



FSA Announces SURE Sign-up

Sign-up for the 2009 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) began Jan. 10, 2011. SURE provides benefits for 2009 crop year farm revenue losses due to natural disasters.

A farm is eligible to enroll in SURE when either:

- a portion of the farm is located in a county covered by a qualifying natural disaster declaration (USDA Secretarial Declarations only) or a contiguous county; or,
- the actual production is less than 50% of the normal production.

Counties serviced through the Columbus Service Center are covered by the secretarial designation. Therefore, producers who meet all other requirements are eligible for SURE participation in 2009 without having to meet the 50% loss threshold criteria. Producer reports to the office about weather related losses are vital to a county receiving Secretarial Designations – thereby making SURE eligibility easier to attain – so please continue to notify us about weather-related physical or crop damage.

Sorghum Referendum Underway

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced the start of the Sorghum Referendum beginning February 1st until February 28th. The referendum will determine whether or not the Sorghum Checkoff Program will continue.

Sorghum Checkoff is a national, coordinated, self-help marketing program designed to strengthen the position of sorghum in the marketplace, maintain and expand

existing domestic and foreign markets and uses for sorghum, and develop new markets and uses for sorghum.

The Sorghum Checkoff Program, and its 13-member board, is funded at the rate of 0.6 percent of the net market value on grain sorghum and 0.35 percent of the net market value of sorghum forage.

Any eligible person engaged in the production or importation of sorghum from July 1, 2008, to Dec. 31, 2010, is eligible to participate. Individuals are required to provide documentation such as a sales receipt or remittance form that shows they engaged in the production or importation of sorghum.

USDA will conduct the referendum at local Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices. Ballots may be obtained in person, by mail or facsimile at county FSA offices, or via the Internet at www.ams.usda.gov/sorghumpage.

Producer Meetings

In an effort to keep our customers informed about program eligibility and requirements, the Columbus Service Center will be hosting a series of meetings in the coming months.

All meetings will be held at the Columbus Service Center at 10:00am on the dates below:

- **March 2nd** – Non-insured crop Assistance Program (NAP)
- **March 16th** – Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) Program,
- **April 13th** - Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and other conservation programs.

FSA Office Burlington Camden Ocean Counties

1971 Jacksonville
Jobstown Road
Columbus NJ 08022

Phone: 609-267-1639
FAX: 609-261-3007

www.fsa.usda.gov/NJ

Hours

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

County Committee

George H. Adams Sr.
Marilyn L Russo
Louis Parzanese
John H Hunter
Ralph W Wainwright

COC meets:

2nd Tuesday of Month
(Call the office for times)

County Staff

Nick Morolda CED
Robert Maxwell FLM
Jim Mellor PT
Craig Christo PT
Julia Coriary PT





Eligible Losses for NAP

NAP covers participants for “natural disasters” such as:

- drought
- hail
- freeze
- excessive moisture
- wind.

Did you know that NAP also covers participants for conditions resulting from “natural disasters” such as:

- heat
- disease
- insect infestation?

March 15th NAP Deadline

Be sure to cover the following crops before March 15th.

- Beans
- Brussels sprouts
- Cantaloupe
- Celery
- Corn (insured)
- Cucumber
- Eggplant
- Honeydew
- Oats (insured)
- Okra
- Peppers
- Pumpkins
- Sorghum
- Soybeans (insured)
- Squash
- Sunflowers
- Sweet potatoes
- Yams
- Tomatillos
- Tomatoes
- Watermelon

Manage Your Risk with the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

The noninsured crop disaster assistance program (NAP) helps producers reduce their risk when growing food and fiber crops, specialty crops and crops for livestock feed. These benefits are only available for crops for which the catastrophic level of crop insurance is not available.

NAP compensates producers that experience catastrophic losses that are weather related for covered crops.

In addition to providing catastrophic coverage NAP (or Crop Insurance) is also a prerequisite for other disaster programs like 2009 (and future) SURE.

To receive coverage for an eligible crop for a crop year or planting period, the application must be accompanied by a service fee in an amount that is equal to the lesser of \$250 per crop per county; or \$750 per producer per county, not to exceed a total of \$1875 per producer per multi-county. Application for coverage must be filed by the applicable crop’s application closing date.

Producers that enroll in NAP must complete an acreage report and provide production after harvest. Producers must report losses 15 days after the loss is apparent and may not destroy the crop until it has been appraised by FSA. Failure to do so will result in the ineligibility of that crop.

Production evidence for all crops must be reported to FSA to receive benefits. Maintaining your Actual production History (APH) each year will provide you the greatest NAP benefit. Production can be reported either with production receipts or by certifying your production before the final crop reporting date of the following year. Production evidence can be verifiable, reliable or certified.

Borrow up to \$500,000 for Hay, Grain and Temperature Controlled Storage with FSFL

The Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program allows producers of eligible

commodities to obtain low-interest financing to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities, including cold storage for fruits, vegetable and even grapes used in wine production.



Eligible commodities for the FSFL program include: corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanut s, wheat, barley, minor oilseeds, pulse crops - lentils, small chickpeas and dry peas, hay, renewable biomass, fruits (including nuts) and vegetables

Participants are now required to provide a down payment of 15 percent, with CCC providing a loan for the remaining 85 percent of the net cost of the eligible storage facility and permanent drying and handling equipment. New loan terms of 7, 10 or 12 years are available depending on the amount of the loan. Interest rates for each term rate may be different and are based on the rate which CCC borrows from Treasury Department.

Payments are available in the form of a partial disbursement during construction and the remaining payment after construction is completed. The maximum amount of the partial disbursement will be 50 percent of the projected and approved total loan amount.

Applications for FSFL must be submitted to the FSA county office that maintains the farm's records. An FSFL must be approved before any site preparation or construction can begin.

2011 DCP Signup

Enrollment for the 2011 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) has begun and will continue through June 1, 2011.

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 2011, eligible producers may request partial direct payments as an advance on the total amount.

The Columbus Service Center began mailing out DCP contracts to our previously participating producers. Please remember to initial block 6 for DCP or ACRE selection, sign (make sure to insert your title if signing for an entity) and date.

Contracts for farms that are continuously leased require either; owner signatures on the contract, copy of a written leases or Cash-Rent Certification form, CCC-510 that is enclosed with your contract. Ground that is newly leased or has a change ownership requires either; owner signature(s) on the contract or a written lease.

Actively Engaged Requirements Amended

USDA has amended the rules that govern the requirements to be 'actively engaged' in farming. These rules apply to eligibility for payments under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) or Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) program administered by FSA.

Normally the stockholder or a member of a legal entity **must** make contributions of active personal labor and/or active personal management for the farming operation. The contributions are to be performed on regular basis, must be identifiable, and separate from the contributions of others.

The exception to this rule for a stockholder or member of a legal entity only occurs when both of the following apply:

- At least half of the interest in the legal entity is held by stockholders or members who are providing active personal labor or active personal management; and
- The total direct payments received by the legal entity and each of the members can't exceed \$40,000.

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 nonfarm 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. These forms may be obtained from your local Service Center.

Selected Interest Rates for February 2011	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating Loans - Direct	2.25%
Farm Ownership Loans - Direct	4.75%
Limited Resource Loans	5.00%
Farm Ownership Loans - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Emergency Loans	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility Loans	2.75-3.625%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.25%
Conservation Loan	4.5%

Conservation Corner

NRCS's Organic Initiative Deadline March 4th

NRCS's Organic Initiative provides funding to help organic producers and those transitioning to organic production implement resource conservation practices on their agricultural operations.

Organic Initiative funding is provided through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), a voluntary conservation program administered by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible national goals. The 2008 Farm Bill EQIP provided for assistance specifically for organic farm operations and those converting to organic production.

Under Organic Initiative contracts, producers are paid 75 percent of the cost for the organic conservation measures they implement. Beginning, limited resource, and socially disadvantaged producers are paid 90 percent. The program provides up to \$20,000 per year per person or legal entity, with a maximum total of \$80,000 over six years.

Producers interested in applying for Organic Initiative funding must submit applications through NRCS at the Columbus Service Center.



FEBRUARY 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 2009 SURE Producer Meeting	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21  Presidents Day Office Closed	22	23	24	25	26
27	28 Sorghum Referendum Ends		MARCH 2 NAP Producer Meeting			

"The U.S. Dept of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."