



# NEWSLETTER



**September 2012**

**Ottawa County  
FSA Office**

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

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

**Ottawa County Staff  
Farm Programs**  
Amy S MacNeil  
County Executive Director

Jackie French  
Program Technician

Andrew Stille  
Program Technician

**Farm Loan Manager**  
Paul E Wagner

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Program Technician

**County Committee**  
Kirk Haverdink  
Chairperson

Dave Pyle  
Vice-Chairperson

Paul Lindberg  
Member

Helen Dietrich  
Advisor

## HAY NET

**What is Hay Net?** The Farm Service Agency's (FSA) electronic Hay Net Ad Service (eHayNet) is an Internet-based service allowing farmers and ranchers to share 'Need Hay' ads and 'Have Hay' ads online. A few things to remember when getting familiarized with the site:

- There is a one-time registration process that should be completed by all users who want to post an ad online.
- Users just wishing to browse ads DO NOT NEED to have an eAuthentication user id.
- Hay Net Ads will be automatically removed after a period of 13 months.
- Please help your fellow farmer and rancher by keeping ads current and up to date. Remove ads you no longer need advertised on our Web.
- Please use this site in a courteous manner. The site was not designed for use by placing ads in each state, or advertising your company.

**How Do I Access the Hay Net Service?** Browsing access to the Hay Net service is available to all USDA customers, without the need to create an account.

**How Do I Place an Ad on Hay Net?** This process is easy and only requires creating a user ID and password and confirming your email. Click here to go to the [eAuthentication](#) page. From here, click on the '[Create an Accounts](#)' link, and finally, follow the instructions to complete a request for [Level 1 Access](#). Once you have your eAuthentication account, you can click on the 'Login' link on the top of

The Hay Net process is available 24/7, except during routine backup and maintenance periods.

To assess FSA's Hay Net:

- Go to: [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)
- Click the **Disaster Assistance Program** link on left
- Click **Online Services** tab on top
- Click **Hay Net** link on right

## EMERGENCY HAYING & GRAZING OF CRP

As you may have heard on the news, the country is currently experiencing a drought. Because of its severity, the Secretary of Agriculture has opened up specific practices on CRP acres for Emergency Haying and Grazing. Your CRP contract may be eligible.

2012 Emergency Haying or Grazing **requires:**

- a request form signed by everyone listed on the CRP contract
- a modified Conservation Plan
- written approval from the County Committee
- reporting acres after haying or grazing is completed
- 10% reduction in the annual payment on acres hayed or grazed

An alternative option is Managed Haying and Grazing, and it may be available to you for your CRP acres.

Contact the office today for more information and to see if you might be eligible.

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## **MILC PROGRAM**

FSA's Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC) compensates dairy producers when domestic milk prices fall below a specified level. MILC payments are made when the Boston Class I milk price falls below \$16.94 per hundredweight (cwt) as adjusted by the dairy feed ration adjustment. The monthly Boston price is posted online at: [http://www.fmmone.com/Northeast\\_Order\\_Prices\\_main\\_new.htm](http://www.fmmone.com/Northeast_Order_Prices_main_new.htm).

Eligible producers should submit the current MILC (Milk Income Loss Contract) statements for payment. Eligibility for 2012 must be completed before payments can be disbursed. Please contact the office to check the status of your eligibility. New producers are encouraged to apply for the program any time before September 30, 2012.



## **OVER THE COUNTER CHANNEL (OTCnet)**

FSA/CCC is moving toward OTCnet, an electronic method for processing customer check payments. When a check is submitted for payment either in person or through the mail, the check will be converted into an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). The funds will be debited from the producer's account, usually within 24 hours of receipt. Please see the U.S. Department of Treasury legal notices posted in the Service Center or visit the following U.S. Department of Treasury Internet site for detailed information. <http://fms.treas.gov/otcnet/legal.html>

### **What is OTCnet?**

OTCnet is a Web-based online application process for converting paper checks presented to FSA into electronic debits to the producer's bank account. It presents many benefits, such as reducing lost/misplaced checks and paper handling. This improves customer relations, speeds the check clearing process, and reduces the potential for human error.

### **How will my check be handled?**

The check will be scanned into the system and voided. The customer will not receive the check back from FSA. FSA will hold checks for up to 14 calendar days to ensure that the item was successfully processed, and then FSA will shred the check.

### **How quickly will funds be transferred from my account?**

The transfer of funds from your account could occur within 24 hours. Therefore, you should be sure that you have sufficient funds in your account to process the transaction. If you do not have sufficient funds, we may initiate the transaction again.

### **How will this transaction appear on my account statement?**

The transfer of funds will be reflected on your account statement. The transaction may be recorded in a different place on your statement than where your checks normally appear, such as under "other withdrawals" or "other transactions".

### **What are my rights if there is a problem with the transaction?**

You have protections under Federal law for an unauthorized electronic fund transfer from your account. You should contact your financial institution immediately if you believe that the transaction reported on your account statement was not properly authorized or is otherwise incorrect.



## **FILING FOR NAP LOSSES**

The CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and prevented planting and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. Timely filing a Notice of Loss is required for all crops including grasses. For losses on crops covered by the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and crop insurance, you must file a CCC-576, Notice of Loss, in the FSA County Office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent.

If filing for prevented planting, an acreage report and CCC-576 must be filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.

**Producers who have filed a Notice of Loss must request an appraisal on all unharvested acreage.** An appraisal must also be done after harvest on all hand-harvested acreage covered by a Notice of Loss.

## **DISASTER CONDITIONS**

The Farm Service Agency would like to remind crop and livestock producers that have recently experienced severe damage from drought that FSA programs are available to assist with recovery.

We encourage all who have suffered a disaster due to the recent severe weather conditions to read the fact sheets and visit their local FSA county office so they get a quick start in the recovery process. Fact sheets for all of these programs can be found at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov); click on Newsroom, then Fact Sheets

## **EMERGENCY LOANS AVAILABLE**

Effective June 29, 2012, the United States Department of Agriculture designated 72 Michigan counties as natural disaster areas.

The counties were designated as natural disaster areas for losses due to the combined effects of blizzards, excessive snow, excessive heat, excessive rain, high winds, hail, freeze, frost, tornadoes, flooding and lightning that occurred January 1, 2012 through May 11, 2012.

The disaster designation makes available low interest (recently reduced to 2.25%) loans to farm operators in the designated area. Farm operators who suffered a 30% loss in crop production caused by the weather conditions and meet other eligibility requirements may qualify for Emergency (EM) loan assistance from FSA. The deadline for filing an EM loan application is March 1, 2013.

Please contact the office at:

616-842-5852, ext. 2

## **POWER OF ATTORNEY**

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc, FSA has a power of attorney form available that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. If you are interested, please contact our office.

## **DON'T CLEAR OR DRAIN LAND WITHOUT CHECKING FIRST**

Producers participating in most programs administered by the FSA and the NRCS, are required to abide by certain conditions on any land owned or farmed that is highly erodible or that is considered a wetland.

To be in compliance with the highly erodible land conservation and wetland conservation provisions, producers must agree, that they will **Not**:

- Produce an agricultural commodity on highly erodible land without a conservation system
- Plant an agricultural commodity on a converted wetland
- Convert a wetland to make possible the production of an agricultural commodity

Producers planning to remove fence rows, convert woodlots to cropland, combine crop fields, divide a crop field into two or more fields, install new drainage, or improve or modify existing drainage, must notify the FSA and update Form AD-1026. FSA will notify NRCS and NRCS will then provide Highly erodible land or Wetland technical determinations.

To get additional information contact your local FSA or NRCS office or info can be found at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>

**IF YOU RECEIVE A NOTIFICATION OR DETERMINATION FROM NRCS, MAKE SURE YOU UNDERSTAND IT. PLEASE CALL IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS. THIS AFFECTS YOUR ELIGIBILITY FOR ALL USDA BENEFITS. YOU ONLY HAVE 30 DAYS TO RESPOND IN WRITING.**

## **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 December 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.

In addition, producers and the producer's affiliates have to file an AD-1026 in the administrative or control county office before any farm program payments can be made. The AD-1026 is the producer's signed certification that HELC, as well as wetland conservation, provisions will not be violated.

## **2013 CROP CERTIFICATION**

There has been a change in the 2013 reporting date for the following crops:

- Forage (Alfalfa & all Mixed Hay)
- Fall Wheat
- Fall-Seeded Small Grains

The date to report these crops for 2013 is by **November 15, 2012.**



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PRESORTED STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID

## Sign Up for FSA Fence Post for Daily Updates

The Farm Service Agency Fence Post is an online newsletter that is updated on an almost daily basis. It contains articles of interest on the agency's programs and departments, as well as success stories from the field. To access Fence Post visit <http://fsa.blogs.govdelivery.com/>. Producers can sign up for weekly Fence Post updates by putting an email address in box that says "Get Email Updates."

FSA Dates to Remember	
September 1	Final date to purchase 2013 NAP coverage for value loss crops (aquaculture, ornamental nursery, Christmas trees, floriculture, mushrooms, finfish, ginseng and grass sod)
September 3	Office closed for Labor Day
September 30	Final date to purchase 2013 NAP coverage on forage and fall seeded grain
October 1	Coverage ends for many NAP crops Final date to purchase 2013 NAP coverage for Chestnuts
October 8	Office closed for Columbus Day
November 12	Office closed for Veteran's Day
November 15	Final 2013 crop certification date for all perennial forage and fall seeded small grains
November 20	Final date to purchase 2013 NAP coverage for fruit and asparagus
December 1	Final date to purchase 2013 NAP coverage for honey and maple sap
January 15, 2013	Certification Deadline: Apples, Blueberries, Cherries, Grapes and Peaches
Continuing	Farm Storage Facility Loans
Continuing	Continuous Conservation Reserve Program, CREP & CRP-SAFE