

May 2009



Atlantic/ Cape May/ Cumberland County News

USDA Service Center

Atlantic/ Cape May/ Cumberland County FSA

1317 S. Main Rd. Bldg. 3
Vineland, NJ 08360
856-205-1225 (phone)
856-205-0691 (fax)

Hours

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

County Committee

Rita Muzzarelli
Anthony Melora
Florence Ale
Sue Wheeler
David T. Sheppard Jr.

County Committee meets
2nd Wednesday of month

County Staff

Angela J. Andreoli, CED
Robert R. Maxwell, FLM
Toni Brooks, FLO
Ellen Schmidt, FLO
Lori Tobin, PT
Kathy Visconti, PT
Lorna Hofstetter, PT
Ashlea Visconti, FLOT



May 4, 2009

Request for Soybean Referendum May 4 – May 29

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has announced that it will offer soybean producers the opportunity to request a referendum on the Soybean Promotion and Research Order, as authorized under the Soybean Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act.

The Request for Referendum will be conducted at county Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices. To participate, producers must certify and provide documentation that shows that they produced soybeans and paid an assessment on the soybeans during the period of Jan. 1, 2007, through Dec. 31, 2008.

Beginning May 4, 2009, and continuing through May 29, 2009, producers may obtain a request form by mail, fax, or in person from the FSA county offices. Forms may also be obtained via the internet at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/ismarketingprograms> during the same time period.

The deadline for returning the referendum request form is May 29, 2009. USDA will conduct a referendum if at least 10 percent of the nation's 589,182 soybean producers support a referendum. Not more than one-fifth of the producers who support having a referendum can be from any one state. For more information, contact your local FSA office.

DCP & ACRE Signup Extended

Signup for the 2009 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment (DCP) Program has been extended until August 14, 2009. FSA will not accept any late-filed applications. Signup in the ACRE option is also available through August 14, 2009.

FSA 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 2009, you may request to receive ad-

vance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment for each commodity associated with the farm. FSA will issue advance direct payments later this month. Counter-cyclical payment rates vary depending on market prices and are issued only when the effective price for a commodity is statutorily set below its target price.

The electronic DCP (or eDCP) service will save you time, reduce paperwork and speed up contract processing at FSA offices. It is available to anyone eligible to participate in the DCP Program. To access this on-line service, you must have an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires filling out an online registration form at <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov> followed by a visit to the local USDA Service Center for identity verification.

ACRE Signup is Ongoing

The Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) program signup began April 27, 2009, and runs through August 14, 2009. The ACRE alternative provides eligible producers a state-level revenue guarantee, based on the 5-year state Olympic average yield and the 2-year national average price.

Commodities eligible for ACRE payments are wheat, corn, grain sorghum, barley, oats, upland cotton, long grain rice, medium and short grain rice, peanuts, soybeans, sunflower seed, canola, flaxseed, safflower, mustard seed, rapeseed, sesame seed, crambe, dry peas, lentils, small chickpeas and large chickpeas.

The ACRE program was created to give producers an option in lieu of traditional counter-cyclical payments. Producers may elect and enroll in ACRE for the 2009 crop year even if they have already accepted advance direct payments under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program.



New Commodity Loan Repayment Rates

Since April 15, FSA began using an improved and more stable system for determining non-recourse marketing assistance loan repayment rates and loan deficiency payment rates for wheat, feed grains, pulse crops, oilseeds, wool, mohair and honey. The new method reduces the effects daily market volatilities have on loan repayment rates, and provides more certainty for producers who have taken advantage of marketing assistance loans or loan deficiency payments. The loan repayment rate may now be determined as the **lesser** of the loan rate plus interest and a rate based on: 1) average market prices during the previous 30 days, or 2) an alternative method the secretary may develop.

Beginning April 15, 2009, for wheat, corn, grain sorghum, soybeans, barley, oats, canola, flaxseed and sunflower seed, the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) determines and publishes daily loan repayment rates based on the average market prices during the preceding 30 days. At the same time, CCC will announce each day a repayment rate based on the preceding five days. The new method will replace the current one, which is based on the previous day's market rates. **The effective alternative repayment rate will be the lower of either the 30-day average or the 5-day average.**

The 30-day method will reflect a 30-day moving average of all terminal market prices for the crop, adjusted by the difference between the applicable national loan rate and the county loan rate. The 5-day method will reflect a 5-day moving average of applicable terminal market prices adjusted by applicable county differential and terminal adjustments. This new loan repayment method will minimize potential forfeitures, accumulation of CCC stocks, CCC storage costs, market impediments and discrepancies in benefits across state and county boundaries. More details are available at your county FSA office.

Crop Reporting

The annual, timely and accurate reporting of acres for all crops and land uses, including 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, Average

Crop Revenue Election, marketing assistance loans, Loan Deficiency Payments, Conservation Reserve Program and the Non-Insured Disaster Assistance Program.

Crop reported on form FSA-578, "Report of Acreage", must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. Producers need to file their acreage reports by May 31st for small grains and July 15th for most other crops.

Prevented Planting:

Prevented planting needs be reported no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date.

Failed Acreage:

Reports of failed acreage must be filed before disposition of the crop, and producers must be able to establish to the satisfaction of the county committee that the crop failed and was prevented from being replanted through the normal planting period because of natural disaster conditions.

Please call the office if you have questions about the reporting deadlines for the type of crops you grow.

2009 County Committee Elections

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency County Committees is important to ALL farmers and ranchers, whether beginning or long-established, with large or small operations. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA County Committees are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

County Committee members are a critical component of the operations of FSA. They help deliver FSA farm programs at the local level. Farmers and ranchers who serve on County Committees help with the decisions necessary to administer the programs in their counties. County Committees provide local input on:

- Commodity price support loans and payments
- Conservation programs
- Incentive, indemnity and disaster payments for some commodities
- Emergency programs
- Payment eligibility

FSA county committees operate within official regulations to carry out federal laws. County committee members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions.

Election Period

June 15, 2009 – The nomination period begins.



Request nomination forms (FSA 669A) from the local USDA Service Center or obtain online at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA> under News & Events/County Committee Elections.

Aug. 3, 2009 - Last day to file nomination forms

Nov. 6, 2009 - Ballots mailed to eligible voters

Dec. 7, 2009 - Last day to return voted ballots to the USDA Service Center

Jan. 1, 2010 - Newly elected county committee members take office

Who Can Hold Office

To hold office a person must meet the basic eligibility criteria.

- Participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA
- Be eligible to vote in a county committee election
- Reside in the LAA in which a candidate

Not have been:

- Removed or disqualified from the office of county committee member, alternate or employee
- Removed for cause from any public office or have been convicted of fraud, larceny, embezzlement or any other felony
- Dishonorably discharged from any branch of the armed services.

Nominations

To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign nomination form FSA-669A. The form includes a statement that the nominee agrees to serve if elected. This form is available at USDA Service Centers and online at:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA> under News & Events/County Committee Elections.

Nomination forms must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on **Aug. 3, 2009**.

Individuals may nominate themselves or others as a candidate. Additionally, organizations representing minority and women farmers or ranchers may nominate candidates. Nomination forms are filed for the County Committee of the office that administers a producer's farm records.

Who Can Vote

Agricultural producers of legal voting age may be eligible to vote if they participate or cooperate in any FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises and conducts the farming

operations of an entire farm may also be eligible to vote. More information about voting eligibility requirements can be found in the FSA fact sheet titled "FSA County Committee Election - Eligibility to Vote and Hold."

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 at no charge. This would provide the acreage of an entire field.

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 reconstitution of the farm 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 1** for farms enrolled in specific programs.

NAP Production Reporting

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, which in most cases is July 15th.**

Timely Filing of Loss

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 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.

Dates to Remember	
April 27- Aug 14	ACRE program signup runs
May 18	Last day for Disaster Buy-In
May 25	Office Closed- Memorial Day
May 31	Reporting deadline for small grains
May 4- 29	Requests for Referendum for Soy-bean Promotion
June 15	COC nominations period opens
July 3	Office Closed- Independence Day
July 15	Reporting deadline for most crops except small grains
July 15	Last day to report prior years production for 2009 APH
August 1	NAP closing for Strawberries
August 3	Last day to file COC election nomination forms
August 14	DCP Signup Deadline
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve program

Visit our Web site at
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/nj>

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