



Monroe County FSA

January 2012

USDA Service Center
1137 S. Telegraph Rd.
Monroe, Michigan 48161

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[See extensions below]
(734) 241-9432 fax

www.fsa.usda.gov/mi

Hours

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

Monroe Staff

Christina L. Salenbien, County Executive Director (Ext.107)

Carole F. Bogoski, PT (Ext.110)
Roger P. Bezek, PT (Ext.108)
Dawn M. Pluff, PT (Ext.113)
Jessica A. Squires, PT (Ext.110)

Michael D. Jordon, Farm Loan Manager (Lenawee County)

Dates to Remember

January 2– Office closed
New Year's Day (observance)
January 16– Office closed
Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. (observance)
January 23– USDA Meet & Greet
January 23– DCP signup starts
February 20 – Office closed
Washington's Birthday (observance)
March 15 - Final date to apply for Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) coverage

Continuing – Farm Storage Facility Loans

Continuing – Continuous Conservation Reserve Program & CRP-SAFE

New County Executive Director

In December, the Monroe County FSA Committee selected Christina L. (Lange) Salenbien as the new County Executive Director, effective January 1st 2012. Mrs. Salenbien was previously enrolled in the County Operations Trainee (COT) Program since 2010. She is a native of Monroe County and was raised on a farm in Maybee. She is a graduate of the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor and currently resides in Monroe.

County Committee Election Results

The County Committee Election for Local Administrative Area (LAA) #2 was held on December 8th 2011. Mr. Herb Smith was selected by eligible voters as the new representative for LAA#2, which encompasses Erie, Ida, Bedford, Summerfield, and Whiteford townships.

Herb is a cash grain farmer with over 700 acres in Ida Township. He has been farming in Monroe County for almost 60 years and is very active in the community. Herb serves as a current or past board representative for many local organizations, including Monroe County Farm Bureau, Michigan Soybean Association, Michigan Corn Growers, Michigan Technical Committee, Monroe County Planning Commission, Monroe Conservation District Board, Monroe County Community College Foundation Board, and Morocco United Brethren in Christ Church.

Please join us in congratulating Herb! He will serve a three-year term beginning January 1st 2012.

DCP Sign-Up Starts January 23rd

The initial date to sign up for the 2012 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) is Monday, January 23rd 2012. Producers may call the office at any time to set up an appointment. **The sign-up deadline is June 1st 2012.** Producers are asked to bring in updated leases for the 2012 crop year and report any farm changes as soon as possible.

USDA Service Center Meet & Greet

FSA will be hosting a Meet & Greet, along with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Monroe Conservation District (MCD), on Monday January 23rd 2012. Producers and landowners are encouraged to stop by between 10:00am and 2:00pm to meet staff members and learn about programs for which they may be eligible. Light refreshments will be available.

Producers will be able to schedule DCP appointments, obtain MCD Annual Tree Sale order forms, and learn about a variety of program opportunities. Producers can report any changes in farming operations and provide any necessary documentation for the 2012 crop year.

Representatives from FSA Farm Loan, Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP), and Michigan Pheasant Restoration Initiative (MPRI) will be on-hand to provide details on these programs.

Report How You Actually Operate!

Producers are often selected for eligibility spot-checks, at the county, state, and national level. These spot-checks are intended to confirm that the individual, entity, or partnership is actually operating according to the farm plan filed with FSA for a specific year.

During these spot-checks, producers are required to provide sufficient evidence to prove they are adhering to their FSA-established operating plan. Evidence may include production records, grain tickets, tax filings, financial statements, loan documents, etc.

If a producer is determined to have operated differently than reported, the producer will be deemed ineligible for that program year. All program payments for that year will be re-funded back to Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC).

Therefore, it is **vital** that all producers accurately report to FSA how they operate on each farm and tract. It is in your best interest to report ALL changes and ALL acres you farm!

Remember: If you are performing any new/replacement tiling, dredging, draining, ditch cleaning, fence row clearing, or stump removal, contact FSA **before taking action!** Failure to contact the Monroe FSA Office may place your program benefits at risk.

2010 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) Sign-Up

Producers can now sign-up for the 2010 SURE Program, which began on November 14th 2011 and **ends on June 1st 2012**. To receive SURE payments, an eligible producer must have a 10% production loss affecting at least one crop due to an eligible disaster in a declared disaster county. (Monroe County is located within a Secretarial disaster zone for the 2010 crop year.)



To be eligible, producers are required to have a valid FCIC crop insurance policy (or NAP coverage, as applicable) on all crops of economic significance on all acres operated for the 2010 crop year. Beginning, Limited Resource, and Socially-Disadvantaged farmers are not mandated to meet this requirement. All producers must meet all other eligibility requirements.

FSA staff will need the following information to complete all SURE applications:

- Acreage and production records, if not already provided by producer or Risk Management Agency (RMA)
- Information to determine eligible producer status on farm, if not already provided (i.e. deeds, leases, etc.)

Throughout January and February, Monroe FSA staff will be compiling RMA information on producers with crop insurance coverage to determine if the 10% loss level has been met. Monroe FSA staff will contact producers meeting the 10% loss threshold to request additional information. Contact your local Service Center with any questions and for additional program information.

Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

Vegetable and fruit producers: Don't forget to apply for NAP coverage on your 2012 crops by **March 15th 2012!** If you miss this deadline, you will be unable to cover your crops against potential losses due to disaster-related conditions for crop year 2012.

Call the office to schedule your appointment before March 15th. The NAP fee is \$250 for each crop (\$750 cap per county location), and can be paid in cash or check at the time of application.

REMEMBER: To be eligible for the SURE program, NAP coverage is required for crops of economic significance!

Did you have 2011 NAP coverage? Provide your 2011 production records to the office as soon as possible! This information is used to update your farm yields. **Producers must provide their production prior to 2012 crop certification.** If production is NOT provided before 2012 crop certification, actual production will not be reflected in NAP yields.

Turn in Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Production

Producers with farms enrolled in the ACRE program are asked to provide production records to the Monroe County FSA Office as soon as possible for the 2011 crop year. Production records are used to determine if a farm is eligible for an ACRE payment for a given year. Production records should be **tract-specific** and provided to the Monroe County FSA Office for a producer to remain in compliance with the ACRE program.

The ACRE program provides eligible producers a state-level revenue guarantee, based on the 5-year state Olympic average yield and the 2-year national average price. ACRE payments are made when both state and farm-level triggers are met. By participating in ACRE, producers elect to forgo counter-cyclical payments, receive a 20-percent reduction in direct payments and a 30-percent reduction in loan rates. The decision to elect ACRE binds the farm to the program through the 2012 crop year. No state revenue triggers have been met yet for Michigan for crop year 2011.

Marketing Assistance Loans (MAL)



MALs are available for producers who share in the risk of producing corn, wheat, oats, or soybeans in Monroe County for crop year 2011. To be eligible, a producer must maintain continual beneficial interest in the crop from harvest through the date the loan is repaid. Commodities under loan must be stored in an approved farm storage structure. Commodity loan eligibility also requires compliance with conservation and wetland protection requirements and acreage reporting requirements. The quality of the commodity in farm storage must be maintained throughout the term of the loan. Producers do not have to participate in the Direct and Counter-Cyclical and/or ACRE Programs to be eligible for commodity loans.

March 31st 2012 is the deadline for a producer to request a small grains (i.e. wheat) loan for crop year 2011. The deadline to request feed grains or oilseeds (i.e., oats, corn, soybeans) for crop year 2011 is **May 31st 2012**.



Conservation Programs

Although General Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) sign-up 41 has ended, CREP, SAFE, and Continuous CRP sign-up 42 is ongoing and applications are accepted at any time. A new CP-33 “Habitat Buffers for Upland Bird Focus Expansion” practice has been implemented for Monroe County. Please call or come into the office to learn more about what programs may be available to you on your farming operation.

Foreign Landowner Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA. Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA within 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property.

County government offices, real estate agents, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

Hispanic and Women Farmers

If you believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) improperly denied farm loan benefits to you between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic, or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation. For additional information on this and other settlement issues contact:

- **Hispanic and Women Farmer Claims Process, please visit:**
www.farmerclaims.gov or call 1-888-508-4429
- **Pigford – The Black Farmers Discrimination Litigation, please visit:**
www.blackfarmercase.com or call 1-866-950-5547
- **Keepseagle - The Native American Farmers Class Action Settlement please visit:**
www.IndianFarmClass.com or call 1-888-233-5506

Individuals interested in participating in the claims process may register to receive a claims package, or may obtain more information, by visiting the website or by calling the Farmer and Rancher Call Center. USDA cannot provide legal advice to potential claimants. Persons seeking legal advice may contact a lawyer or other legal services provider.

FSA Transitions to Electronic Communication

“When are my program payments being issued?” “What’s the deadline for program signup?” As a Michigan agricultural producer, you are probably looking for answers to these and other valid FSA questions. With federal budget constraints, important announcements previously included in newsletters, postcards, and bulk mailings will no longer be mailed to individual producers or landowners. This change requires producers to be very active in seeking out information by calling or visiting their local FSA office.



One easy way producers can continue to receive up-to-date news and information is via email communication. GovDelivery is the newest technology being implemented by USDA to allow producers and landowners the opportunity to receive prompt alerts and emails regarding vital program information, disaster updates, and available funds.

Michigan producers are strongly encouraged to submit their email addresses as soon as possible. If you are a producer or landowner, act now by calling or visiting your local county FSA office to sign up for urgent email alerts regarding new programs, quickly-approaching deadlines, and FSA requirements.

You can also visit Michigan’s FSA website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mi> and signup to receive news releases and newsletters available online. Follow the “Newsletters” link in the left column of the main page and enter your email in the “Sign up for updates” box under “Stay Connected” section. Please contact your local FSA office with any questions.

Monroe COC 1st Quarter 2012 Meeting

Due to federal budget constraints, FSA County Committee Meetings are held on a quarterly, rather than monthly, basis. Producers, landowners, and members of the public are permitted to attend discussions at the Regular Session.

The first re-organizational meeting for 2012 will be held on **Wednesday, February 1st 2012** starting at **9:00 am**.

Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL)

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. Applicants must demonstrate a verifiable need for increased storage capacity.

The new maximum principal amount per loan is \$500,000. Participants are required to provide a down payment of 15 percent. 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 CCC borrows from the Treasury Department.

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

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.

Eligible commodities for the FSFL program include: corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley, minor oilseeds, pulse crops - lentils, small chickpeas and dry peas, hay, renewable biomass, fruits (including nuts) and vegetables.

For more information about FSFL please visit your Monroe FSA County Office or www.fsa.usda.gov

Beginning, LR, and SDA Farmers

FSA assists beginning farmers, limited resource, and or members of socially disadvantaged groups 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 one who:

- Has operated a farm for not more that 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 average size.

Please call Farm Loan Manager Michael D. Jordon, located in the Lenawee County FSA office, at (517) 263-7400 for further details or regarding loan applications. Additional program information and other materials are available at www.fsa.usda.gov.

If your banking/deposit information has changed, be sure to let the staff at your local FSA office know!



Selected Interest Rates for January 2012

90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	1.50%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	3.50%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment	1.50%
Emergency Loans	3.75%
Conservation Loans	3.50%
Farm Storage Facility Loans 7 yr	1.375%
Farm Storage Facility Loans 10 yr	2.00%
Farm Storage Facility Loans 12 yr	2.25%
Sugar Storage Facility Loans	2.375%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.125%

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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 20250-9410, 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). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.