

June 2014



# NEWSLETTER



## June Topics:

- [2014 Acreage Reporting Deadlines](#)
- [Failed Acres](#)
- [Farm Reconstitutions](#)
- [Save Time – Make An Appointment With FSA](#)
- [Direct Loan Changes](#)
- [USDA Awarding \\$6 Million To Prepare Farmers For New Farm Bill Programs](#)
- [USDA Announces Changes To Fruit, Vegetable And Wild Rice Planting Rules](#)
- [Important Dates to Remember](#)

---

## Newaygo/Muskegon County FSA Updates

---

### Newaygo/Muskegon County FSA Office

940 West Rex Street  
Fremont, MI 49412  
Phone: 231-924-2230 x 2  
Fax: 855-647-4845  
Hours: Monday - Friday  
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

### County Executive Director: David Bain

### Program Technicians: Kathy Nelson Lisa Smalligan

### County Committee: Brian Abbott Aaron Bennett Steve Boluyt Dennis Sikkenga David Stout Jean Stroven, Advisor

### Farm Loan Managers: Paul Wagner, Muskegon Phone: 616-842-5852 x 2 Larry Cleary, Newaygo Phone: 231-796-2659 x 2

### Next County Committee Meeting: to be determined

## 2014 Acreage Reporting Deadlines

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers must report their crops, pasture, and agricultural ground timely. The following deadlines apply:

- **May 31st** – Nursery
- **July 15th** – Spring seeded grains and spring planted row crops
- **August 15th** – Cabbage (planted 6/1 to 7/20)
- **September 30th** – Aquaculture, Christmas trees, floriculture, mushrooms, & turfgrass sod
- **November 15th** – Perennial forage (alfalfa, hay, mixed hay, pasture), fall-seeded wheat, rye, and all other fall-seeded small grains
- **January 2nd** – Honey (number of colonies)
- **January 15th** – Apples, asparagus, blueberries, cherries, grapes, peaches, plums, strawberries, and all other perennial orchard crops
- **February 1st** – Maple sap (number of eligible trees and taps)

Contact your local Farm Service Agency to set up an appointment when planting is completed.

---

## Failed Acres

As the growing season kicks into gear, some areas/fields may be considered “failed” due to the extreme weather we had throughout the winter months & the continuing wet spring.

Failed acreage is acreage that was timely planted with the intent to harvest, but because of disaster related conditions, the crop failed before it could be brought to harvest.

Producers who are requesting failed acreage credit shall prove to the County Committee's satisfaction that:

- The crop was planted with the intent to harvest using farming practices consistent for the crop and area
- The acreage failed because of disaster-related conditions

To be approved as failed acreage, the acreage must have been reported as failed acreage before the disposition of the crop; and the acreage must have been planted under normal conditions but failed as the result of a natural disaster and not a management decision.

Verification of failed acreage must be made by 1 of the following methods:

- Crop insurance data if the data supports the FSA-578, report of acreage
- County Committee (COC) knowledge.
- Field Visit

NOTE: If the COC has knowledge that an area in the county is affected by a natural disaster, they can approve the acreage without performing a field visit.

**Failed acreage determinations must be filed on form CCC-576 and cannot be withdrawn or revised.**

---

## Farm Reconstitutions

When changes in farm 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.

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.

---

## Save Time – Make an Appointment with FSA

As we roll out the Farm Bill programs administered by FSA, there will be related signups and in some cases multiple management decisions that need to be made by you, the producer, in consult with FSA staff. To insure maximum use of your time and to insure that you are afforded our full attention to your important business needs, please call our office ahead of your visit to set an appointment and to discuss any records or documentation that you may need to have with you when you arrive for your appointment. For local FSA Service Center contact information, please visit: <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app> .

---

## Direct Loan Changes

Changes were made to the interest rate charged on loans where FSA provides 50 percent or less on jointly financed purchases of real estate also called Direct Farm Ownership Participation Loans. The interest rate will be the greater of 2.5 percent or the current interest rate for direct Farm Ownership loans minus 2 percent, as a fixed rate for the duration of the loan. At present, the June direct Farm Ownership rate is 4.00 percent. Because the 2.5 percent floor is greater than subtracting 2 percent from the current direct farm ownership loan rate, the rate for Direct Farm Ownership Participation Loans in June is 2.50 percent.

---

## USDA Awarding \$6 Million to Prepare Farmers for New Farm Bill Programs

USDA is awarding \$6 million to universities and cooperative state extension services to develop online decision tools and other materials and train experts to educate producers about several key farm bill programs. The new Web tools will help farmers and ranchers determine what participation in programs established by the 2014 Farm Bill will mean for their businesses.

The University of Illinois (lead for the National Coalition for Producer Education), along with the Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute (FAPRI) at the University of Missouri and the Agricultural and Food Policy Center at Texas A&M (co-leads for the National Association of Agricultural and Food Policy), will receive a total of \$3 million to develop the new online tools and train state-based extension agents who can in turn help educate farmers.

The new resources will help farmers and ranchers make an educated choice between the new Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) program and the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program. Using the new online tools, producers will be able to use data unique to their specific farming operations combined with factors like the geographical diversity of crops, soils, weather and climates across the country to test a variety of financial scenarios before officially signing up for the new program options later this year. Once a producer enrolls in the ARC or PLC program, he or she must remain in the program through the 2018 crop year.

New tools will be provided for other programs as well. Sign-up for the newly established Margin Protection Program for Dairy (MPP) begins late this summer and enrollment for "buy-up" provisions under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) will begin early next year. An online MPP tool will be available when sign up begins and the NAP buy-up provision resource will become available to producers in the fall for the 2015 crop year.

USDA will also award \$3 million to state cooperative extension services—a nationwide network of experts based at land-grant universities—for outreach and education on the new Farm Bill programs. Funds will be used to conduct public education outreach meetings where producers can speak with local extension agents and Farm Service Agency (FSA) staff. Outreach meetings will begin late this summer to help farmers and ranchers understand the new programs and their options.

While universities work to create new online tools, producers now have access to a preliminary website that gives them a chance to begin familiarizing themselves with the new programs and the type of information they will need to consider when deciding which program options work better for them. At this site, farmers and ranchers can view ARC and PLC projected payments, ARC guarantees, and PLC payment rate projections. These tables are available on the [FSA website](#).

Visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) or the local FSA office for information about FSA and the 2014 Farm Bill programs.

---

## USDA Announces Changes to Fruit, Vegetable and Wild Rice Planting Rules

Farm Service Agency (FSA) has announced fruit, vegetable and wild rice provisions that affect producers who intend to participate in certain programs authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014.

Producers who intend to participate in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs are subject to an acre-for-acre payment reduction when fruits and nuts, vegetables or wild rice are planted on the payment acres of a farm. Payment reductions do not apply to mung beans, dry peas, lentils or chickpeas. Planting fruits, vegetables or wild rice on acres that are not considered payment acres will not result in a payment reduction. Farms that are eligible to participate in ARC/PLC but are not enrolled for a particular year may plant unlimited fruits, vegetables and wild rice for that year but will not receive ARC/PLC payments for that year. Eligibility for succeeding years is not affected.

Planting and harvesting fruits, vegetables and wild rice on ARC/PLC acreage is subject to the acre-for-acre payment reduction when those crops are planted on either more than 15 percent of the base acres of a farm enrolled in ARC using the county coverage or PLC, or more than 35 percent of the base acres of a farm enrolled in ARC using the individual coverage.

Fruits, vegetables and wild rice that are planted in a double-cropping practice will not cause a payment reduction if the farm is in a double-cropping region as designated by the USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation.

---

## Important Dates to Remember

- **July 4th** - FSA office closed for Independence Day holiday
- **August 1st** - Final date for County Offices to receive FSA-669A's, County Committee nomination forms
- **August 1st** - 2012 and 2013 Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) sign-up deadline
- **August 1st** - Deadline to request a farm reconstitution for 2014
- **August 15th** - Deadline to report 2013 Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) production evidence
- **November 1st** - 2014 ELAP sign-up deadline

---

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).