



NEWSLETTER



Warren-Sussex-Morris County FSA Office

101 Bilby Road, BLDG 1H
Hackettstown, NJ 07840

Phone: (908) 852-2576
Fax: (908) 852-4666

Hours

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

Website

www.fsa.usda.gov/nj

County Office Staff

Lindsay Caragher, CED
Virginia Brophy, FLM
John Snearowski, PT
Diandra Brunstetter, PT
Debbie Crisman, PT

County Committee

Scott Ashley
Carl Sigler
Holly Sytsema
Robert De Block
James Smith

**County Committee meets
the last Monday of the
month at 9:30am**

IMPORTANT DATES:

- Dec 9 - Crop Assistance Program Deadline
- Dec 9 - County Committee Election Ballot County 9:30am
- Dec 24 - Office Closed Christmas
- Dec 31 - NAP Closing Date:
asparagus, beets, broccoli,
cabbage, carrots, cauliflower,
greens & herbs, horseradish,
kohlrabi, leeks, lettuce,
parsnip, peas, potatoes,
radishes
- Dec 31 - Office Closed New Year's Day Observance

County Committee Elections

County office committee election ballot were mailed to all eligible voters in Local Administrative Area (LAA) #5 on November 5, 2010. Completed and signed ballots are due back in the county office by the close of business on **December 6, 2010**. Ballots will be counted on **December 9, 2010 at 9:30 AM** at the Hackettstown Farm Service Agency Office. The public is welcome to attend.

Grasslands Reserve Program Sign-up



Sign-up for participation in the Grasslands Reserve Program (GRP) is currently underway and will continue through **January 28, 2011**. GRP is a voluntary program jointly managed by Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service. The program assists owners and operators of private land to protect grazing uses and the related grassland values, such as grassland-dependent plants and animals, soil erosion, and air or water quality protection. Applicants may choose between a rental contract of 10, 15 or 20 years, or a permanent easement. Rental contract holders receive an annual payment and 50% of the cost of restoration practices. Restoration practices eligible for cost-share could include the following: upland or wetland habitat management, pasture and hayland planting, prescribed grazing, fencing for rotational grazing, watering facilities for livestock, or pipeline to support a watering facility.

Crop Assistance Program

The Crop Assistance Program (CAP) administered through FSA will provide disaster aid to producers whose rice, upland cotton, soybean and sweet potato production were affected by excessive moisture and related conditions that occurred in 2009. Eligible producers must farm in counties with a 2009 Secretarial Disaster Declaration, which includes Sussex and Warren Counties. Producers may be eligible for assistance if they suffered from a five (5) percent or greater loss for one or more eligible crops in 2009. Producers must self-certify that they have met the loss threshold; however as a condition of the application, producers agree that they have verifiable or reliable production evidence to support the certification. Producer certifications of loss are subject to FSA spot-check. CAP payments will be calculated by multiplying the producer's eligible acres for 2009 by the per-acre payment rate established for the crop. Payment rates are as follows: long grain rice - \$31.93; medium/short grain rice - \$52.46; upland cotton - \$17.70; soybeans - \$15.62; and sweet potatoes - \$155.41. The application period has opened and applications will be accepted through Thursday, **December 9, 2010**.

Acres Reporting

To be eligible for most FSA program benefits, planted crops must be reported to the office by the final reporting dates. Fall and spring seeded small grains, including wheat, barley, oats, and rye must be reported by **May 31, 2011**. To ensure that you do not forget this deadline, call the office as soon as planting is completed to schedule an appointment.

CC-927 or CCC-928 Must Be Sent To IRS

Producers who participated in 2009 or 2010 programs subject to adjusted gross income limitations (AGI) had to certify compliance with AGI rules. The average AGI verification process requires all program participants to provide written consent to IRS for the disclosure of certain information to FSA. On October 6, 2010, a letter was mailed to producers who have not submitted a CCC-927: "Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information-Individual Form" and/or CC-928: "Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information-Legal Entity". Individuals and legal entities, including members of legal entities, that certified to average AGI compliance for 2009 and/or 2010 payment eligibility must submit a completed CCC-927 or CCC-928 to IRS regardless of whether they received program benefits directly or as a member of a joint operation or entity. These forms must be submitted to IRS in order to avoid a demand for refund of benefits received.



Spousal Signatures

Husbands and wives may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation programs in which either has an interest unless a written request for exclusion is made to the county office by either spouse. Spouses may not sign on behalf of each other for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations or other similar entities. Individual signatures are required on certain Farm Loan Program and Farm Storage Facility Loan documents.

IRS Form 1099-G

Producers annually receive a CCC-1099-G detailing payments producers have received from the Commodity Credit Corporation. The annual report of program payments on a CCC-1099-G is a service intended to help our customers report taxable income. It is not intended to replace the producers' responsibilities to report income to IRS.

FSA staff cannot interpret IRS regulations or advise producers about which payments to report on their income tax returns. However, county office staff can review payments for accuracy.

Emergency Loans

FSA Emergency Loans are now available for losses caused by drought and extreme heat from June 1st through September 30, 2010. Sussex, Morris, Warren, Essex & Passaic counties are included in the eligible area. Please contact **Virginia Brophy** at (908) 852-2576, ext. 110 for more information. The application deadline is **July 22, 2010**.

Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP)

The Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) BCAP provides incentives to interested farmers, ranchers and forest landowners for the establishment and cultivation of biomass crops for heat, power, bio-based products and biofuels. BCAP provides the following assistance:

- **Matching payments of eligible materials** - Provides for matching payments to eligible material owners at a rate of \$1 for each \$1 per dry ton paid by a qualified biomass conversion facility, in an amount up to \$45 per dry ton. An eligible material owner may be a producer of an eligible crop or a person or entity with the legal right to collect or harvest eligible material. By law matching payments may be made to eligible material owners for a maximum of two years.
- **Establishment payments** - Producers in designated project areas can receive up to 75 percent of the costs of establishing a perennial crop. This does not include equipment. Annual crops are not eligible. (Annual crops, however, are eligible for annual payments.)
- **Annual payments** - Biomass producers in BCAP project areas can receive annual payments up to 5 years for herbaceous biomass (annual and perennial) and up to 15 years for woody biomass (annual and perennial).

Please call the office for additional information on this program.

Paper Check Conversion (PCC)

Over the next year, FSA and the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) are moving toward an electronic method for processing producers' checks. This will allow FSA/CCC to process collections faster.



When producers present checks, either in person or through the mail, the checks will be converted into an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). The funds will be debited from the producer's account, usually within 24 hours of receipt.

Please see the U.S. Department of Treasury legal notices posted in the office or visit the following website for detailed information:

<https://www.pccotc.gov/pccotc/pcc/usin gpcc/Legal%20Notices/legalnotices.htm>

Maintaining the Quality of Loaned Grain

This year's large grain crop has its obvious up side, but there is a downside too. Many producers are hard pressed to find adequate storage for every bushel harvested. Overfilled grain storage bins can lead to grain quality problems.

Bins are ideally designed to hold a level volume of grain. When bins are overfilled and grain is heaped up, airflow is hindered and the chance of spoilage increases.

Producers who take out marketing assistance loans and use the farm-stored grain as collateral should remember that they are responsible for maintaining the quality of the grain through the term of the loan.

Farm Loan Programs

The Farm Service Agency is committed to providing family farmers with loans to meet their farm credit needs. If you are having trouble getting the credit you need for your farm, or regularly borrow from FSA, direct and guaranteed loans are currently available. Please contact **Virginia Brophy** at (908)852-2576, ext 110, for more information.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program

The Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory or prevented planting occurs due to natural disasters. Signup for 2011 coverage is currently underway.

NAP applications are due at different times according to the crop being insured. Producers should apply for NAP coverage using form CCC-471 (Application for Coverage). Related service fees are due when the application is filed. The application and service fee **MUST** be filed by the crop sales closing date, listed below. The service fee is \$250 per crop per county or \$750 per producer per county. The fee cannot exceed a total of \$1875 per producer for individuals with farming interests in multiple counties. Limited resource producers may request a waiver for service fees. To qualify for coverage, a producer must share in the risk of producing an eligible crop.

Remaining 2011 NAP coverage closing dates are as follows:

December 31, 2010 - asparagus, beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, greens & herbs, horseradish, kohlrabi, leeks, lettuce, parsnip, peas, potatoes, radishes

March 15, 2011 - beans, Brussel sprouts, cantaloupes, celery, corn, cucumbers, eggplant, honeydew, oats, okra, peppers, pumpkins, sorghum, soybeans, squash, sunflowers, sweet potatoes, yams, tomatillos, tomatoes, watermelon

Remember: service fees must be provided when the application is filed. For more information please call the office.



Selected Interest Rates for December 2010

Farm Operating - Direct	1.75 %
Farm Ownership & Conservation Loans	4.125 %
Limited Resource - Farm Operating	5.00 %
Limited Resource - Farm Ownership	5.00 %
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50 %
Emergency	3.75 %
Marketing Assistance Loans	1.250%
Farm Storage Facility	
7-year loan term	2.000 %
10-year loan term	2.750 %
12-year loan term	3.000 %

New Financial Management Web Page Available for Producers

Producers who have level 2 e-authentication access can use the new Public Financial Management Information web page which allows producers to generate reports that show both current and historical financial information. This resource will allow users to view details on payments, collections and outstanding debt. The website is a great tool for producers to conveniently access financial information at any time. View the Financial Management webpage at,

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/fmi>.

Note: Website use requires level 2 e-authentication access. Follow the steps below to obtain level 2 access...

1. Go to www.eauth.egov.usda.gov, complete a customer profile and submit it online
2. After submitting your customer profile, you will receive a confirmation email, and you must respond to it within 7 days to activate your account
3. Then you must complete the "Identity Proofing" process by visiting a USDA Service Center and presenting a photo ID, such as your driver's license

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.