



# Ottawa County News



## Important – Annual Crop Reporting Requirements

**USDA Service Center  
Ottawa County FSA**  
16731 Ferris St  
Grand Haven MI 49417  
616-842-5852, ext. 2 (phone)  
616-842-2820 (fax)

**Hours**  
Monday - Friday  
7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**County Committee**  
Kirk E Haverdink, Chair  
Wayne C Hecksel, Vice Chair  
David L Pyle, Member

Helen R Dietrich, Advisor

The County Committee ordinarily meets on the First Wednesday of each month from 9:00-12:00

**Farm Program Staff**  
Blain Bechtold, CED  
Dawn Essenburg, PT  
Jackie C French, PT  
Andy Stille, PT

**Farm Loan Staff**  
Leslie Wills, FLM  
Phillip Bacalia, FLO  
Susan McIntosh, PT

**Field Agent**  
Les Kloosterman

The annual reporting of acres for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent loss of benefits for a variety of FSA programs. All cropland acres on the farm must be reported to receive benefits from the following programs:

- **Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program(DCP);**
- **Acreage Crop Revenue Election (ACRE);**
- **Marketing assistance loans and loan deficiency payments;**
- **Conservation Reserve Program (CRP);**
- **Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)**
- **Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE)**

Form FSA-578, Report of Acreage, must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. Producers need to file their acreage reports by:

- **June 30, 2010 for fall seeded small grain crops; fruit crops**
- **July 15, 2010 for all remaining crops**

**Please call for an appointment in advance: 616-842-5852, ext. 2**

### SURE

Currently applications for the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) are being taken for the 2008 Crop Year. SURE provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disaster that were incurred starting in the crop year 2008 through September 30, 2011. To be eligible for SURE payments, a producer is required to obtain crop insurance on all crops of economic significance in all counties or, if crop

insurance is not available, to participate in the Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) except for grazed acreage.

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,
- the crop of economic significance must be 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,
- the farm experiencing the loss must be in a county declared a disaster county by the Secretary of Agriculture, or in contiguous counties. Those who show proof of an individual loss of at least 50% are also eligible to receive SURE payments for production losses or crop 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.

A SURE calculator is available at: [http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA\\_File/sure\\_calculator\\_2008.xls](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/sure_calculator_2008.xls). The calculator is not official, but is intended for educational use. A fact sheet and Q & A are also available online at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).



Visit our web site at:

[www.fsa.usda.gov/mi](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mi)

## Online Services

Producers, if you have Internet access you can electronically log on, fill out and print a variety of FSA paper forms in the comfort of your home as your schedule allows. You can also register for secure electronic access that will allow you to electronically sign and transmit some forms directly to the county office staff. If you are new to the website, first you will want to obtain a Level 2 USDA Service Center Customer ID and password at: <http://www.eauth.e.gov.usda.gov/> and then click on "Create an Account Page" link.

USDA eAuthentication is the system used by USDA agencies to enable customers to obtain accounts that will allow them to access USDA Web applications and services via the Internet. This includes things such as submitting forms electronically, filing eLDPs, completing DCP contracts, filling out surveys online, and checking the status of your USDA accounts.

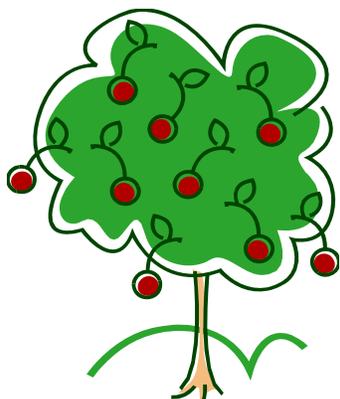
## Tree Assistance Program for Orchardists and Nursery Tree Growers (TAP)

USDA Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Tree Assistance Program (TAP) provides financial assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by natural disasters occurring on or after Jan. 1, 2008, and before Oct. 1, 2011.

### Eligible Producers

To qualify for TAP, orchardists and nursery tree growers must:

- suffer qualifying tree, bush or vine losses in excess of 15 percent (adjusted for normal mortality) from an eligible natural disaster for the individual stand
- have owned the eligible trees, bushes and vines when the natural disaster occurred; however, eligible growers are not required to own the land on which eligible trees, bushes and vines are planted;
- Replace eligible trees, bushes and vines within 12 months from the date the application is approved.



## Signup Period

Orchardists and nursery tree growers may apply to receive TAP benefits at local FSA county offices beginning May 10, 2010, for losses suffered during calendar years 2008 and 2009, and for losses suffered during Jan. 1, 2010, to May 7, 2010.

The following table provides the final dates to submit a TAP application and supporting documentation:

Date of Loss	Final Date to Submit an Application and Supporting Documentation
Calendar Year 2008	<b>July 6, 2010</b>
Calendar Year 2009	<b>July 6, 2010</b>
Jan. 1, 2010 to May 7, 2010	<b>July 6, 2010</b>
May 8, 2010 to Sept. 30, 2011	Within 90 calendar days from the later of the disaster event or the date when the loss of trees, bushes or vines is apparent.

More information on TAP is available at local FSA offices and on FSA's Web site at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/tap>.

### **MILC Payment Available for April**

The payment rate for the Milk Income Contract Program for April 2010 has been triggered and the final payment rate for that month is 0.21150.

***Please submit your milk production for April (May milk check) to the county office for payment.***

**“GOT MILK?”**

## Online Services continued:

If you already have a Customer ID and password, then click on the following eForms website at:

<http://forms.sc.ego.usda.gov/eforms/mainervlet> and then click on the "Sign In" button. A disclaimer window will open and after you read the "Warning message", click on the "Continue" button.

Then the USDA Web services page will open to the eAuthentication login page. Enter your login User ID and password and then click on the "Login" button. To sign and transmit forms electronically, you must sign-up and get a User ID and password.

Submitting an e-Form is convenient. You can access information anytime day or night seven days a week. It's faster and forms along with applications can be submitted and received in the county office in a matter of minutes, not days or weeks.



## Wetland Compliance

Producers renting or purchasing land that may have a converted wetland status need to check with the county office to learn if there are restrictions. The last thing that the USDA wants to do is to deny a producer benefits due to wetland noncompliance.

The 1985 Farm Bill provides that, **unless exempt**, persons **are ineligible** for benefits under certain programs administered by USDA if they:

- plant an agricultural commodity on wetland that was converted after December 23, 1985
- convert a wetland after November 28, 1990

**FSA may not approve any loan or loan guarantee to drain, dredge, fill, level or otherwise manipulate a wetland, or to engage in any activity that results in impairing or reducing the flow, circulation or reach of water except in the case of activity related to the maintenance of certain previously converted wetlands.**

The following provides permitted uses and restrictions of certain wetlands for compliance with Wetland compliance provisions:

- Wetlands can be farmed under natural conditions. However, **wetlands cannot be converted.**
- Wetlands converted before November 28, 1990, cannot be planted to an agricultural commodity and retain eligibility for benefits.
- Wetlands converted after Nov. 28, 1990, **must be** either restored to wetland status or mitigated to regain eligibility for program benefits.
- Wetlands that can be farmed under natural conditions **cannot be manipulated in any way**, unless the Natural Resources Conservation Service determines the work would have a minimal effect on wetland values.

- Wetlands converted before December 23, 1985, can be farmed and maintained.

**Additional information about wetland compliance is available at USDA Service Centers.**

## Farm Reconstitutions

For FSA program purposes, tracts having the same owner and the same operator is grouped 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 **August 1** for farms enrolled in specific programs.

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.

**Ottawa  
 Conservation  
 District**

The Ottawa Conservation District has a new website:

[www.ottawacd.org](http://www.ottawacd.org)

Please check their new website for information on management and education of the natural resources of the county, including conservation, forestry, groundwater, wildlife, and farmland, plus much more.

**New Farm Loan Officer**

As announced in the May newsletter, Leslie Wills is retiring July 1 after 30 years of service to the USDA.

With Leslie Wills' retirement on July 1, Farm Loan Manager, Rick Dean, will supervise the office. Phillip Bacalia, Farm Loan Officer has been reassigned to the FSA's Ottawa County Service Center. Susan McIntosh will remain the Farm Loan Programs Technician. Rick and this Farm Loan Programs team will service Allegan, Ottawa and Muskegon Counties. Your loan files will remain in Grand Haven. Following July 1<sup>st</sup>, all contacts regarding your loan account should be directed to Rick and his staff in Grand Haven. 616-842-5852

Dates to Remember	
June 30 <sup>th</sup>	Last day to report fall seeded small grain crops
July 5 <sup>rd</sup>	Office closed for the observance of Independence Day
July 6 <sup>th</sup>	TAP application deadline
July 15 <sup>th</sup>	Last day to report all other crops
July 15 <sup>th</sup>	Last day to submit production for NAP.
August 1 <sup>st</sup>	Last day to report farm changes/request reconstitutions
August 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Last day to submit COC nominations
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loans
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve Program

Visit our Web site at:  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/mi](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mi)

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