



Washtenaw/Wayne County News

**Ann Arbor
USDA Service Center**

**Washtenaw/Wayne
County FSA**
7203 Jackson Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
734-761-8789 (phone)
734-662-1686 (fax)

www.fsa.usda.gov/mi

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

County Committee
Walter Rochowiak
Luther Schaible
Marilyn Gordon
Robert Breuninger
Linda Mitchell - Advisor

**County Committee
meetings**
2nd Wednesday of each
month

Staff

Program Technicians
Lori Maulbetsch
Lori Terreault
Laura Whitaker

**County Executive
Director**
Linda Rector



**County Committee
Election Results for LAA#3:**

Congratulations to Robert Breuninger!
Robert (Bob) was re-elected to represent farmers from Ann Arbor, Lima, Northfield, Salem, Scio, Superior and Webster Townships on the county committee.

Robert E Breuninger –Member Howard Sias – 1st alternate

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

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/FS_A_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.

2010 DCP/ACRE Signup: DEADLINE - JUNE 1, 2010

DCP: Enrollment for the 2010 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) has begun and will continue through June 1, 2010. USDA urges producers to make use of the eDCP automated website to sign up, or producers can visit any USDA Service Center to complete their 2010 DCP contract.

Please do not delay signup call now for an appointment.

ACRE: The optional ACRE Program provides a safety net based on state revenue losses and acts in place of the price-based safety net of counter-cyclical payments under DCP. The June 1, 2010, signup deadline is mandatory for all participants. USDA will not accept any late-filed applications.

A farm's payment is based on a revenue guarantee calculated using a 5-year average state yield and the most recent 2-year national price for each eligible commodity. For 2010, the 2-year price average will be based on the 2008 and 2009 crop years. An ACRE payment is issued when both the state and the farm have incurred a revenue loss. The payment is based on 83.3% (85% in 2012) of the farm's planted acres times the difference between the state ACRE guarantee and the state revenue times the ratio of the farm's yield divided by the state expected yield. The total number of planted acres for which a producer may receive ACRE payments may not exceed the total base on the farm. In exchange for participating in ACRE, in addition to not receiving counter-cyclical payments, a farm's direct payment is reduced by 20%, and marketing assistance loan rates are reduced by 30%.

The decision to enroll in the ACRE Program is irrevocable. The owner of the farm and all producers on the farm must agree to enroll in ACRE. Once enrolled, the farm shall be enrolled for that initial crop year and will remain in ACRE through the 2012 crop year.

Appointments: We recommend you call to make an appointment before coming to the office to conduct business. This will enable us to prepare any necessary paperwork and research issues before your appointment. We realize how important your time is, and this will reduce the amount of time that you have to wait in the office.

FSA Signature Policy: Husbands and wives may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation programs in which either has an interest. This option is automatically available unless a written request for exclusion is made to the county office staff by either spouse.

There are exceptions to the rule, where spouses may not sign on behalf of each other for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations or other similar entities. Individual signatures are also required on certain Farm Loan Program and Farm Storage Facility Loan documents. For more clarification on spousal signature authority, feel free to contact your local FSA office.

Appeal Process: After an FSA official makes a decision on your request for USDA services or application, you will be sent a letter informing you of the decision and options you can pursue if you disagree. Generally, program participants have three choices — an informal review with the original agency decision-maker, an opportunity for mediation and finally an appeal to the next level of authority within the agency.

Adjusted Gross Income: USDA has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Internal Revenue Service to establish an electronic information exchange process for verifying compliance with the adjusted gross income (AGI) provisions for farm programs. Written consent will be required from each producer or payment recipient for the tax review process. No actual tax data will be included in the report that IRS sends to USDA.

The agreement ensures that payments are not issued to producers whose AGI exceeds certain limits. The limits set in the 2008 Farm Bill are \$500,000 nonfarm average AGI for commodity and disaster programs; \$750,000 farm average AGI for direct payments; and \$1 million nonfarm average AGI for conservation programs.

Participants in CCC programs subject to average AGI rules must submit form CCC-927 (Individual) and/or CCC-928 (Legal Entity) to the Internal Revenue Service by June 15 to avoid interruption of program benefits. These forms may be obtained from local FSA and NRCS offices or online at: <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainservlet>.

Actively Engaged: USDA has amended the rules that govern the requirements to be 'actively engaged' in farming. These rules apply to eligibility for payments under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) or Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) program administered by the FSA.

Every stockholder or member of a legal entity, such as a corporation, does not have to contribute labor or management if both of the following apply:

- At least half of the interest in the legal entity is held by stockholders or members who are providing active personal labor or active personal management that altogether qualifies as a significant contribution to the farming operation;
- The total direct payments received, both directly and indirectly, by the legal entity and each of the members cannot exceed \$40,000.

Farm Loan Programs: The Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers loans for farmers and ranchers to purchase farmland and finance agricultural operations. FSA loan programs are designed to help producers who are temporarily unable to obtain private or commercial credit. In many cases, applicants are beginning farmers who have insufficient net worth to qualify for financing through a commercial lender. In other instances, borrowers might have suffered setbacks from natural disasters or might be persons with limited resources.

- Farm ownership loans or farm operating loans may be obtained as direct loans for a maximum of up to \$300,000.
- Guaranteed loans can reach a maximum indebtedness of \$1,112,000 Emergency loans are always direct loans for farmers who may have suffered physical or production losses in disaster areas designated by a Presidential or Secretarial disaster declaration. Rural Youth Loans, Loans to Beginning Farmers and loans for socially disadvantaged applicants are also available through FSA. For details contact the county office staff for an appointment with a farm loan officer.

There has been a large increase in demand for FLP services, so please contact your Farm Loan Programs staff early if you need FSA credit for spring planting, etc.

CREP, SAFE & Continuous CRP Available: Environmentally sensitive acreage qualifying for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), Conservation Reserve Program State Acres For Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) Practice, and Continuous CRP are eligible for enrollment. These targeted programs remain funded, and continue to provide a heightened environmental benefit on select areas.

Special Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment to attend or participate in meetings or events sponsored by the Farm Service Agency. If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in one of our events, please call the FSA county office and we will be happy to make any needed arrangements.

Foreign Buyers Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture.

The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA.

All individuals who are not U.S. citizens, and have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form (FSA-153) could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, Realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements

Dates to Remember	
May 31	Final availability for 2009 crop corn and soybean loans and LDPs
May 31	Memorial Day – Office Closed
June 1	Direct & Counter Cyclical/ACRE SIGN-UP DEADLINE
June 1	Farm Changes DEADLINE
On going	Farm Storage Facility Loan
On going	CRP-State Acres for Wildlife (SAFE)
On going	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
On going	Continuous Conservation Reserve program

Interest Rates: Please contact the FSA Office for interest rates for the following:

- Farm Operating and Ownership loans
- Limited Resource Loans
- Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher
- Emergency Loans
- Farm Storage Facility Loans 7, 10, or 12 year
- Commodity Loans 1996-Present

Controlled Substance: Any person who is 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.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

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.