



# August 2009

## Columbus Service Center News

### Serving Burlington, Camden & Ocean Counties in NJ

#### **COC Nomination Deadline**

The FSA county committee deadline for nominations for candidates was August 3, 2009.

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. Nationwide, there are more than 7,800 farmers and ranchers serving on FSA county committees. Committees consist of three to five members who are elected by eligible local producers. FSA will mail ballots to producers beginning November 6, 2009. The voted ballots are due back at the local county office either via mail or in person by December 7, 2009.

#### **Loans for Socially Disadvantaged**

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operating type loans and/or purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided priority funding for members of Socially Disadvantaged Applicants.

A socially disadvantaged applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities.

For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders.

If producers or their spouses believe they would qualify as socially disadvantaged, they should contact their local FSA office for details. FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

#### **Livestock Indemnity Program**

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides assistance to producers for livestock deaths that result from disaster. Using funds from the Agricultural Disaster Relief Trust Fund established under section 902 of the Trade Act of 1974, the program is administered by the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA). LIP compensates livestock owners and contract growers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather, including losses due to hurricanes, floods, blizzards, disease, wildfires, extreme heat and extreme cold. Eligible losses must have occurred on or after Jan. 1, 2008, and before Oct. 1, 2011.

The following table provides the final dates to file a notice of loss and/or application for payment for either 2008 or 2009 livestock losses.

<b>Date of Livestock Death</b>	<b>Final Date to File a Notice of Loss</b>	<b>Final Date to Submit an Application for Payment</b>
Calendar Year 2008	Sept. 13, 2009	Sept. 13, 2009
Jan. 1, 2009 to July 12, 2009	Sept. 13, 2009	Jan. 30, 2010
July 13, 2009 to Dec. 31, 2009	30 days after death is apparent	Jan. 30, 2010

For more information on available supplemental disaster assistance programs, please visit your FSA county office or <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

**USDA**  
**Burlington/Camden &**  
**Ocean Counties in NJ**

**1971 Jacksonville-**  
**Jobstown Road**  
**Columbus NJ 08022**

609 267-1639 Phone  
 609 261-3007 Fax  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/NJ](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/NJ)

**Hours**  
 Monday - Friday  
 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**County Committee**  
 George H. Adams Sr  
 Marilyn L. Russo  
 Louis Parzanese  
 John H. Hunter  
 Ralph Wainwright

County Committee meets  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of Month

**County Staff**  
 Nick Morolda CED  
 Robert Maxwell FLM  
 Ellen Schmidt FLO  
**Program Technicians**  
 Jim Mellor  
 Julia Coriaty  
 Craig Christo



## NAP Coverage

The Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) was designed to reduce financial losses that occur when natural disasters cause a catastrophic loss of production or prevented planting of an eligible crop by providing coverage equivalent to catastrophic (CAT) insurance. Statute limits NAP to each commercial crop or agricultural commodity, except livestock, for which CAT is not available.

Producers who already have coverage on 2009 NAP crops may choose to continue coverage on the same crop or crops for 2010, if the applicable service fee is submitted by the application closing date. A new CCC-471, application for coverage is not required to be signed when applying for continuous coverage of the same crop or crops.

Producers who choose to add a new crop(s) or delete a crop(s) from previous year's coverage or changing crop shares must file a new CCC-471 with signatures and pay the applicable service fee.

### NAP Reminders

- Accurately report production and acreage before crop deadline (May 31 for small grain, July 15 for all other crops). Crops must be reported before loss adjuster can review the loss on reported fields.
- Contact the office within 5 days to have the loss adjuster perform a Post Harvest Inspection (Final) on all crops in the pay group after harvest is completed. The office will determine if an inspection and/or an appraisal is required.
- Notice of Loss must be reported within 15 days of the loss becoming apparent to the producer. Loss adjuster must have the opportunity to examine the weather related damage. An inspection/appraisal is required if the crop is not going to be harvested. Loss adjuster must inspect all crops in the pay group, even if there is not a loss.
- Provide reliable/verifiable production records for all crops in the pay group including the price received. In most cases your APH and production evidence will be expressed in pounds. If receipts are given in boxes or crates please specify how many pounds per box/crate. Retail sales can be expressed on a calendar or by using a pick record, register tapes, copies of receipts or other reliable documentation.

**\*Complete** and sign a CCC-576 Notice of Loss within 15 days of the loss becoming apparent.

**\*Tolerance** is the number of acres that the reported acres may differ from the determined (actual) acres is the larger of 1 acre or 5% of the reported acreage. This could result in the loss of NAP benefits.

**\*Report** production for all crops by the final reporting date of the following year to maintain your Actual Production History (APH), and to apply for payment.

**\*The county committee** is required to disapprove any NAP claim that is not accompanied by acceptable production evidence.

**\*Pay group** = crop type + planting period + crop (for example jac and hod pumpkins). Different pay groups are created when there is a significant difference in price (25% or greater).

**\*Multiple** notices of loss on the same crop must be filed – drought, hail etc.

**\*Production** evidence must meet statutory requirements:

Verifiable – can be verified by a third party.

Reliable – contemporaneous receipts and register tapes by crop or pick records. Losses with reliable production records must be compared to similar farms.

**\*U-pick**, road stand and all hand harvested crops must notify the office within 5 days after the completion of harvest or destruction of crop for an appraisal to determine if anything is left in the field.

For more information on NAP coverage please contact your nearest Farm Service Agency office for application closing dates.

### New Payment Limitations

Over time the payment limitation provisions have been expanded to more programs. Some of the changes in this area are listed below.

#### New forms for 2009 and subsequent years

Anyone that plans to participate in 2009 programs is required to submit a completed CCC-902, CCC-926, and CCC-901, if applicable, for payment eligibility and payment limitation purposes. The form used prior to 2009 was named CCC-502.

#### Another change for 2009, all must make a contribution in an entity

All partners, stockholders, or members with an ownership interest in the legal entity must make a contribution, whether compensated or **not** compensated, for active--\*

- personal labor,
- active personal management,
- or a combination of active personal labor and active personal management to the farming operation;

\*Note: there are exceptions for spouses. For

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more detailed information on this and other programs, please contact your local FSA office.

## Wetland Compliance

Producers renting or purchasing land that may have a converted wetland status need to check with the county office to learn if there are restrictions. The last thing FSA wants to do is to deny a producer benefits due to wetland noncompliance. The Farm Bill provides that, **unless exempt**, persons **are ineligible** for benefits under certain programs administered by USDA if they:

- plant an agricultural commodity on wetland that was converted after December 23, 1985
- convert a wetland after November 28, 1990

**FSA may not approve any loan or loan guarantee to drain, dredge, fill, level or otherwise manipulate a wetland, or to engage in any activity that results in impairing or reducing the flow, circulation or reach of water except in the case of activity related to the maintenance of previously converted wetlands.**

There are some permitted uses for wetlands. Contact your local office to learn what permitted uses and restrictions and Wetland compliance provisions impact your land.

## Farm Energy Audits now available in New Jersey

Residences and commercial establishments can receive energy audits. Now, New Jersey farms can too.

The North and South Jersey Resource Conservation and Development Councils just trained five individuals to collect data for Farm Energy Audits. The training was performed by EnSave, Inc, who will process the data collected and create the final audit report. This report will show farmers where and how they can reduce their energy use.

The three day training focused on dairy and greenhouse farm operations, as these operations have the greatest potential for energy savings as a result of an audit. However, farm audits can be conducted on any type of farm.

Farm energy audits are required for farmers applying for energy grants over \$50,000 with the USDA Rural Development's Rural Energy for America Program (REAP). This program received

\$55 million this year, over twice what it received last year. Rural Development is accepting applications for this through July 31, 2009. Information and application material can be found at [www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/farmbill/index.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/farmbill/index.html)

To discuss how your farm might benefit from an audit, contact EnSave at (800) 732-1399, or Ken Taaffe, South Jersey RC&D, at (609) 267-0811 x110 [www.sjrkd.org](http://www.sjrkd.org).

## NRCS Conservation Programs

Farmers interested in participating in 2010 conservation programs should contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office at 609 267 1639 ext 3, to begin the application process. Applications for Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA), the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) received by August 28, 2009, will be considered for 2010 funding. For those who want to implement practices early in the 2010 season you can expect contracts to be signed by April, 2010.

- Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) reduces the economic risk of adopting new conservation measures for limited resource, beginning, or full-time farmers.
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides assistance to install permanent measures or adopt new management strategies that address existing resource concerns on farms.
- Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) encourages the creation of high quality wildlife habitats that support targeted wildlife populations of National, State, and local significance.

The agency accepts applications for conservation assistance year round and sets cut off dates to facilitate review of applications and contract awards. Interested applicants should contact NRCS for more information and an application. Program information is available online at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/>.

Dates to Remember	
Continuous	Continuous Conservation Reserve Program
April 27 to August 14, 2009	ACRE program signup runs
Aug. 3, 2009	Last day to file COC election nomination forms
Aug. 14, 2009	DCP Signup Deadline
Selected Interest Rates for August 2009	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	3.125%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	5.00%
Farm Ownership Loans — Down Payment	1.50%
Emergency Loans	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility Loans	3.125%
Sugar Storage Facility Loans	4.250%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.50%

## CREP & Continuous CRP Available

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) allows farmers and ranchers to voluntarily enroll environmentally sensitive land into a program that decreases erosion, restores wildlife habitat and safeguards ground and surface water. CREP is a partnership with federal and state government and is limited to specific geographic areas.

USDA has indicated there will not be general signups scheduled for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) in 2009. The budget has no available funding for CRP general signups, and instead advocates enrollment in either CREP or Continuous CRP.

Environmentally sensitive acreage qualifying for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) or Continuous CRP will be eligible for annual rental payments and cost-share of up to 50 percent on approved practices. These targeted programs will remain funded, and continue to provide heightened environmental benefits on select areas.

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