



Important Budget Impact Information *from Paul J. Hlubik, State Executive Director*

As you are aware, the 2011 FY federal budget was recently approved with significant reductions. Some programs have been impacted and administrative operating money has been reduced. In order to maximize services to you, we are making some minor changes. We will no longer make mass mailings of maps, contracts, etc. Maps of your operation will be available to you if you contact the office in advance and bring with you a new, unopened USB flash drive (storage stick), CD or DVD. This will make it very convenient to you to have this information on your own computers. For those requesting paper maps, please arrange for them to be picked up.

The number of newsletters will be reduced as will the number of written reminders mailed to you. Travel to meetings will be reduced as well as other steps to reduce administrative dollars. We encourage you to mark your calendar with important sign up dates and reporting information. It is also very helpful when you keep your scheduled appointment and bring with you the documents you need. If you provide the office with your e-mail address or fax number, we can update you on the latest program information. In addition, the COC meeting schedules may need to be adjusted so contact the office in advance if you plan to attend.

We believe these changes will have minimum impact to you while still saving tax dollars. Please report any problems with these proposed changes to the CED who will include the information in their weekly reports to me. Our goal is to continue to provide quality service to you, our producers and borrowers.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation in this matter.



DCP Signup Closing June 1, 2011

Enrollment for the 2011 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) will continue through June 1, 2011. There will not be an opportunity to late file your contract. Producers can visit the Frenchtown USDA Service Center to complete their 2011 DCP contract.

USDA computes DCP 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.

FSA Office **Hunterdon, Somerset Counties**

687 Pittstown Road,
Suite 2
Frenchtown, NJ 08825

Phone: 908-782-4614
FAX: 908-782-0501

www.fsa.usda.gov/NJ

Hours

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

County Committee

Frank Hahola
Robert Fulper
Gerald Lyness
John Yablonosky
Cynthia Nicieki
(Minority Advisor)

COC meets:

3rd Thursday of Month
8:30 AM
*Please contact the office if
you would like to attend.*

County Staff

Doreen Beruck CED
Virginia Brophy FLM
Beth Banko PT
Laura LaFevre PT



Commodity Loans

Commodity loans, also referred to as Marketing Assistance Loans, are available to producers who share in the risk of producing the crop. To be eligible, you must maintain beneficial interest in the crop through the time of application. Once beneficial interest in a commodity is lost, the commodity is ineligible for loan — even if you regain beneficial interest.

Violating provisions of a marketing assistance loan may trigger administrative actions, such as assessing liquidated damages, calling the loan and denial of future farm-stored loans. The most common violations are removing or disposing of a commodity being used as loan collateral without prior authorization and providing an incorrect quantity certification.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit www.fsa.usda.gov



2011 FSA County Committee Elections



The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to all farmers and ranchers, whether beginning or long-established, large or small operation. 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 (COC) members are a critical component of FSA operations. The intent is to have the COC reflect the makeup of the producers and to represent all constituents. This means wherever possible, minorities, women or lower income producers need to be on the committee to speak for these underrepresented groups.

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 designed to carry out federal laws. County committee members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions.

Election Period

- June 15, 2011 - The nomination period begins.
- Aug. 1, 2011 - Last day to file nomination forms (FSA-669A) at the local USDA Service Center
- Nov. 4, 2011 - Ballots mailed to eligible voters
- Dec. 5, 2011 - Last day to return ballots to the USDA Service Center
- Jan. 2, 2012 - Newly elected county committee members take office

Who Can Hold Office

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 Local Administrative Area (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 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 at http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/fsa0669a_committeelectform.pdf

Nomination forms for the 2011 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on Aug. 1, 2011.

Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in an FSA program may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee. 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 in 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 Office as a County Committee Member." Producers may contact their local USDA Service Center for more information.

Manage Your Risk with the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program

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.

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. NAP application period for the 2011 crop year has closed, but applications are being accepted for 2012

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 or the disaster occurred. The crop may not be destroyed 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.

Is Your Farm Changing?

June 1, 2011 is the deadline to provide changes to most of your farm records at the local FSA office for the 2011 crop year. If you are changing your operation entity type, adding or dropping cropland or farms, or changing members to your operation, contact the FSA county office by June 1.

Acreage Reporting

Time is nearing for producers to report their 2011 acreage. 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 enrolled in programs other than Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), acreage reports are to be certified by the May 31, 2011 deadline on small grains or July 15, 2011 deadline on all other crops.

Acreage reports on crops covered by NAP are due in the county office by the earlier of May 31, 2011 for small grains and July 15, 2011 for all other crops, or 15 calendar days before the onset of harvest or grazing of the specific crop acreage being reported

Selected Interest Rates for May 2011	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating Loans - Direct	2.625%
Farm Ownership Loans - Direct	5.00%
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	2.875-3.75%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.25%

CONSERVATION CORNER

Assistance Available for Conservation Activity Plans through Environmental Quality Incentives Program

The USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is accepting applications for Environmental Quality Incentive Program's Conservation Activity Plans (EQIP-CAPs). EQIP-CAPs offer financial assistance for producers interested in obtaining the services of a certified professional who can develop a resource specific plan for their eligible agricultural land. The Plan must be completed within 12 months of contract signing.

Available CAPs include:

- Agricultural Energy Management Plan - to explore and address on-farm energy problems and opportunities
- Forest Management Plan (FMP) - to develop NJ-approved Forest Stewardship Plans for woodlots and non-industrial private forestry operations that are 10 acres or greater in size
- Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) - for livestock operations that store, transport, or use manure
- Fish & Wildlife Habitat Management Plan - for any agricultural operation interested in habitat enhancement for threatened, endangered or at-risk species on their agricultural or appurtenant lands, including streams
- Plan Supporting Organic Transition - for cropland or grazing land transitioning to organic agriculture, leading to a USDA- approved Organic System Plan

The [Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](#) is a voluntary conservation program for persons who are engaged in livestock, forestry or agricultural production, including organic production. Applicants must have an interest in an agricultural operation and be compliant with the conservation provisions of the 2008 farm bill with current crop and producer records on file with USDA's Farm Service Agency. They must own or control the land, and agree to implement conservation practices according to the contract schedule. Land is not eligible for a EQIP-CAP if it is currently enrolled in another USDA Farm Bill conservation program, such as the [Wetland Reserve Program \(WRP\)](#) or the [Conservation Reserve Program \(CRP\)](#). Land is also ineligible if it is publically owned, unless the publically owned land is part on an eligible landowners operation and is not the only land offered for enrollment in EQIP. More information about [Conservation Activity Plans](#) and the [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) is available online at www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov or at your local NRCS office.

Conservation Programs that Address YOUR Needs



Don't let state regulations hurt your bottom line.
With Farm Service Agency funding you can
protect the stream without going broke.

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) allows eligible producers and landowners to address their conservation needs. In most cases with 100% of the cost covered!



**50% Federal Cost-Share
40% Practice Incentive Payment
10% State Cost-Share
Equals 100% satisfaction.**

**Eligible Components When Signing
Up for Riparian Buffer Practice:**

- Stream Crossing
- Exclusionary Fencing
- Alternate Watering Source

**For more information call
The Hunterdon-Somerset County
FSA Service Center at: (908) 782-4614**

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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). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."