



Christian/Stone/Taney FSA News

July/August 2008

Christian/Stone & Taney County USDA Service Center

1786 S. 16th Ave.
Ozark, MO 65781
(417)581-2718 phone
(417)485-3863 fax
www.fsa.usda.gov/MO

Hours

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

County Committee

Wesley Roller
Mike Rauch
John Calhoun
George Gatton
Marie Day

County Committee
meets the second
Wednesday of each
month at 9:30 AM

Staff

Donna Nave - PT
Lexie Thompson - PT
Jim Kyle - DD
Mark Aycock - FLM
Mark Hultgren - CED



FSA COC Nomination Deadline

County committees play a crucial role in helping county office staff implement the 2008 Farm Bill. Due to the importance of county committee members and their roles, producers are encouraged to participate in the 2008 FSA county committee election process by nominating an eligible candidate by the August 1 deadline.

To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign form FSA-669A. The Nomination Form for County FSA Committee Election (FSA-669A) is available at the Christian/Stone/Taney County FSA office. You may also go online and download the form from our Missouri FSA website at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/mo>. The document is located under the "I Want To" section on the right side of the screen.

Nomination forms for the 2008 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on August 1, 2008.

FSA county committee members make decisions on disaster and conservation programs, emergency programs, commodity price support loan programs and other important agricultural issues. Members serve three-year terms. Committees consist of three to five members who are elected by eligible local producers.

FSA will mail ballots to producers beginning Nov. 3. The voted ballots are due back at the local county office either via mail or in person by December 1, 2008. Newly elected committee members and alternates take office January 1, 2009.

For more information regarding the County Committee Elections, talk to the Christian/Stone/Taney County Committee, Mark Hultgren, County Executive Director at (417)581-2718 ext. 2 or stop in the office located at 1786 S. 16th Ave., Ozark, MO for details on the types of decisions county committee members make. Or visit the County Committee Elections website to learn more about the County Committee Election process and read over the fact sheets at:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=newsroom&subject=landing&topic=cce>.

FSA Farm Loans

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 modified the Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Farm Loan programs. For Direct Farm Operating and Farm Ownership loans, the maximum loan amount has been increased to \$300,000.

The FSA Farm Ownership Down Payment Loan program allows eligible family farmers to purchase farms with a 5% down payment, while financing up to 45% of the purchase price with a low interest direct loan from FSA. The remainder of the purchase price would be financed by another lender, who could qualify for a loan guarantee from FSA. Socially Disadvantaged Applicants (SDA) are one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of their identity as a member of the group without regard to their individual qualities. SDA groups include; Women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

The Farm Ownership Down Payment Loan program was modified in several ways:

- Expanded to include Socially Disadvantaged Applicants;
- Interest rate reduced to the Direct Farm Ownership rate less 4% or 1.5% whichever is greater;
- Maximum loan amount changed from \$100,000 to an amount not exceeding 45% of the least of:
 - (a) the purchase price of the farm; (b) the appraised value of the farm; or (c) \$500,000.

Note: This would result in a maximum FSA loan amount of \$225,000 and no limitation on the purchase price of the farm.
- Loan term is extended from 15 years to 20 years; and
- Required down payment is reduced from 10% to 5%.

To find out more about the FSA Farm Ownership Down Payment Loan program, contact your local FSA county office to setup an appointment with a loan approval official.

2008 Crop Year Loans and LDP's

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 authorizes marketing assistance loans (MAL's) and Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP's) for crop years 2008 through 2012. General provision in effect for the 2007 crop year will remain in effect for the 2008 crop year.

2008 DCP Program Sign-up Is Underway

Producers have until September 30, 2008 to sign-up for the 2008 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program (DCP). Producers can fill out their 2008 DCP contract at any USDA Farm Service Agency County Office. Sign-up can also be completed online by going to <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/edcp> and clicking on "Access eDCP Service." You can choose payment options, assign crop shares and sign and submit contracts from any computer with Internet access. You can also view and print submitted contract options.

FSA computes DCP payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2008, eligible producers may request to receive an advance payment of 22 percent of the direct payment for each commodity associated with the farm. FSA will issue advance direct payments as soon as practical after enrollment. Final direct payments will be issued after Oct. 1, 2008. Counter-cyclical payments vary depending on market prices, and are issued only when the effective price for a commodity is below its target price (which takes into account the direct payment rate, market price and loan rate).

For all eligibility requirements or addition information, contact your local office.



Selected Interest Rates for July 2008	
90-Day Treasury Bill	1.625%
Farm Operating Loans -- Direct	3.625%
Farm Ownership Loans -- Direct	5.000%
Farm Ownership Loans -- Down Payment	1.500%
Emergency Loans	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility Loans	3.625%
Sugar Storage Facility Loans	4.625%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	3.375%

New Crop Certification Deadline

For 2008, the final crop reporting dates will be **extended to August 15, 2008**. Late fees will not be applied if acreage reports are filed by August 15 and all other reporting requirements are met.

Filing an accurate and timely report for all crops and land uses, including prevented planted and failed acreage, can prevent loss of benefits for a variety of Farm Service Agency programs. All cropland on the farm must be reported to receive benefits from the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, marketing assistance loans and Loan Deficiency Payments.

Report of acreage must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted.

CRP & NAP Certification

Conservation Reserve Program acreage must be reported to receive annual rental payments. And, crop acreage for Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) must also be reported.

Farm Reconstitutions

In Farm Service Agency terms, farms are **constituted** to group all tracts having the same owner and the same operator 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. To be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by **August 1** for farms enrolled in the Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program. The 2008 Act provides that a producer on a farm may not receive direct payments, counter-cyclical payments, or average crop revenue election payments if the sum of the base acres of the farm is 10.0 acres or less, except if the farm is wholly owned by either of the following:

- A socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher;
- A limited resource farmer or rancher.

BUY-IN WAIVER FOR SUPPLEMENTAL AGRICULTURAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE

The 2008 Farm Bill requires producers who wish to participate in the new disaster programs to have crop insurance or non-insured crop disaster assistance (NAP) coverage for the land for which assistance is being requested, and for all farms in all counties in which they have an interest. Since the 2008 Act was enacted after the sales closing date for those programs, producers who did not purchase coverage could not comply with this requirement. However, the 2008 Act authorizes a waiver that allows producers to pay a fee, called a "buy-in" fee, to be eligible for this new disaster assistance.

The buy-in fee for 2008 eligibility only (for either the catastrophic risk protection insurance (CAT) or NAP) is \$100 per crop, but not more than \$300 per producer per administrative county, or \$900 total per producer for all counties less any previously paid fees for CAT and/or NAP. Producers can contact their local administrative FSA County Office to file the application for waiver and pay the applicable fees.

Producers who meet the definition of "Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource," or "Beginning Farmer or Rancher," do not have to meet the Risk Management Purchase Requirement, and, therefore, are not required to pay the buy-in fee.

Contact the local FSA office for additional information.

CRP Payment Rates to be Updated

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) county offices are currently reviewing soil rental rates and local farmland cash rent rates to determine the maximum payment rate for CRP annual payments. This is to guarantee the CRP rental rates are set at market levels to ensure program operations do not distort local rental markets, program costs are minimized, and program benefits are achieved.

As a result a large majority of State Rental Rates may be adjusted as a result of this review process. Producers should consider these soil rental rate changes before agreeing to terms of new contracts. Soil rental rates are expected to be updated sometime in August or September.

Foreign Landowner 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.

Foreign persons who 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 could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property.



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 Dec. 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 an 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 with the staff 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.

NRCS Announces EQIP Sign-Up Opportunity

Missouri Landowners can apply July 21 to September 19, 2008 for natural resources conservation assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announced.

EQIP promotes agricultural production and environmental quality. Through EQIP, farmers and ranchers receive financial and technical assistance to help install structural conservation practices and to implement management systems that promote conservation. State Conservationist Roger Hansen says that beginning with this sign up, limited-resource farmers, beginning farmers and socially disadvantaged farmers are eligible for increased rates of financial assistance. Also new, Hansen says, is that financial assistance is available for new practices that improve air quality or conserve energy.

Hansen says some tasks associated with this sign up, such as scoring and ranking, cannot be completed until there is a final EQIP rule. The rule will provide new guidance for the EQIP program and will incorporate the 2008 Farm Bill changes. However, NRCS can accept applications, screen them and develop conservation plans while the new rules are pending.

To apply for EQIP or to get more information about EQIP and other NRCS programs, contact the NRCS office at (417)581-2718, ext. 3. You can also get information about NRCS programs online at <http://www.mo.nrcs.usda.gov/programs>.

Signing for Entities

To sign FSA forms for trusts, limited liability companies, cooperatives, partnerships or corporations, producers need a document on file at the county office saying you're authorized to sign for the entity. It could be a copy of the articles of partnership or articles of corporation or a valid power of attorney.

You also have to know how you're supposed to sign. In almost all instances, when you are signing for an entity, your signature has to include "by" or "for," indicating you're signing in a representative capacity. Remember, if you've established an entity for your operation, you can no longer sign forms and contracts as yourself. When you have signing authority for an entity, you have to sign forms on behalf of the entity.

If you have questions about the proper way to sign forms and contracts for your entity, contact the county office staff. We can review the records and help determine the acceptable signature for your situation.

Dates to Remember

July 4	Independence Day Holiday. FSA Offices Closed.
July 18	Deadline to sign-up for LCP and LIP.
Aug. 1	Last day to file County Committee Nomination forms.
Aug. 1	Final date to request farm reconstitution for current fiscal year.
Aug. 15	Final certification date for all crops. Late fees will be assessed after Aug. 15.
Sept. 1	Labor Day Holiday. FSA Offices Closed.
Sept. 16	Final date for the SURE, EALHF, LFP or TAP programs.
Sept. 30	Continue all CRP operations.
Sept. 30	Deadline to sign-up ends for 2008 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program.
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loan program.
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve Program through September 30 th , under previous authorities.

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