



NEWSLETTER



December 2011

Signup for Emergency Conservation Program Ends December 4, 2011

Signup is currently underway for the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) in Warren and Sussex Counties. ECP provides emergency funding to rehabilitate farmland damaged by wind and water erosion, floods, hurricanes, or other natural disasters, and during periods of severe drought providing emergency water for livestock and existing irrigation systems serving orchards and vineyards. The natural disaster must have created new conservation problems, which, if not treated, would:

- Impair or endanger the land;
- Materially affect the productive capacity of the land;
- Represent unusual damage which, except for wind erosion, is not likely to recur frequently in the same area; and
- Be so costly to repair that Federal assistance is or will be required to return the land to productive agricultural use.

Emergency practices eligible for up to 75% cost-share include:

- Removing debris from farmland;
- Grading, shaping, re-leveling,
- Restoring permanent fences;
- Restoring conservation structures and other installations.

Producers **must** contact the county office in person, or by phone, to request ECP cost share **before** starting a practice. Producers who start a practice before requesting ECP funding may be ineligible to receive cost share.

Grasslands Reserve Program Sign-up

Sign-up for participation in the Grasslands Reserve Program (GRP) is currently underway and will continue through **December 30, 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 actual cost of restoration, not to exceed estimated costs. 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 .

County Committee Elections

County office committee election ballots were mailed to all eligible voters in Local Administrative Areas (LAA) #1 and #4 on November 4, 2011. Completed and signed ballots are due back in the county office by the close of business on **December 5, 2011**. Ballots will be counted on **December 8, 2011 at 9:30 AM** at the Hackettstown Farm Service Agency Office. The public is welcome to attend.

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, SFLO
John Snearowski, PT
Diandra Brunstetter, PT
Debbie Crisman, PT
Megan Everswick, FLOT

County Committee

Scott Ashley
Robert DeBlock
Carl Sigler
James Smith
Holly Sytsema

The County Committee meets the last Monday of the month at 9:30AM.

As meeting dates and times are subject to change, please call ahead if you plan on attending.

IMPORTANT DATES:

- Dec 4 - ECP Signup Ends
- Dec 26 - Office Closed
Christmas Day
- Dec 30 - GRP Signup Ends
- Dec 31 - NAP Closing Date:
asparagus, beets, broccoli,
cabbage, carrots, cauliflower,
greens & herbs, horseradish,
kohlrabi, leeks, lettuce,
parsnip, peas, potatoes,
radishes
- Jan 2 - Office Closed New
Years Day

2010 SURE Signup

Signup for the 2010 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payment (SURE) program is currently underway and will end June 1, 2012.

SURE provides crop disaster assistance payments to eligible producers on farms that have incurred crop production or crop quality losses. The program takes into consideration crop losses on all crops grown by a producer nationwide. To be eligible for SURE, a portion of the farm must be located in a county, or contiguous to a county, covered by a qualifying USDA Secretarial Disaster Declaration. For 2010 SURE, producers in Warren, Sussex and Morris counties meet the aforementioned eligibility requirement. In addition, producers must have suffered at least a 10 percent production loss on a crop of economic significance. A crop of economic significance is one that contributes, or is expected to contribute, 5 percent or more of the total expected value of all crops grown by the producer. A 2010 policy or plan of insurance, under the Federal Crop Insurance Act or NAP coverage, must have been obtained for all economically significant crops. Producers considered socially disadvantaged, a beginning farmer or rancher, or a limited resource farmer may be eligible for SURE without a policy or plan of insurance or NAP coverage. Please call the office to schedule an appointment for signup.



2012 DCP Sign-Up

Enrollment for the 2012 DCP will begin **January 23, 2012** and continue through June 1, 2012. The change to the enrollment beginning date will allow time for 2010 SURE sign-up. Advance payments are not authorized for 2012 DCP. Eligible producers receive direct payments at statutory rates regardless of market prices.

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 2012 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 2012 NAP coverage closing dates are as follows:

December 31, 2011 - asparagus, beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, greens & herbs, horseradish, kohlrabi, leeks, lettuce, parsnip, peas, potatoes, radishes

March 15, 2012 - 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.

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.



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.

FSA Moving to Electronic Information

The USDA Farm Service Agency offices are moving toward a paperless operation. Producers are asked to enroll in the new GovDelivery system which will provide notices, newsletters and electronic reminders instead of a hard copy through the mail.

FSA, like many other organizations, is trying to work smarter and be more efficient. Moving to electronic notifications via email will help conserve resources and save taxpayer dollars.

Producers can now subscribe to receive free e-mail updates by going to <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe>.

Farm Storage Facility Loan Program (FSFL)

The Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program allows producers of eligible commodities to obtain low-interest financing to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities.

The new maximum principal amount of a loan through FSFL is \$500,000. Participants are now required to provide a down payment of 15 percent, with CCC providing a loan for the remaining 85 percent of the net cost of the eligible storage facility and permanent drying and handling equipment. New loan terms of 7, 10 or 12 years are available depending on the amount of the loan. Interest rates for each term rate may be different and are based on the rate which CCC borrows from the Treasury Department.

Payments are available in the form of a partial disbursement and the remaining final disbursement. The partial disbursement will be available after a portion of the construction has been completed. The final fund disbursement will be made when all construction is completed. The maximum amount of the partial disbursement will be 50 percent of the projected and approved total loan amount.

Applications for FSFL must be submitted to the FSA county office that maintains the farm's records. An FSFL must be approved before any site preparation or construction can begin. The following commodities are eligible for farm storage facility loans:

- Corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley or minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain
- Corn, grain sorghum, wheat, oats or barley harvested as other-than-whole grain
- Pulse crops - lentils, small chickpeas and dry peas
- Hay
- Honey
- Renewable biomass
- Fruits (including nuts) and vegetables - cold storage facilities

For more information about FSFL please call the office.

Selected Interest Rates for December 2011	
Farm Operating – Direct	1.50 %
Farm Ownership & Conservation Loans	3.375%
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 %

Hispanic and Women Farmers Claim Process

A process to resolve the claims of Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who believe they were discriminated against when seeking USDA farm loans is being established. If you believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) improperly denied farm loan benefits to you between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic, or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation. For additional information on this and other settlement issues contact:

- **Hispanic and Women Farmers and Ranchers Claims Adjudication Process**, please visit: www.farmerclaims.gov or call 1-888-508-4429;
- **African American Farmers Settlement Agreement (Pigford II)**, please visit: www.blackfarmercase.com or call 1-866-950-5547 or 1-866-472-7826;
- **Native Americans Farmers Settlement Agreement (Keepseagle v Vilsack)**, please visit: www.IndianFarmClass.com or call 1-888-233-5506.

All media calls can be forwarded to the
 USDA, Office of Communication at (202)720-4623.

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.