



January 11, 2011

*Farm Service Agency*

Serving Monmouth,  
Mercer &  
Middlesex Counties

4000 Kozloski Road  
P.O. Box 5033  
Freehold, NJ 07728

Phone:  
(732) 462-0075  
Fax:  
(732) 462-5274

Office Hours:  
8:00 am to 4:30 pm  
or visit us at:  
[www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)

County Committee  
Richard Bullock  
Thomas Orgo II  
Barry Taylor  
Kathy Stattel

*“dedicated to achieving  
an economically and  
environmentally sound  
future for American  
Agriculture”*



[County Committee Elections](#) - Please join FSA in congratulating the winners of this year's County Committee election! 140 ballots were received for LAA #2 (Middlesex and northern Monmouth County) and counted in a public forum on December 9, 2010 resulting in Thomas Orgo II being re-elected as the regular member, Patrick DePalma as the first alternate and John Hauser as the second alternate. All members and alternates began their new term on January 3, 2011. Thanks to all who voted!



[Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program \(SURE\)](#) - Signup for the 2009 SURE began on Jan. 10, 2011 and will remain open through July 29, 2011. SURE provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters. A farm enrolled in SURE is eligible when either a portion of the farm is located in a county covered by a qualifying natural disaster declaration, which includes Monmouth, Mercer, and Middlesex Counties for 2009, or a contiguous county, or the actual production is less than 50% of the normal production.

[DCP Signup & Advance Payments](#) - Enrollment for the 2011 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) has begun and advance payments of 22% on the 2011 DCP program are available. The remaining 78% of your DCP payment will be issued after October 1, 2011. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. DCP contract signatures for enrollment are due by the signup deadline of June 1, 2011.

### [Important Annual Reminders:](#)

[Payment Limitation/Eligibility](#) - Producers are reminded that no program benefits may be provided until all the necessary payment limitation and eligibility determinations have been made. Determinations are based on the facts as submitted by the producer, and as a program participant, it is the producer's responsibility to promptly notify the county



FSA office of any changes in the farming operation that would affect an "actively engaged in farming", or foreign person determination. Any changes in an operation may result in a new or revised CCC-902 and/or AD-1026 being required before any current year payments can be issued. Current payment limitation and eligibility requirements result in the following annual limits: Direct and Counter Cyclical Payment Program (DCP); direct payments (\$40,000) and counter-cyclical payments (\$65,000), ACRE: Direct Payment earned reduced by 20% - not to exceed \$32,000; Marketing Assistance Loans, Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP) and market gains (\$75,000), Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) (\$50,000), ELAP, LFP, LIP, and SURE \$100,000, and Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) (\$100,000); Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)(\$200,000).

[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 four 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, and finally an appeal can be heard by the National Appeals Division (NAD).

**Controlled Substance** - Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could 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.

**Farm Records Update** - If you have bought or sold land, or if you have picked up or dropped rented land from your operation, make sure to report the changes to the County Office as soon as possible. You need to provide a copy of your deed or closing contract for purchased property. We recommend keeping your records up to date now to save you time in the spring. Failure to maintain accurate records with FSA on all land you have an interest in can lead to program ineligibility and penalties.

**Special Accommodations** - Special accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If you require such accommodations, please call this office.

**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 staff 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.

**Power of Attorney** - For those individuals who find it difficult to visit the office personally, the FSA has a Power of Attorney form available so you may designate another person to conduct your business at the office.

**Foreign Landowner Notification** - The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) of 1978 requires that any foreign person who acquires, transfers, or holds an interest in U.S. agricultural lands to report such holdings to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture within 90 days of the transaction. Failure to do so may result in a fine of up to 25% of the property's fair market value. County government offices, realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements and that it is the foreign person's responsibility to report the land transaction.

### **Dates to Remember!**

**January 10, 2011** – SURE program signup opens for 2009 losses (will continue thru July 29, 2011).

**February 2, 2011** - Next scheduled meeting of the County Committee (9:00am)

**March 15, 2011** - Next NAP sales closing date for some 2011 crops.

**Through June 1, 2011** – DCP and ACRE signup period for 2011.



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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).