Hancock FSA News

FARM SERVICE AGENCY

June 2009

Hancock County USDA Service Center

Hancock County FSA
7868 County Rd. 140
Findlay, Ohio 45840
419-422-5438 (phone)
419-422-5105 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/oh

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

County Committee
Richard Colman
Richard Cupples
Michael Conley
Karen Conine (Advisor)

Co. Committee meets 2nd Wednesday of each month @ 9:00 a.m.

Staff
Sue Doolittle
Sue Stahl
Casey Gunder
Diane Parke
Janis Wittenmyer
John Deeds, Field
Amber Johns, Temp
Steve Inbody

County Committee Elections
"FSA Counts on You"

From **June 15 through Aug. 1**, farmers and ranchers can nominate eligible peers as candidates for election to the Hancock County Farm Service Agency County Committee. 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.

An election will be held for the Hancock County Committee position for LAA 2 that includes the townships of Allen, Cass, Portage, Washington, Biglick and Marion.

Any eligible person residing in one of these townships who is interested in running for the County Committee, or would like to nominate an individual to run for the County Committee, must complete a nomination form. The nomination form for County FSA Committee Election (FSA-669A) is available at the Hancock County FSA office. You may also go on-line and download the form from our Ohio FSA website at: www.fsa.usda.gov/oh The document is located under the "I Want To" section on the right side of the screen.

This is an important time for LAA communities, because county committee members make decisions that have significant effects on you and the area's agricultural sector as a whole. For example, committee members make decisions on applications for federal farm program and disaster payments. Committee members play a vital role by helping local farmers and ranchers manage tough financial times and natural disasters.

Talk to the Hancock County Committee, Steve Inbody County Executive Director at 419-422-5438 Ext.2 or stop in the office located at 7868 County Road 140 Suite C for details on the types of decisions county committee members make. Or visit the County Committee Elections website to learn more about the County Committee Election process and read over the fact sheets at: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections.

Remember, the nomination period runs **June 15 through August 3.** 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 takes place in the fall. Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters by Nov. 6. Dec. 7 is the last day to return voted ballots to the county office. Newly elected committee members and alternates take office Jan.1, 2010.

Final Acreage Reporting Dates Quickly Approaching

The Hancock County Farm Service Agency (FSA), would like to remind producers of the acreage reporting requirements that must be met prior to receiving program benefits. If producers miss the acreage reporting deadline dates, a late filing fee will be charged.

Producers are required to file an FSA-578, *Report of Acreage,* certification for the farm by the **June 30 deadline for small grains** and by **July 15 for all other crops except small grains**. To be considered timely, acreage reports on crops are due in the county office by the earlier of June 30 for small grains and July 15 for all other crops, or 15 calendar days before the onset of harvest or grazing of the specific crop acreage being reported.

It is also very important that producers report crop losses, including those insured under Federal Crop Insurance (FCIC) and Non-insured Assistance Program (NAP) within 15 days of the date damage occurred or 15 days from the date damage is apparent. Losses and or damages to crops must be reported after each disaster occurrence and in a timely manner to insure continued eligibility for benefits.

Producers are encouraged to visit their local FSA county office to file the required FSA-578 certification report before the deadline dates expire. 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.

USDA

Grasslands Reserve Program

Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) assists landowners and operators to protect grazing uses and related conservation values by conserving and restoring grassland resources on eligible private lands. The GRP was revitalized as a part of the 2008 Farm Bill with a goal of enrolling 1.2 million acres nationwide. The 2009 deadline for accepting applications for the GRP **is June 26, 2009**.

FSA and NRCS accept applications on a continuous basis; however, ranking dates are established to evaluate and select applications for current year funding. Any applications received after this date shall be loaded into the GRP application software and stored until the next ranking period. Producers not accepted during previous GRP sign-ups must reapply to be considered for enrollment.

Preference will be given to:

- Working grazing operations with an approved grazing plan;
- Land that has been historically dominated by grassland and provides habitat for animal or plant populations of significant ecological value;
- Land which contains historical or archeological resources; and
- Land expiring from the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) on Sept. 30, 2009.

Only landowners may voluntarily apply for GRP easements. Either owners or operators may voluntarily apply for GRP rental contracts as long as the operator can provide proper documents to show control of rental acres during the entire contract period. Participants must meet adjusted gross income requirements, must be in conservation compliance and cannot exceed the $50,000 payment limitation.

Rental contracts may be for duration of 10 years, 15 years or 20 years and rental payments vary by county and range from $7.00 to $16.50 per acre per year of the contract. Easements are permanent and a payment is based on the geographic area rate cap of the land less the grazing value.

Interested landowners and operators should visit their local USDA Service Center by June 26th to find out more about enrolling in the GRP or other Conservation programs.

Selected Interest Rates for June 2009	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	2.250%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	4.250%
Farm Ownership Loans — Beginning Farmer Down Payment	1.500%
Emergency Loans	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility Loans	2.625%
Sugar Storage Facility Loans	4.000%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.500%

MILC Payments on Their Way to Dairy Farmers

As a result of low dairy prices, MILC payments continue to be distributed to dairy producers. Producers participating in USDA's Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) program will receive payments for the month of April. USDA makes MILC payments on a monthly basis when the Boston Class I milk price falls below $16.94 per hundredweight as adjusted for feed costs.

USDA determines the per hundredweight payment rate for the applicable month by subtracting the Boston Class I price for that month from the $16.94 MILC payment trigger price, established in the 2008 Farm Bill, as adjusted for feed costs, and multiplying the difference by 45 percent. The monthly Boston Class I price along with final MILC payment rates are posted online at: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA.

The MILC payment trigger price of $16.94 is adjusted upward when the National Average Dairy Feed Ration Cost for a month is greater than $7.35 per cwt. USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service recently released the data for determining the Average Dairy Feed Ration Cost for the month of April on May 29, 2009. Using this information and the formula contained in the 2008 Act, the MILC payment trigger for the month of April has been adjusted to $17.14, for a final MILC payment rate of $1.58628.

For more information about the MILC program, please visit your local FSA office or go online to: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA.

Maintenance of CRP Cover

Participants are required to maintain CRP and CREP acres according to the Conservation Plan agreed to with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). All CRP and CREP maintenance activity must be conducted outside the primary nesting season for wildlife and in accordance with the conservation plan. The primary nesting season is March 1 through July 15th. Spot treatment of the acreage to control noxious and invasive species may be allowed during the primary nesting season if prior approval is received from FSA County Committee.

Maintaining Stored Grain Quality

Since the summer heat will be here soon, producers are reminded to keep an eye on the condition and quality of the stored grain. Remember to contact your local FSA office if you notice changes in the condition and quality of the stored grain.

Rural Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency makes loans to rural youths to establish and operate income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is $5000.

Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

- Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) or a legal resident alien;
- Be 10 years to 20 years of age;
- Live in a rural area or in a town of 50,000 people or fewer;
- Must obtain a written recommendation and consent from a parent or guardian if the applicant has not reached the age of majority under state law;
- Comply with FSA's general eligibility requirements;
- Be unable to get a loan from other sources;
- Conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work as outlined above;
- Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor. The project supervisor must recommend the project and the loan, along with providing adequate supervision.

To find out more about the FSA Rural Youth loan program, contact your local FSA county office to setup an appointment with a Loan Approval Official.

2009 Compliance and Spot-Check Review

Compliance and spot checks will once again be utilized during the 2009 crop year. Instead of locally selecting farms, contracts, deficiency loans, etc. for spot check and review, a nationwide selection of producers is used to achieve a statistical sampling of participating producers. A statistical sample of FSA employees, County Committee (COC) and State Committee (STC) members have also been selected for review using this same process. Spot check selections are to be conducted based on a producer's participation in Conservation Reserve Program, Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, Loan Deficiency Program, etc.

FSA may review a producer's operations in multiple states and counties, depending on the scope of the producer's operations. FSA will review both the accuracy of the representations made by the selected producers in connection with participation in FSA programs as well as the producer's compliance with applicable program requirements. The reviews may need to be conducted at various times throughout the year depending on the FSA programs in which the producer is participating. If an entity is selected from the national database that is no longer farming or participating in the 2009 crop year, a notation shall be made on the spot check list.

FSA appreciates the cooperation of its customers as the agency continues to enhance its operations. FSA's goal is to ensure that program dollars are delivered effectively and efficiently so America's farmers and ranchers can provide safe and abundant food, fiber and fuel for consumers at home and abroad. For more information about the new spot check selection procedure, feel free to contact your local FSA office for additional clarification.

Foreign Investors Who Hold Agricultural Land

Foreign investors, who buy, sell or hold a direct or indirect interest in U.S. agricultural land must report their holdings and transactions to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. Failure to timely file an accurate report can result in a penalty with fines up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the agricultural land. Foreign persons who are buying or selling land must report the transaction **within 90 days of the date of the transaction.**

Who Must Report:

- Individuals who are not U.S. citizens or citizens of the Northern Mariana Islands or the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands;
- Individuals who are not lawfully admitted to the U.S. for permanent residence or who are not paroled into the U.S. under the Immigration and Nationality Act;
- Any organization created under laws of a foreign government or which has located its principle place of business outside the U.S.;
- Any U.S. organization in which a significant interest or substantial control is directly or indirectly held by foreign individuals, organizations or governments; and
- Any foreign governments.

What to Report:

- Each tract of agricultural land in the U.S., its territories, the Northern Mariana Islands and the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands owned by persons required to report; and
- Leaseholds of 10 years or more.

USDA designated the FSA to collect the AFIDA report forms. Individuals wanting to obtain an AFIDA report form (FSA-153) may do so from any FSA county office. The (FSA-153) is available in both English and Spanish translations. You can also go on-line and download the form at: http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/efcommon/eFileServices/Forms/FSA0153_010524V02.pdf .

Although interested parties may obtain a report form from any FSA county office, the completed form must be returned to the FSA county office where the land or where the programs are administered.

Foreign investors should contact your local FSA if this pertains to you. To locate the FSA county office, you can look in the telephone book white pages or go on-line to: www.fsa.usda.gov/oh and then click on the "County Offices" link. Then click on the county where the land is located.

Hancock Co. FSA Office
7868 Co. Rd. 140 Suite C
Findlay, Ohio 45840

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

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Upcoming June Agricultural Survey

The June Agricultural Survey (also known as the Crops/Stocks Survey) is the one of the most important surveys conducted each year by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). It provides the first clear indication of the potential production and supply of major commodities, including those from biotech varieties, for the year.

Interviewers will be contacting approximately 4,000 Ohio farmers by phone, mail and/or personal interview. NASS will be contacting local farmers between the end of May and mid July.

The information collected about specific commodities varies somewhat from state to state. But all participating producers will be asked to provide information on their total acres, acres planted to specific commodities, and quantities of grains and oilseeds stored on-farm.

If you would like more information about the survey, please call NASS at (614) 728-2100.

Dates to Remember	
June 15	County Committee Nomination period begins.
June 30	Final certification date for small grains.
July 3	Independence Day Holiday. **FSA Offices Closed.**
July 15	Final certification date for all crops except small grains.
Aug. 1	**Final date** to request farm reconstitution for current fiscal year.
Aug. 3	**Last day** to file County Committee Nomination forms.
Aug. 14	**Sign-up Deadline** for DCP and ACRE Programs.
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loan Program.
Continues	Continuous CRP.

Visit our website at: www.fsa.usda.gov/oh

Special Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment to attend or participate in meetings or events sponsored by the Farm Service Agency. If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in one of our events, please call the FSA county office and we will be happy to make any needed arrangements.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all 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, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance programs. (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 USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202)-720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."