

March 2014



# NEWSLETTER



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## Washtenaw/Wayne County FSA Updates

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### Washtenaw/Wayne County FSA Office

7203 Jackson Road  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103 9506

Phone: 734-761-8789  
Fax: 855-643-5270

### County Executive Director: Linda Rector

[linda.rector@mi.usda.gov](mailto:linda.rector@mi.usda.gov)

### Program Technicians: Lori Maulbetsch Lori Terreault

### Farm Loan Manager: Michael Jordon

[michael.jordon@mi.usda.gov](mailto:michael.jordon@mi.usda.gov)

### County Committee: Luther Schaible G Pete Elliott Joyce Bujak Howard Sias

### Next County Committee Meeting:

April 10, 2014

## USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) Offers Farm Bill Website and Online Overview of Farm Bill Programs

The Agricultural Act of 2014, also known as the 2014 Farm Bill, was signed by President Obama on February 7, 2014. The Act repeals certain programs, continues some programs with modifications, and authorizes several new programs administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA). Most of these programs are authorized and funded through 2018.

For the latest on 2014 Farm Bill programs administered by FSA, please visit our Farm Bill website at [www.fsa.usda.gov/farmbill](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/farmbill) and for an FSA program overview, please read, download and/or print our recently posted FSA Farm Bill Fact Sheet titled, What's in the 2014 Farm Bill for Farm Service Agency Customers?

For more information on FSA, please contact your local USDA Service Center or visit us online at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

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## 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.

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## Farm Records Changes

How you will operate in 2014. Have you picked up new ground? Do you have changes in farm ownership that must be reported? If so, please contact the Washtenaw/Wayne Farm Service Agency office now! These are just a few of the types of changes that must be reported to FSA each year. If you have bought or sold land, or if you have picked up or dropped rented land from your operation, make sure you report the changes to FSA as soon as possible. You need to provide a copy of your deed or recorded land contract for purchased property.

Failure to maintain accurate records with FSA on all land you have an interest in can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. Making the record changes now will save you time in the spring. Update signature authorization when changes in the operation occur.

Producers are reminded to contact FSA when there is a change in operations on a farm so that records can be kept current and accurate.

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## 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 within 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.

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## 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.

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## 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 Washtenaw/Wayne County FSA office staff directly or by phone.

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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).