



Monroe County News

Monroe County USDA Service Center

Monroe County FSA
1137 S. Telegraph Rd.
Monroe, MI 48161
734-241-8540 (phone)
734-241-9432 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/mi

Hours

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

County Committee

Jim Vanbuskirk,
Chairperson
Carmen Cousino, Vice-
Chair
Richard Janssens,
Member
William Gay, Advisor

County Committee meets

3rd Wednesday of each
month

Staff

Paul Manol, CED
Carole Bogoski, Prog.
Tech.
Dawn Pluff, Prog. Tech.
Roger Bezek, Prog. Tech.
Jessica Squires, Prog.
Tech.
Rachel Bakowski, Field
Asst.



Acreage Spot Check Determinations and Notification

Each year the Farm Service Agency completes spot checks of acreage reports. Acreage reports are an integral part of farm program participation. Acreage spot checks are completed to ensure accurate acreage reports are used in farm program computations.

FSA will conduct spot checks on a selected number of farms in each state. All acreage determinations will be completed using the FSA Geographic Information System official acreages.

After farms are spot checked, a Notice of Determined Acreage will be sent to the farm operator. Producer notifications will be issued by FSA as spot checks are completed. Questions concerning determined acres should be directed to your local FSA office for further explanation.

County Committee Election

As a reminder, official COC election ballots will be mailed to all eligible voters starting **November 5, 2010**. This year, there is only one nominee who will appear on the ballot, **Mary K. Webb**, who is seeking to represent producers in Local Administrative Area # 1, (Ash, Berlin, Exeter, London & Milan Townships). As always, eligible write-in candidates will be accepted on this year's ballot. Current LAA#1 representative and COC Chairman, Jim Vanbuskirk, cannot run again due to term limitations.

If you do not receive a ballot by mid-November, please call the office. Completed and signed ballots are due back to the County Office by close of business on December 6, 2010. They will be officially counted later that week/early the following week.

NAP Coverage

The Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) was designed to reduce financial losses that occur when natural disasters cause a catastrophic loss of production or prevented planting of an eligible crop by providing coverage equivalent to catastrophic (CAT) insurance. Statute limits NAP to each commercial crop or agricultural commodity, except livestock, for which CAT is *not* available. The application deadline date for 2011 NAP coverage for small grains, fall mint, fall speltz, and forage crops is **September 30, 2010**.

Producers who already have coverage on 2010 NAP crops may choose to continue coverage on the same crop or crops for 2011, if the applicable service fee is submitted by the application closing date. A new CCC-471, application for coverage is not required to be signed when applying for continuous coverage of the same crop or crops.

Producers who choose to add a new crop(s) or delete a crop(s) from previous year's coverage or changing crop shares must file a new CCC-471 with signatures and pay the applicable service fee. Producers with NAP coverage must remember to complete the following to qualify for benefits:

- Timely file acreage reports and keep track of harvested production using acceptable methods. For example, bale weights or other means of determining quantities of hay are required.
- File a "Notice of Loss" within 15 days of when a loss is apparent, due to drought, hail, etc.

Please contact the county office for additional information.

Bank Account Changes

Please contact this office to update your direct deposit if you change banks or your account number changes.

Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) Signup Continues

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disaster that incurred in the crop years 2008 through September 30, 2011. To be eligible for SURE payments, a producer is required to obtain crop insurance on all crops in all counties or, if crop insurance is not available, to participate in the Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) except for grazed acreage. However, crop insurance or NAP coverage is no longer required for crops that are not of economic significance or those where the administrative fee required to buy NAP coverage exceeds 10% of the value of the coverage.

Eligible farmers and ranchers who meet the definition of Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, or Beginning Farmer or Rancher are exempt from the risk management purchase requirement.

The following are the conditions that trigger SURE payments:

- At least one crop of economic significance must suffer a 10% production loss due to an eligible disaster condition. A crop of economic significance is a crop that has contributed or would have contributed at least 5% or more of the total expected revenue from all crops on the farm;
- Producers in counties declared disaster counties by the Secretary of Agriculture, or in contiguous counties, or those who show proof of an individual loss of at least 50% are eligible to receive SURE payments for crop production or quality losses. Losses are measured with consideration to the whole-farm revenue, which includes crop insurance indemnities and commodity program payments, so that producers are not paid more than once for the same loss.

Monroe County *did* have a Secretarial Disaster declaration for 2008. Producers who obtained crop insurance or NAP coverage on all crops of economic significance are therefore eligible to apply for SURE. **However, FSA will close the application period for 2008 SURE program payments on September 30, 2010.**

DCP Maintenance Default Rate

Producers are responsible for controlling wind and water erosion as well as weeds, including noxious weeds, on land they have enrolled in DCP or ACRE. Failure to do so could result in a producer being levied a maintenance default penalty.

COC recently concurred on establishing a rate of **\$5.00 per acre** for calculating maintenance default payment reductions for non-compliance. This amount shall be assessed to producers who fail to control wind and water erosion as well as weeds, including noxious weeds, on base acres enrolled in the DCP program.

Please call the office for further details or for any questions you might have.

Transition Incentives Program

The Transition Incentives Program (TIP) was created to encourage retired or retiring owners or operators to transition their Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres to beginning or socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers.

TIP sign-up began on Monday, May 17, 2010. If all program requirements are met, TIP provides annual rental payments to the retiring farmer for up to two additional years after the date of the expiration of the CRP contract, provided the transition is not to a family member.

To be eligible, TIP requires that the retired or retiring farmer or rancher:

- Have land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) that is in the last year of the contract.
- Agree to allow the beginning or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher make conservation and land improvements in accordance with a sustainable farm conservation plan.
- Agree to sell, or have a contract to sell, or agree to long-term lease (a minimum of 5 years) the land under CRP contract to a beginning or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher by Oct. 1 of the year the CRP contract expires.

Generally, TIP only applies to contracts that expire on September 30, 2010, or later. However, retired or retiring owners or operators with CRP contracts that expired on September 30, 2008, and September 30, 2009, may be eligible to enroll in TIP. To learn more about this program, producers interested in applying and participating in TIP should stop by the county office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov

Conservation Compliance Reminder

All participants in USDA programs are required to have a conservation system in place on all the highly erodible land that they operate. Several areas where problems can arise with complying with a conservation system are: renting new cropland, purchasing new cropland, breaking out additional cropland, shortening an established cropping rotation, planting new crops, and changing or removing existing conservation practices. It is very important that you contact the FSA office **BEFORE** doing any of the above. Also, it is very important that you contact your local County office **BEFORE** modifying (tiling, draining, dredging, filling or leveling) any wetland or drainage ditch. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in loss of all Federal payments and program eligibility.

Farm Loan Programs

At this time, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) has Emergency Loans available farmers who suffered production losses resulting from frost, freeze, excessive rainfall, flooding, tornadoes, high winds during the incidence period. Emergency loans are also available for those farmers who experienced a physical loss as a result of the tornadoes that swept the area in April and May of this year. FSA is still accepting loan applications for all loan programs - Direct Operating, Direct Farm Ownership, Youth loans, Guarantee Farm Ownership, and Guarantee Operating. While some of these loan programs may be out of funds at this time, applications are still being processed and added to our waiting lists. For those applicants who meet the Beginning Farmer and/or Socially Disadvantaged Farmer requirements, a limited amount of targeted funding is still available. If you have any questions about any loan program, eligibility requirements, applications, or other forms, or simply need information in general, please contact the Farm Loan staff, located in the Lenawee County Office, at (517) 263-7400 and ask to speak with Mike, Becky, Sue, or Brenda.

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 type loans and/or 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 members of 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 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. If producers or their spouses believe they would qualify as socially disadvantaged, they should contact their local FSA office for details. FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

Farm Storage Facility Loan Program

The Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program 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 now required to provide a down payment of 15%, with CCC providing a loan for the remaining 85% of the net cost of the eligible storage facility and permanent drying and handling equipment. 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% of the projected and approved total loan amount. Applications for FSFL must be submitted to the FSA county office that maintains the farm's records. An FSFL must be approved before any site preparation or construction can begin. The following commodities are eligible for farm storage facility loans:

- Corn, grain sorghum, , soybeans, oats, wheat, barley or minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain
- Corn, grain sorghum, wheat, oats or barley harvested as other-than-whole grain
- Pulse crops - lentils, small chickpeas and dry peas
- Hay
- Renewable biomass
- Fruits (including nuts) and vegetables -cold storage facilities

For more information about FSFL please visit your FSA county office or www.fsa.usda.gov.

Thoughts from the Fence Row

It has been a busy summer, both for Monroe County farmers and for our office. We are finishing up crop certifications and reconstitutions. Please remember when you're notified that your reconstitution is completed and it's for a participating DCP farm, you only have **thirty days** from the date of the letter to enroll the farm into DCP for 2010. Some farmers missed the June 1st deadline for enrolling into DCP this year; so I would like to ask a favor of all of you. The 2011 DCP sign up begins on October 1, 2010, which is a time when farmers are busy harvesting their crops. However, it is imperative that you mark down on your calendars to give the office a call in early December (or whenever you think that your harvest might be complete) and schedule an appointment to enroll for 2011. As Ben Franklin once said "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

Successor-In-Interest

Many FSA programs will allow payments to be made to heirs or successors when a program participant passes away. Additionally, contracts in programs such as CRP must be revised to reflect the successor(s) to a deceased participant's interest.

In the event of an FSA program participant's death, it is important that FSA be notified. Entities and joint operations that participate in FSA programs also need to notify FSA if a shareholder or member passes away. FSA benefits are reported to IRS and maintaining current, accurate records about participants is vital to ensuring that those payments are reported correctly

Dates to Remember

Sept 23, 2010	Final date for asparagus producers to apply for TAA for Farmers
Sept 30, 2010	Final date to apply for 2008 SURE program
Sept 30, 2010	Final date to apply for 2011 NAP coverage for small grains & forage crops
On going	Farm Storage Facility Loans
On going	CRP-State Acres for Wildlife (SAFE)
On going	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
On going	Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP)

Visit our Web site at: www.fsa.usda.gov/mi

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