emergency loan funds may be used to:

- Restore or replace essential property;
- Pay all or part of production costs associated with the disaster year;
- Pay essential family living expenses;

- Reorganize the farming operation; and
- Refinance certain debts.

All emergency loans must be fully collateralized. Producers can borrow up to 100 percent of actual production or physical losses, to a maximum amount of \$500,000. Loans for crop, livestock, and non-real estate losses are normally repaid within 1 to 7 years; depending on the loan purpose, repayment ability and collateral available as loan security. In special circumstances, terms of up to 20 years may be authorized. Loans for physical losses to real estate are normally repaid within 30 years. In certain circumstances, repayment may be made over a maximum of 40 years. The current annual interest rate for emergency loans is 3.000 percent.

Secretarial Disaster Designation S3622

Effective January 23, 2014, 27 Michigan counties, including **Clare and Newaygo** counties, were designated as natural disaster areas due to losses caused by the combined effects of excessive rain and cooler than normal temperatures occurring April 1, 2013, and continuing. **Mecosta, Isabella, Lake, Oseola, and Montcalm** counties are included among eligible contiguous counties. The **deadline** for filing an EM loan application for the following designation, S3622, is **September 23, 2014**.

Secretarial Disaster Designation S3636

Effective January 23, 2014, 10 Michigan counties, including **Mecosta and Osceola** counties, were designated as natural disaster areas due to losses caused by the combined effects of excessive rain occurring April 1, 2013 through July 29, 2013, returning October 15, 2013 and continuing. Also included in this designation are eligible losses due to the drought that occurred from July 30, 2013 through October 15, 2013 along with cooler than normal temperatures that spanned the entire disaster period. All contiguous counties are eligible. The **deadline** for filing an EM loan application for the following designation, S3636, is **September 23, 2014**.

Secretarial Disaster Designation N1146

Effective January 2, 2014 Michigan counties, including **Mecosta, Montcalm, and Newaygo** counties, were designated as natural disaster areas due to physical damage to farm structures, buildings, barns, fruit trees, and death of livestock caused by high winds that occurred November 17, 2013 through November 19, 2013. All contiguous counties are eligible. The **deadline** for filing an EM loan application for this designation, N1146, is **September 2, 2014**.

Historical Aerial Imagery is Available through APFO

The United States Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency has been collecting aerial photography of the United States for over half a century. These aerial photos were originally collected to support federal farm programs throughout the United States. This historic film is now stored at the USDA's Aerial Photography Field Office (APFO) in Salt Lake City, Utah. USDA aerial photos are high resolution images taken during the growing season and clearly show features such as roads, buildings, vegetation, trees and waterways. Most of these projects covered entire counties over large parts of the U.S. at least once a decade.

The APFO is able to print or digitally scan these photos for public use. Our print photos and scans start as low as \$13.00 each. We can also certify our photos for use as evidence in court for a small fee. Additional information about the APFO and available aerial imagery is available at:

www.apfo.usda.gov

Detailed information about ordering aerial imagery is available [here](#).

Interest Rates February 2014

- 90-Day Treasury Bill: .125%
- Farm Operating Loans - Direct: 2.000%
- Farm Ownership Loans - Direct: 4.25%
- Farm Ownership Loans - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher: 1.50%
- Emergency Loans: 3.000%
- Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years): 2.250%
- Farm Storage Facility Loans (10 years): 2.875%
- Farm Storage Facility Loans (12 years): 3.000%
- Marketing Assistance Loans: 1.125%

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).