



July 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
Lorna Hofstetter, PT
Ashlea Visconti, FLOT

County Committee Elections

"FSA Counts on You"

Since COC elections happen only once a year, here is an election refresher. For election purposes, counties are divided into *local administrative areas*, or LAA's. Each LAA selects one producer to serve a three-year term on the Farm Service Agency county committee.

Each year, an election is held in an LAA to replace the committee member whose three-year term is expiring. In counties with three LAA's, one seat is up for election. In combined counties in some years, two seats may be up for election.

The Local Administrative Areas (LAA) that are having an election this year are LAA #1 & #3. These areas include the following:

LAA # 1

Stow Creek	Greenwich	Hopewell
Upper Deerfield	Bridgeton	Shiloh Boro

LAA # 3

Vineland	Buena	Buena Vista
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Election Timetable

June 15 Nomination period begins.
 Aug. 3 Deadline to submit nomination forms.
 Nov. 6 Ballots are mailed to eligible voters.
 Dec. 7 Deadline to return completed ballots to FSA county office.
 Jan. 1, 2010 New committee members and alternates are installed.

Nominations

Candidate nominations for the FSA county committee election will be accepted June 15 through Aug. 3, 2009. Producers who are residents in the LAA holding the election and who participate or cooperate in an FSA program and are of legal voting age may be nominated to serve on the county committee. Individuals may nominate themselves or others as candidates. Also, organizations representing socially disadvantaged minorities and women farmers or ranchers may also nominate candidates. The nomination form, FSA-669A, is available at the

county office or may be downloaded from <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=newsroom&subject=landing&topic=cce>.

To be valid, the nomination form must be signed by the person being nominated, indicating agreement to serve if elected. The completed nomination form must be returned to the county office by the close of business on Aug. 3, or postmarked by midnight Aug. 3, 2009.

Voting

Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters beginning Nov. 6, and must be returned to the county office by the close of business on Dec. 7, or postmarked by midnight Dec. 7, 2009. Agricultural producers of legal voting age can 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 on an entire farm can also vote. No one can be denied the right to vote because of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital or family status.

Candidate Eligibility

To hold office as a county committee member, 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 the person is 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 felony
 - Dishonorably discharged from any branch of the armed services.

Meetings

Meetings are held once a month. At this time they are the second Wednesday of the month.

November- March 1:00 pm

April- October 7:00 pm

For additional clarification about county committee elections, contact your local county office staff.



July 9, 2009



DCP & ACRE Signup Deadline

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 advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment for each commodity associated with the farm. 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.

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

****IMPORTANT****

Change in Crop Reporting Deadline

The July 15th deadline has been recently changed to August 14th for 2009 crop reporting only. Please remember if you participate in NAP you are still required to report all planted acres 15 days prior to the onset of harvest.

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, Load 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 acres by August 14th for most crops for 2009 only.

Have you been prevented from planting or had failed acres due to the recent wet weather? Contact the office to let us know about your losses & to find out what programs are available.

Prevented Planting:

Prevented planting needs be reported no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date. Proof of intention to plant must be provided.

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.

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 refer-



encing 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.

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.

2010 Nursery Crop Year and Application Closing Date

FSA's Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) application closing date for 2010 nursery is **September 1, 2009**. When low yields, loss of inventory or prevented planting occurs due to natural disaster, NAP can provide financial assistance.

The NAP coverage period and NAP year for 2010 nursery crops has been changed to June 1, 2009, through May 31, 2010. However, the 2010 NAP coverage will be retroactive to June 1, 2009. For those producers who obtained 2009 NAP coverage for nursery, and choose not to obtain 2010 continuous coverage, the 2009 NAP coverage for nursery will continue until September 30, 2009.

NAP coverage may be continued for each subsequent year for the same crop or crops, if the producer pays the applicable service fee by the next year's application closing date. To apply for continuous coverage, producers must pay the applicable service fee before the application closing date. Producers considered as limited resource are not subject to annual fees. Eligible producers must apply for coverage of noninsurable crops and pay the

applicable service fees at their local FSA office. The service fee is the lesser of \$250 per crop or \$750 per producer per administrative county, not to exceed a total of \$1,875 per producer with farming interests in multiple counties.

Contact your local office for more information or at www.fsa.usda.gov.

FSA Farm Loans

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers loans for farmers and ranchers to purchase farmland and finance agricultural operations. FSA loan programs are designed to help producers who are temporarily unable to obtain private or commercial credit. In many cases, applicants are beginning farmers who have insufficient net worth to qualify for financing through a commercial lender. In other instances, borrowers might have suffered setbacks from natural disasters or might be persons with limited resources.

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 \$1,094,000. Emergency loans are always direct loans for farmers who may have suffered physical or production losses in disaster areas designated by a Presidential or Secretarial disaster declaration. Rural Youth Loans, Loans to Beginning Farmers and loans for socially disadvantaged applicants are also available through FSA.

For detail information loan eligibility or the different available loan programs, just contact the county office staff for an appointment with a farm loan officer.

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/farbill/index.html.

The training was supported in part through a Conservation Innovation Grant from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

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.

Dates to Remember	
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
August 14	Extension deadline for reporting most crops, except small grains
September 1	NAP closing for Christmas trees, Fin Fish, Flowers, Grass (SOD) & Nursery
September 7	Office Closed- Labor day
September 30	NAP Closing for Barley, Clover, Grass, Mixed Forage, Rye & Wheat
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve program

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

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