

February 2014



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Shiawassee County FSA Updates

Shiawassee County FSA Office

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County Executive Director:
Jayne Van Ness

Program Technicians:
Louri Miller
Bernadette Schneider
Amanda Conklin

Farm Loan Officer:
Teresa Stewart

**Farm Loan Program
Technician:**
Michelle Bailey

County Committee Members:
George Zmitko - Chair
Ernest Richardson - Vice Chair
Dale Hackney - Member
Julia Birchmeier - Advisor

**Next County Committee
Meeting:** April (pending)
8:30AM

County Committee Advisor

The Shiawassee County FSA Office is seeking out qualified individuals who would be interested in serving on the Shiawassee County FSA Committee in the Advisor position. Advisors are appointed to ensure a fair representation for Socially Disadvantage (SDA) groups when the County Committee currently has no SDA members.

Currently, Julia M. Birchmeier who has served in this position for 9 years has reached her term limit. We thank Julia for her dedicated service to the County Committee.

Nominees must be recommended to the Shiawassee County FSA Office no later than February 18, 2014.

If interested, please contact the Shiawassee County FSA Office at 989-723-8263, Ext. 2.

Farming Operation Changes

Producers who have bought or sold land, or added or dropped rented land from their operation must report those changes to the FSA office as soon as possible. A copy of the deed or recorded land contract for purchase property is needed to maintain accurate records with FSA. Failure to do so can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. While making record updates, be sure to update signature authorizations. Making record changes now will save time in the spring.

Breaking New Ground

Agricultural producers are reminded to consult with FSA and NRCS before breaking out new ground for production as doing so without prior authorization may put a producer's federal farm program benefits in jeopardy. This is especially true for land that must meet Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions.

Producers with HEL determined soils must apply tillage, crop residue and rotation requirements as specified in their conservation plan.

Producers should notify FSA prior to conducting land clearing or drainage projects to ensure compliance. If you intend to clear any trees to create new cropland, these areas will need to be reviewed to ensure any work will not risk your eligibility for benefits.

Landowners and operators can complete form AD-1026 Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification to determine whether a referral to Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is necessary.

Production for the Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP)

Producers who have a NAP policy are reminded to submit their 2013 production to the county office as soon as possible. This is a requirement of the NAP program and the production is used to calculate your 2014 approved yield.

Controlled Substance

Any person 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.

Special Accommodations

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the county FSA office staff directly or by phone.

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).