



# January 2010

## Columbus Service Center News

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

**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  
Ralph Wainwright  
John H. Hunter

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

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



## SURE Signup

Signup for the 2008 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments program (SURE) began on January 4, 2010. SURE 2008 is for those who suffered crop production losses during crop year 2008.

SURE provides crop disaster assistance payments to eligible producers on farms that have incurred crop production or crop quality losses. The program takes into consideration crop losses on all crops grown by a producer nationwide. SURE provides assistance in an amount equal to 60 percent of the difference between the SURE farm guarantee and total farm revenue. The farm guarantee is based on the amount of crop insurance and Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage on the farm. Total farm revenue takes into account the actual value of production on the farm as well as insurance indemnities and certain farm program payments.

Producers with a farming interest physically located in a county that was declared a primary disaster county or contiguous county by the Agriculture Secretary must have suffered at least a 10 percent production loss on a crop of economic significance. Producers must meet the risk management purchase requirement by either obtaining a policy or plan of insurance, under the Federal Crop Insurance Act or NAP coverage, for all economically significant crops. For 2008 crops, producers had the opportunity to obtain a waiver of the risk management purchase requirement through a buy-in provision. Producers considered socially disadvantaged, a beginning farmer or rancher, or a limited resource farmer may be eligible for SURE without a policy or plan of insurance or NAP coverage.

If there is no Secretarial Disaster Designation, individual producers may also be eligible for SURE if the actual production on the farm is less than 50 percent of the normal production on the farm due to a natural disaster. For

SURE, a farm is defined as all crops in which a producer had an interest nationwide. For more information on the new SURE program, please visit the county office or <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

## Farm Reconstitutions

In program terminology, 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. The following are the different methods used

**Estate Method** — the division of bases, allotments and quotas for a parent farm among heirs in settling an estate;

**Designation of Landowner Method** — may be used when (1) part of a farm is sold or ownership is transferred; (2) an entire farm is sold to two or more persons; (3) farm ownership is transferred to two or more persons; (4) part of a tract is sold or ownership is transferred; (5) a tract is sold to two or more persons; or (6) tract ownership is transferred to two or more persons. There are additional requirements

**DCP Cropland Method** — the division of bases in the same proportion that the DCP cropland for each resulting tract relates to the DCP cropland on the parent tract;

**Default Method** — the division of bases for a parent farm with each tract maintaining the bases attributed to the tract level when the reconstitution is initiated in the system.

If payments have already been issued on a particular farm, the reconstitution will be effective for the next year, unless the payments are refunded. Request for recons should be filed by June 1. See your local FSA office for details.



## Marketing Assistance Loans

Marketing Assistance Loans for crop years 2009 through 2012 are available to producers who share in the risk of producing the crop. To be eligible, you must maintain beneficial interest in the crop through the time of application. Beneficial interest means retaining the ability to make decisions about the commodity; responsibility for loss or damage to the commodity; and title to the commodity. Once beneficial interest in a commodity is lost, the commodity is ineligible for loan even if you regain beneficial interest.

Commodity loan eligibility also requires you comply with conservation and wetland protection requirements; beneficial interest requirements, report how you use cropland acreage on the farm and ensure that the commodity meets Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) minimum grade and quality standards. For commodities to be eligible they must have been produced by an eligible producer, be in existence and in a storable condition and be merchantable for food, feed or other uses as determined by CCC. The quality of the commodity in farm storage must be maintained throughout the term of the loan.

Producers do not have to participate in the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program to be eligible for commodity loans.

Violating provisions of a marketing assistance loan may trigger administrative actions, such as assessing liquidated damages, calling the loan and denial of future farm-stored loans.

The most common violations are removing or disposing of a commodity being used as loan collateral without prior authorization and providing an incorrect quantity certification.

## 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.

## County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to George H. Adams Sr. George was re-elected to represent farmers from Local Administrative Area #5 (LAA #5) on the county committee. LAA#5 includes Tabernacle Township, Woodland Township, Washington Township, Bass River Township and Ocean County. George was elected to his 2nd consecutive term. The election results for LAA#5 are:

George H. Adams Sr. — Elected to the county committee from LAA 5 with following Election Totals:

Total Eligible Voters	310
Total Ballots Undeliverable:	29
Total Votes Counted:	28
Total Invalid & Spoiled Ballots 2	
Total Ballots Received (including spoiled and invalid)	30
Percentage of Voters Returning Ballots:	10%

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.

The committee members will hold their organizational meeting on January 19, 2010 to determine who will serve as the county committee chairman and vice-chairman.

## Help Available to Stressed Farmers

In the past year, the economy, inclement weather, drought and other factors have hurt many farming operations around the country. These events pushed some farmers to the emotional breaking point. Watching their livelihood being threatened is difficult for farmers and ranchers and especially for those who care about them.

The National Suicide Prevention Hotline is available to help. If you know a farmer or rancher who is under stress and is reluctant to ask for help, or if you just need to talk to someone, call 1-800-273-TALK (8255). Your call will be routed to the crisis center nearest you, where trained staffers are available 24/7. This nationwide service is free and confidential. Help is just a phone call away.

For more information, go to <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>. This service is not affiliated with the US Department of Agriculture.

## Controlled Substance

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could

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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.

## Power of Attorney

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., FSA has a power of attorney form available that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. If you are interested, please contact our office or any Farm Service Agency office near you for more information

## Bank Account Changes

Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into your bank account. In order for timely payments to be made, producers need to notify the FSA county office if your account has been changed or if another financial institution purchases your bank. Payments can be delayed if the FSA office is not aware of updates to your account and routing numbers.

## 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.

## 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 Facil-

ity Loan documents.

For more clarification on spousal signature authority, feel free to contact your local FSA office.

## Customer Statement

January signals the beginning of a new year, and a time to starting thinking about filing taxes. Producers who have signed up for a USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account will be able to access their farm data via their Customer Statement.

The Customer Statement puts a range of USDA services and programs into a single report that's at your fingertips and available online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

It allows USDA customers to view their participation, application and payment status in various commodity and conservation programs; information on farm loans; and conservation plan and land unit information.

## Informational Meetings

The Service Center will be holding a series of informational meetings in January and February. The meetings will provide information on 3 programs; Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE), Noninsured Assistance Program (NAP) and Average Crop Revenue Election Program (ACRE).

If you would like to attend one of these meetings please contact the service center at (609) 267-1639. The times for each meeting will be the same and will be scheduled 3 times each day. They are 9 AM, 11 AM and 2 PM. The dates are listed below:

SURE – January 27

NAP - February 17

ACRE – February 24

## Emergency Loans Available

1) Due to severe weather conditions from April 15, 2009, low interest emergency loans for losses are available through May 25, 2010.

2) Due to severe storms and flooding associated with Tropical Depression Ida and a Nor'easter from 11/11/2009 through 11/15/2009. Applications may be received through 8/23/2010.

**Please call your local FSA office for information.**



PRSRT STD  
 Postge Fees Paid  
 Farm Service Agency  
 Permit No. G-96

<b>Selected Interest Rates for January 2010</b>	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating - Direct	2.875%
Farm Ownership - Direct	4.75%
Limited Resource	5.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Emergency	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility 7Yr-2.875% 10 Yr-3.375%; 12 Yr-3.750%	
Sugar Storage Facility	4.00%

<b>Dates to Remember</b>	
Jan 19, 2010	Office Closed for Martin Luther King Holiday
Jan. 4, 2010	SURE Signup opens
Jan. 19, 2010	Deadline for DELAP applications
Jan 29, 2010	LDP on Unshorn Lamb Pelts Closes
	<b>INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS at Columbus FSA Office</b>
1/27/2010	SURE 9am, 11am, and 2 pm
2/17/2010	NAP 9am, 11am and 2 pm
2/24/2010	ACRE 9am, 11am and 2 pm

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