



Montcalm County News

**Montcalm County
USDA Service Center**

**Montcalm County FSA
77 S. State St.
Stanton, MI 48888**

(989) 831-4212 (phone)

(989) 831- 4540 (fax)

Website

www.fsa.usda.gov/mi

Hours

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

County Committee

Ned Welder
Judy Johnston
Jack Jeppesen
Mary Waldron - Advisor

County Committee meets
quarterly each year

Staff

Janice McCallister
Becky Proctor
Pam Brooks

Field Reporter

Ken Carr

**County Executive
Director**

Wayne Stickler

Farm Loan Manager

Paul Wagner

Farm Loan Officer

Sarah Possehn

COC ELECTION RESULTS

Congratulations to Judy Johnston for being re- elected to the Montcalm County FSA Committee as representative of LAA-1.

Important Requirement

Farm Service Agency is partnering with the Internal Revenue Service to reduce fraud in farm programs and streamlining payment limits for family farmers.

To earn 2012 program benefits a CCC-931 form must be filed with our office to be forwarded to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

All entities, members of entities and individuals must submit form CCC-931.

This is to ensure that payments are not issued to producers whose adjusted gross income (AGI) exceeds certain limits. The limits set in the 2008 Farm Bill are \$500,000 nonfarm Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) for commodity and disaster programs; \$750,000 farm average AGI for direct payments; and \$1 million nonfarm average AGI for conservation programs.

ANNUAL PAYMENT LIMITATION NOTICE

Payment limitations per person for 2012 (no change from previous year):

- \$40,000 for Direct Payments (DCP);
- \$65,000 for Counter Cyclical Payments (DCP) and ACRE payments;
- \$50,000 for CRP;
- No limits for market gains and LDP's;
- \$100,000 for Disaster Assistance Programs;
- \$100,000 for NAP.

Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

March 15 is the application closing date for most 2012 spring planted annual crops. Producers who had coverage on 2011 NAP crops may choose to continue coverage on the same crop or crops for 2012, if the applicable service fee is submitted by the application closing date. If you have a policy on NAP crops and have not turned in your production, please do so before July 15, 2012. This is a requirement of the NAP program and will help establish a more accurate historical yield. To remain compliant in NAP, producers must: (1) file acreage reports by July 15, 2012, (2) follow HEL and Wetland conservation compliance requirements, (3) file Notice of Loss within 15 days of weather damage or within 15 days of the loss becoming apparent to the producer, (4) request loss adjustment appraisals if any crop will not be harvested or to document production left in the field, and 5) provide true and complete production records for the unit.

COC Meetings & Minutes

Dates of meetings and regular session minutes are posted in the office. Meetings are held at the Montcalm FSA Office Quarterly each year. Please call in advance to confirm meeting dates and time.



Announcing a General CRP Program Sign-up

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will conduct a four-week Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) general sign-up, beginning on March 12 and ending on April 6.

NEW CRP Opportunity

Montcalm FSA announces a new CRP initiative, State Acres For Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE). SAFE allows producers to install practices that benefit high priority State wildlife conservation objectives through the use of targeted restoration of vital habitat.

The program, was the result of an agreement between USDA, wildlife management agencies, conservation and commodity groups -such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Nature Conservancy, Pheasants Forever, the Michigan Department of Agriculture and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Diverse grassland planting consists of a mixture of planted short or tall native grasses and wildflowers. A subset of the short grass planting is a savanna, which includes scattered clumps of planted oak trees.

Eligibility

To be eligible for this SAFE practice the land must be located in the SAFE focus area. The land must have a cropping history (4 out of 6 years from (2002-2007), and be either a block of 30 acres or greater in size or, if a linear habitat, must at least be a minimum of 200 feet wide and 10 acres or greater in size.

Maintaining CRP Cover

CRP cover maintenance is the participant's responsibility and must be done according to the conservation plan.

All CRP maintenance activity, such as mowing, burning and spraying, must be conducted outside the primary nesting season for wildlife and in accordance with the Conservation plan. The ending date for the primary nesting season for wildlife in Michigan is August 1st.

Farm Loan Programs

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) can make and guarantee loans to socially disadvantaged applicants to buy and operate family size farms and ranches. Funds specifically for these loans are reserved each year.

A socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of the group without regard to their individual qualities. For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, and Asians and Pacific Islanders. Contact Paul Wagner Farm Loan Manager or Sara Possehn Farm Loan Officer at (616) 527-2098 for more details and assistance in applying.

Farm Reconstitutions

In FSA program terminology, farms are *constituted* to group all tracts having the same owner and or the same operator under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation take place, a farm *reconstitution* is necessary.

(DCP) & (ACRE) for 2010

ACT NOW!!

The sign-up for the 2012 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) & the ACRE program has a deadline of June 1st.

No Advance payments will be made for the 2012 crop year. The payment will be made in October.

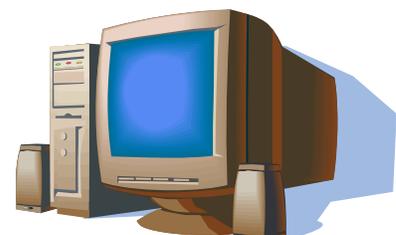
Farms having base acres of 10.0 acres or less cannot be approved for payment.

The exception is farms 50% owned by:

1. **Socially Disadvantaged (SDA)**
2. **Limited Resource Farmer**

Dates to Remember	
February 20th	Office Closed (Presidents Day)
March 15th	NAP Deadline (Spring Crops)
May 28th	Office Closed (Memorial Day)
June 1 st	Deadline for DCP/ACRE sign-up
June 30 th	Deadline for Fall Planted Crop & 2004-2009 ACRE Production Reporting
July 15 th	Deadline for Spring Planted Crop & 2004-2009 ACRE Production Reporting
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loans

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



2010 Disaster Assistance Program

• Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) Program

Sign-up for the 2010 SURE Program has begun and ends June 1st this is available to eligible producers that meet the following requirements:

Has obtained at least the minimum level of insurance under SURE, a producer **must have** a plan of insurance for 2010 with not less than 50 percent yield coverage at 55 percent of the insurable price for each crop grazed, planted, or intended to be planted for harvest on a whole farm.

- **All insurable crops** on the farm (this includes hay), a policy or plan of insurance under the Federal Crop Insurance Act
- Noninsurable Assistance Program (NAP) commodity(s) on the farm.
- According to Pub. L 110-398, at the option of an eligible producer on a farm, the producer may elect to waive insurance or NAP coverage on a crop **that is determined not to be economically significant: (De Minimis)**

Economic significance means any crop that contributed, or is expected to contribute, 5 percent or more of the total expected value of all crops grown by the producer.

(Or)

For which the NAP fee exceeds 10 percent of the value of NAP coverage.

Note: De Minimis only applies to SURE. If the producer elects to designate a crop as a De Minimis crop, the producer is **no** longer eligible for ELAP or TAP. Also, the crop will **not** have a SURE guarantee and revenue calculated.

Foreign Buyers 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.

All individuals who are not U.S. citizens, and have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form (FSA-153) could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, Realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

Controlled Substance

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium, poppies and other drug producing plants.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Farm Service Agency
Montcalm County FSA Office
77 South State St.
Stanton, MI 48888-9469

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



Wetland Compliance

If you plan on clearing, draining, dredging or tile maintenance of any kind, you need to file an AD-1026 with our office before you begin. Failure to do so could result in the loss of USDA benefits.

Sodbuster Regulations

The term “sodbusting” is used to identify the plowing up of erosion-prone grasslands for use as cropland. Sodbuster violations are unauthorized tillage practices on highly erodible lands that converted native vegetation such as 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 Farm Service Agency 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.

Preventing Fraud

The Farm Service Agency has joined with the Risk Management Agency to prevent fraud, waste and abuse in the Federal Crop Insurance Program. FSA has been, and will continue to, assist RMA and insurance providers by monitoring crop conditions throughout the growing season. In addition, FSA will refer all suspected cases of fraud, waste and abuse to RMA. Producers can report suspected cases to the county office staff, RMA office, or the Office of the Inspector General.

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

To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.