



MAY 2010

Columbus Service Center News
Servicing Burlington, Camden & Ocean Counties in NJ

USDA
Burlington/Camden &
Ocean Counties in NJ

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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 W. Wainwright

County committee meets
2nd Tuesday of Month

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



Acreage Reporting

Acreage reporting time will soon be here. Filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs.

Failed acreage must be reported within 15 days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date.

Acreage reports are required for many Farm Service Agency programs. For crops other than NAP (Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program) crops, acreage reports are to be certified by the May 31st deadline on small grains and a July 15th deadline on all other crops.

Acreage reports on crops for which NAP assistance may be paid are due in the county office by the earlier of May 31st for small grains and July 15th for all other crops, or 15 calendar days before the onset of harvest or grazing of the specific crop acreage being reported.

DCP Signup

Enrollment for the 2010 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) will continue through June 1, 2010. Producers can visit any USDA Service Center to complete their 2010 DCP contract.

USDA computes DCP Program 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 2010, eligible producers may request advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment.

Contact the nearest FSA office for more information.

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 non-farm 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/mainse/et.

NAP Loss Filing

The CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and prevented planting and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. Timely filing a Notice of Loss is required on for ALL CROPS INCLUDING GRASSES. For losses on crops covered by the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and crop insurance, you must file a CCC-576 (notice of loss) in the FSA County Office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent.

If filing for prevented planting, an acreage report and CCC-576 must be filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.

NAP Records

Production records for individual crops need to be filed with our office to establish an approved NAP yield. If this is the first year you participated in NAP, you can provide production and acreage information from prior years to establish your yield. If you participated in NAP in previous years, you must report your production and acreage on a yearly basis to keep your yield up-to-date. Records submitted must be reliable or verifiable. Records need to show crop disposition. We recommend producers submit 2009 production records as soon as harvest is complete. All production records must be submitted by the subsequent crop year's final acreage reporting date.



Early Land Preparation for CRP

Beginning May 1 for arid areas, or July 1, of the final year of a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contract, cover may be destroyed on certain acreage before the contract expires to prepare a seedbed for fall seeded crop. A CRP general signup may occur in Fiscal Year (FY) 2010. Questions have arisen concerning the general signup eligibility of land that is expiring from CRP that is approved for early land preparation.

CRP participants that signed CRP-1G, Addendum, Modification To Allow Early Land Preparation, approved before April 22, 2010, to begin early land preparation were informed that beginning early land preparation activity will affect general signup eligibility.

If early land preparation activity is performed, the land is not eligible to be offered for the anticipated FY 2010 general signup. However, the CRP-1G may be withdrawn provided cover has not been damaged or destroyed because of early land preparation.

If no early land preparation activity was performed, the land is otherwise eligible to be offered for the anticipated FY 2010 general signup.

If the county committee has not approved the CRP-1G Addendum, the CRP-1G shall be voided and the participant will be informed that a new CRP-1G Addendum that includes general signup eligibility provisions must be filed.

Additional information on early land preparation for expiring CRP acres is available at FSA county offices.

Farm Reconstitutions

At FSA, 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. If an owner or operator can not agree about program participation, like in the case of the new ACRE program, then producers should inquire about a reconstitutions at the local FSA office.

The reconstitution—or recon—is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by August 2, 2010 for farms enrolled in specific programs.

Farm Loan Programs

The Farm Service Agency is committed to providing family farmers with loans to meet their farm credit needs. If you are having trouble getting the credit you need for your farm, or regularly borrow from FSA, direct and guaranteed loans are currently available.

Ask your lender about an FSA loan guarantee if you’ve had a setback and your lender is reluctant to extend or renew your loan.

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. Producers are encouraged to apply early so that a loan can be processed and funded in a timely manner.

FSA employees will help you complete the necessary application and other forms, and help you understand what information is required, where to find it or who to contact to get it. To find out more about FSA loan programs, contact the county office staff.

Cold Storage Facility Loans

The Farm Storage Facility Loan program has been amended to allow producers to build cold storage facilities to store their fresh fruits and vegetables. To be eligible, cold storage facilities must have a useful life of 15 years and include:

- New structures suitable for a cold storage facility;
- New walk-in prefabricated permanently installed coolers suitable for storing fresh fruits and vegetables;
- New permanently affixed cooling, circulating and monitoring equipment;
- Electrical equipment integral to the proper operation of a cold storage facility; **and must be**
- An addition or modification to an existing storage facility.

USDA will not make cold storage facility loans for portable structures, portable handling and cooling equipment, used, or pre-owned structures or cooling equipment or structures deemed unsuitable.

The maximum loan amount for a Farm Storage Facility loan is \$500,000 per loan, which require a down payment of at least 15 percent. Applications must be approved before construction can begin. Loan terms of 7, 10 or 12 years are available depending on the amount of the loan.

Loans applications should be submitted to the administrative FSA county office that maintains the records of the farm or farms to which the application applies. If the commodities are produced on land that does not have farm records established, the application must be submitted to the FSA county office that services the county where the facility will be located.

For more information on this program or other FSA farm programs please contact your local FSA county office or <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

SURE Program

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters that incurred in the crop years 2008 through September 30, 2011. To be eligible for SURE payments, a producer is required to obtain crop insurance on all crops in all counties or, if crop insurance is not available, to participate in the Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) except for grazed acreage. However, crop insurance or NAP coverage is no longer required for crops that are not of economic significance or those where the administrative fee required to buy NAP coverage exceeds 10% of the value of the coverage.

SURE Program Continued

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 conditions trigger SURE payments:

- At least one crop of economic significance must suffer a 10% production loss due to an eligible disaster condition
- Prop of economic significance is 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
- Producers in counties declared disaster counties by the Secretary of Agriculture, or in contiguous counties, or those who show proof of an individual loss of at least 50% are eligible to receive SURE payments for crop producer 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/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=diap&topic=sure>. The calculator is not official, but is intended for educational use. A fact sheet and back-grounder are also available online.

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP)

USDA Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is a voluntary program that helps agricultural producers safeguard environmentally sensitive land. CRP participants plant long-term, resource-conserving covers to improve the quality of water, control soil erosion, and enhance wildlife habitat. In return, FSA provides participants with annual rental payments and cost-share assistance.

The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) makes annual rental payments based on the agriculture rental value of the land, and it provides cost-share assistance for up to 50 percent of the participant's costs in establishing approved conservation practices. Participants enroll in CRP contracts for 10 to 15 years.

To be eligible for placement in CRP, land must be either:

Cropland (including field margins) that is planted or considered planted to an agricultural commodity 4 of the previous 6 crop years from 1996 to 2001, and which is physically and legally capable of being planted in a normal manner to an agricultural commodity; or certain marginal pastureland that is enrolled in the Water Bank Program or suitable for use as a riparian buffer or for similar water quality purposes.

CRP Eligible Practices

Also, the land must be eligible and suitable for any of the following conservation practices:

- Riparian buffers;
- Wildlife habitat buffers; Wetland Buffers
- Filter strips; Wetland Restoration
- Grass waterways; Shelterbelts
- Living snow fences; Contour Grass Strips
- Salt tolerant vegetation; and
- Shallow water areas for wildlife.

Land within an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-designated public wellhead area may also be eligible for enrollment on a continuous basis. For more information on CRP, contact your local FSA office or visit FSA's Web site at:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov>

Tree Assistance Program for Orchardists and Nursery Tree Growers (TAP)

USDA Farm Service Agency's TAP provides financial assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers (including blueberry bushes and cranberry vines) to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by natural disasters occurring on or after Jan. 1, 2008 and before Oct. 1, 2011. The 2008 Farm Bill expanded eligibility to include Christmas tree and nursery tree growers that were ineligible under prior legislation. Trees grown for pulp or timber or not grown for commercial purposes are not eligible.

To be eligible for TAP, producers must have suffered more than a 15 percent death loss due to the natural disaster after adjustment for normal mortality. Eligible trees, bushes and vines are those from which an annual crop is produced for commercial purposes. TAP is a cost-reimbursement program, with payments covering up to 70% of replant costs and 50% of pruning, removal and other salvaging costs for replacing or salvaging damaged trees.

Producers can receive assistance for up to 500 acres of trees, bushes or vines. Producers must also have purchased a policy or plan of insurance under the Federal Crop Insurance Act or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), or for 2008, obtained a waiver of the risk management purchase requirement through the buy-in provision. Eligible losses must have occurred on or after Jan. 1, 2008, and before Oct. 1, 2011.

Signup for TAP begins Monday, May 10, 2010, for losses suffered during calendar years 2008 and 2009, and for losses suffered during Jan. 1, 2010, to May 7, 2010 at local Farm Service Agency offices.

Date of Loss	Final Date to Submit an Application and Supporting Documentation
Calendar Year 2008	July 6, 2010
Calendar Year 2009	July 6, 2010
Jan. 1, 2010 to May 7, 2010	July 6, 2010
May 8, 2010 to Sept. 30, 2011	Within 90 calendar days from the later of the disaster event or the date when the loss of trees, bushes or vines is apparent.

More information is available at FSA's website: www.fsa.usda.gov/tap

Measurement Service

Farmers who would like a guarantee on their crop plantings and land use acreages can make it official by using the FSA measurement service. Producers must file a request with the county office staff and pay the cost of a field visit to have stake and referencing done on the farm. Measurement service is available using digital imagery and where an on-site visit is not required are charged at a reduced rate.

Incorrect acreage self-certification can result in reduced program payments, penalty, or loss of eligibility.

Producers can request ortho-imagery and CLU covering their land (commonly referred to as a clip) at no charge. This would provide the acreage of an entire field.

Selected Interest Rates for May 2010		DATES TO REMEMBER	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%	May 10 th	TAP Signup Begins (See above)
Farm Operating - Direct	2.875%	May 31 st	Small Grain Reporting Deadline
Farm Ownership - Direct	5.00%	June 1 st	DCP Sign-Up Closes
Limited Resource	5.00%	June 1 st	Recons Should Be Filed
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%	July 6 th	Final Date to submit Applications & Supporting Documentation for TAP; For losses in Calendar Years 2008 & 2009 and 1/1/2010 to 5/7/ 2010
Emergency	3.75%	July 15 th	Crop Reporting Deadline
Farm Storage Facility (FSFL): 7 Year	3.25%	July 15 th	2009 NAP Production Deadline
FSFL-10 Year 3.875% FSFL-12 Year	4.125%	Aug 1 st	2011 NAP Strawberry Deadline
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.50%	Sept 1 st	2011 NAP Hay & Sod Deadline

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication & Compliance, 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."