July 2012

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Ogemaw Area County FSA Updates

DEAR PRODUCERS: Welcome to the new GovDelivery bulletins and updates service from Ogemaw Area County FSA office. Note that you are welcome to request to receive bulletins from more than one county and can add or remove individual subscriptions at any time.

Ogemaw Area County

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County Executive Director:
John C. Porath
Program Technicians:
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COC Members:
James Bischoff, Chair
Klint Marshall, Vice Chair
Brad Kartes, Member
Julie Nelkie, Advisor

2012 Crop Year DCP

The annual Direct and Counter Cyclical Program (DCP) contracts are usually available for you to enroll for the 2012 crop year. However, the agency has determined to set **January 23rd as the Beginning Date** for the 2012 DCP and ACRE Contract enrollment period and it will run thru **June 1, 2012**. The 2008 Farm Bill had stipulated that no advance payments would be available for the 2012 crop year DCP or ACRE contracts. Final payments will be received in October 2012.

FSA Moving to Electronic Newsletter

The USDA Farm Service Agency offices are moving toward a paperless operation. Producers are asked to enroll in the new GovDelivery system which will provide notices, newsletters and electronic reminders instead of a hard copy through the mail. FSA, like many other organizations, is trying to work smarter and be more efficient. Moving to electronic notifications via email will help conserve resources and save taxpayer dollars. County Committee ballots will continue to be mailed to all eligible producers. Interested producers may subscribe to receive e-mail updates by going to the USDA GovDelivery sign-up page found at the following web address:
http://www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe
Check out Michigan's website at:
www.fsa.usda.gov/mi

Wetland Provisions

Potential violations of the wetland rules include bringing new land into production by clearing trees or improving drainage by tiling or dredging. **Before you BEGIN any of these projects, you need to fill out form AD-1026.** Natural Resources Conservation Service will complete a certified evaluation of the tract to determine if there are areas that are wet and highly erodible. This process takes at least 60 days to complete. NRCS will notify you by mail of the results. With the new mapping system, updated imagery clearly shows where land has been cleared or drained. The penalty for a wetland violation can be loss of **ALL** USDA benefits back to the year of conversion. By checking with our office before you start a project, you can remain in compliance and avoid the penalties. Plan ahead, before clearing any land come into the office and sign the form.

County Committee Election Results

James Bischoff was elected to the Ogemaw Area County committee from LAA#3. (Oscoda, Roscommon, and Crawford Counties) Jim will serve a 3 year term. Thanks to everyone who participated in the election process.

Farm Record Changes

We strongly encourage you to report all farm record changes to this office as soon as possible. This will save wasted additional trips and time in this office on your end and also on our end. Current records make signup more accurate and efficient.

Apply now for 2012 Annual Operating Loans

Farmers that plan to apply to the Farm Service Agency for annual operating loan assistance this year are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. The earlier an application for loan assistance is filed, the quicker the FSA staff can process your request. In addition, due to budget constraints, farmers that wait until later in the year to apply, often run the risk of finding out that our funding allocations have been utilized already. Farmers are encouraged to contact our office to set up an appointment for information as to what is required in order to have a complete loan application on file. Decisions cannot be made until a complete application is received**.**

Farm Reconstitutions

In program terminology, farms are constituted to group all tracts having the same owner and operator under one farm serial number. When changes in 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.

Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by Aug. 1 for farms enrolled in the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program or ACRE Program.

Designation of Landowner Method — may be used when (1) part of a farm is sold or ownership is transferred; (2) an entire farm ownership is sold/transferred to two or more persons; (3) part of a tract is sold or ownership is transferred. 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.

Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL)

- Low cost financing for storage facilities is available for qualifying producers to build or remodel farm storage facilities for a variety of commodities, including wheat, soybeans, corn, hay, renewable biomass, and cold storage for fruits and vegetables. The interest rate used for the loan is set when the loan is approved.
- Loan terms of 7, 10 and 12 years are available for the purchase and installation of new, eligible storage facilities or permanently affixed drying and handling equipment or for new components used to remodel existing facilities. Eligible facilities include conventional type bins or cribs, new oxygen-limiting upright and bunker silos, new permanently affixed structures suitable for storing hay and renewable biomass, and new cold storage facilities suitable for storing the fruits and vegetables produced by the borrower.
- Maximum Loan limit is $500,000. A mortgage is required on all amounts over $50,000.
- Loan terms:
- $100,000 or less – 7 years;
- $100,000.01 - $250,000 – 7 or 10 yrs;
- $250,000.01 - $500,000 – 7, 10 or 12 yrs
- Sign-up is continuous, as long as CCC funds are available.

Conservation Signup Continues

Enrollment for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program and the Continuous Program is ongoing. If you would like to install windbreaks, filter strips, or wetland restorations, please do not delay applying. This program could close at any time since there is a statewide acreage limit. So don't delay if you want to enroll some of your farm. Please contact this office for additional information.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. 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 20250-9450, 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).