



NEWSLETTER



Hancock County FSA Office

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

May 2013

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

CRP Sign-Up Starts May 20th

USDA will conduct a four-week general sign-up for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), beginning **May 20 and ending on June 14**. CRP protects the nation's natural resources through voluntary participation, while providing significant economic and environmental benefits to rural communities across the United States.

Currently, about 319,000 acres are enrolled in CRP in Ohio. Producers that are accepted in the sign-up can receive cost-share assistance to plant long-term, resource-conserving covers and receive an annual rental payment for the length of the contract (10-15 years).

Contracts on approximately 55,000 acres of CRP in Ohio are set to expire on Sept. 30, 2013. Producers with expiring contracts or producers with environmentally sensitive land are encouraged to evaluate their options under CRP.

More information about the CRP general sign-up [can be found online](#) or contact the Hancock county FSA office at 419-422-5438 (Ext. 2).

USDA Announces Farm Payments Scheduled to Resume

MILC, SURE, and NAP will restart on May 8

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator Juan M. Garcia announced that farm payments, which had been temporarily suspended due to sequestration, are scheduled to resume May 8. This includes payments for the 2011 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE), the Noninsured Crop Assistance Program (NAP) and the Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC).

On March 4, 2013, FSA began a temporary suspension of FSA program payments in order to assess the impact of sequestration and determine the least-disruptive process possible for carrying out required cuts. The Department will use the Secretary's limited authority to transfer funds to avoid reducing these program payments.

Producers should be advised that program sign-up periods currently underway have the following enrollment deadlines: **2013 Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program – June 3rd; 2011 SURE – June 7; and the 2013 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program –**

August 2nd. Producers should contact the Hancock County Farm Service Agency office as soon as possible for appointments to enroll in these programs before the deadlines.

USDA has made a concerted effort to deliver results for the American people, even as USDA implements sequestration – the across-the-board budget reductions mandated under terms of the Budget Control Act. USDA has already undertaken historic efforts since 2009 to save more than \$828 million in taxpayer funds through targeted, common-sense budget reductions. These reductions have put USDA in a better position to carry out its mission, while implementing sequester budget reductions in a fair manner that causes as little disruption as possible.

Final Loan and LDP Availability Date

Producers are reminded that the final commodity loan and LDP availability date for 2012 Crop Year Corn, Dry Peas, Grain Sorghum, Lentils, Mustard Seed, Safflower Seed, Small Chickpeas, Soybeans and Sunflower seed **will be May 31, 2013.**

2013 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, with large or small operations. 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.



The Hancock County Farm Service Agency is looking for individuals interested in serving on the Hancock County Committee. This year LAA-3 will be having an election. LAA-3 is comprised of the following townships: Pleasant, Blanchard, Liberty, Union, and Eagle. Any eligible person residing in one of these townships who is interested in running for County Committee, or would like to nominate an individual to run for 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 and [online](#).

Members of socially disadvantaged groups (a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities) are strongly encouraged to complete the Nomination Form for County FSA Committee Election (FSA-669A) and nominate themselves or another eligible candidate.

Committee members make decisions on applications for federal farm program and disaster payments. Committee members play a vital role by helping local farmers manage tough financial times and natural disasters. County committee members make many other important decisions that affect local farmers such as whether haying and grazing should be allowed on Conservation Reserve Program land.

For more information regarding the County Committee Elections, talk to the Hancock County Committee, Jim Greve, County Executive Director at 419-422-5438 or stop in the office located at 7868 County Rd 140, Suite C, Findlay, Ohio, 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>.

The nomination period begins June 17th and runs until August 1, 2013. Nomination forms for the 2013 election must be postmarked or received in the local FSA office by close of business on Aug. 1, 2013. Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters November 4th and must be returned by December 2, 2013. The elected Committee Member and Alternates will take office January 1, 2014.

For more information about county committee elections, contact the Hancock County FSA office.

Acreage & Crop Reporting Requirements

Producers are reminded of the ANNUAL acreage reporting requirements that must be met prior to receiving program benefits. The acreage reporting deadlines for 2013 are as follows:

- July 15th for any spring-seeded crops (corn & soybeans), fruits and vegetables, cabbage planted by May 31st, forage crops;
- August 15th for CRP and cabbage planted between June 1st and July 20th; and
- December 15th for wheat and other fall seeded crops.

Prevented planted and failed cropland acres that will not be brought to harvest have slightly different timelines.

- Prevented planting acres must be reported within 15 calendar days of the Federal Crop Insurance Companies (FCIC) established ending planting dates. For corn, the FCIC ending planting date is June 5, and for soybeans the ending planting date is June 20.
- Failed acreage must be reported to FSA before destroying and replanting to allow time for a field check. Failure to timely report prevented planting acres may result in loss of potential disaster assistance, as well as maintaining cropping history.
- For crop losses covered by the Non-insured Assistance Program (NAP), producers must contact their local FSA office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent.

Missing any of these deadlines could cause FSA payments to be held and a late filing penalty fee to be charged. So, please contact the Hancock County FSA office if you have any questions or to set up an appointment to report your crop acreages.

Maintaining Stored Grain Quality

With spring here, producers are reminded to keep an eye on the condition and quality of the stored grain. Remember to contact the Hancock County FSA office if you notice changes in the condition and quality of the stored grain.

DCP/ACRE Sign-Up Continues

The sign-up period for ACRE is still open, but the June 3 deadline is quickly approaching and interested producers should contact the Hancock County FSA office to set up an appointment. Producers are encouraged to sign up for DCP before the Aug. 2, 2013, deadline.

All payments under the DCP are subject to the availability of funds and compliance with all laws including those that may be passed after a DCP Contract is signed. This may include a reduction in the amount of Direct Payments due to any sequester order required by legislation. FSA will notify producers of any required percentage reduction of DCP payments.

The 2013 Direct Payments will be as follows: Corn 28 cents per bushel, Soybeans 44 cents and Wheat 52 cents. Producers should contact the Hancock County Farm Service Agency as soon as possible to schedule an appointment for the 2013 DCP/ACRE sign-up 419-422-5438 (Ext. 2).

Farm Loans for Socially Disadvantaged

Hancock County Executive Director, Jim Greve, reminds interested applicants that FSA offers loans for farmers to purchase farmland and finance agricultural operations. FSA loan programs are designed to help producers who are temporarily unable to obtain private or commercial credit. In many cases, applicants are beginning farmers who have insufficient net worth to qualify for financing through a commercial lender. In other instances, applicants might have suffered setbacks from natural disasters or might be persons with limited resources.

FSA makes two different types of loans, direct and guaranteed. Farm ownership loans or farm operating loans may be obtained as direct loans for a maximum of up to \$300,000. Guaranteed loans (loans made by a commercial lender where FSA acts as guarantor) can reach a maximum indebtedness of \$1,302,000. Emergency loans are a type of direct loan for farmers who may have suffered physical or production losses in disaster areas designated by a Presidential or Secretarial disaster declaration. Rural Youth Loans, Loans to Beginning Farmers and loans for Socially Disadvantaged Applicants are other types of direct loans also available through FSA.

Socially Disadvantaged Applicants (SDA) are one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of their identity as a member of the group without regard to their individual qualities. SDA groups are Women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Certain FSA loan funds are targeted to beginning farmers and SDA.

For detailed information on loan eligibility or the different loan programs available, contact the Hancock FSA office to setup an appointment with a Loan Approval Official.

2012 ACRE Program Production Reports

Producers that participated in the ACRE program for 2012 are required to report 2012 production to be used to compute 2012 ACRE payments, if applicable, and 2013 benchmark farm yields. The reporting deadline date for 2012 production reports is July 15, 2013 for small grains and other crops. Production reports may be submitted by the 2012 crop year operator, owner or other producer with an interest in the reported acreage. Failure to file a production report (FSA-658) for a farm enrolled in ACRE will result in the farm's producers being ineligible for any ACRE contract payments and the actual yield used to determine future benchmark farm yields will be zero.

Selected Interest Rates for May 2013	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	1.375%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	3.500%
Limited Resource Loans	5.000%
Farm Ownership Loans — Down Payment	1.500%
Emergency Loans	2.375%
Farm Storage Facility Loan -- 7 year	1.250%
Farm Storage Facility Loan -- 10 year	1.875%
Farm Storage Facility Loan -- 12 year	2.125%
Sugar Storage Facility Loans	2.375%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.125%

CRP Participants – Think Twice before Mowing

In the past, mowing of CRP grass cover was a widely accepted practice by many participants, if for no other purpose than aesthetics. Today with more research and understanding, it has been shown that undisturbed grass cover will reduce soil erosion, improve water quality, and is more beneficial to wildlife than annually mowed grass covers.

Undisturbed CRP covers could appear unattractive to those that do not understand its value. Wildlife, especially grassland birds including pheasants and quail, and pollinators, such as bees and butterflies, view undisturbed CRP cover as a source of food and habitat suitable to raise their young. Wildlife will not be attracted to CRP cover if plants are not allowed to mature. Game birds and bees are disappearing because of habitat loss.

Undisturbed grass cover does not include noxious weeds such as thistle and teasel or woody species like trees and multiflora rose. These noxious weeds must be controlled by spot mowing affected areas or spot spraying of an approved herbicide. These treatments will have a minimal effect on the CRP practice cover's ability to meet the purposes of erosion control, water quality, and wildlife

habitat. Spot mowing is less expensive than mowing the whole practice. Aesthetic beauty should not replace good land stewardship and economics.

Unnecessary disturbance of CRP cover is considered a violation of the terms and conditions of the CRP contract and conservation plan. Violations could potentially result in hefty penalties including contract termination and refund of all contract related payments.

Properly maintained CRP cover can be very attractive if noxious weeds and invasive species are controlled and grasses and wildflowers are allowed to mature. Please scout your CRP fields before weeds go to seed. Contact your local FSA office for permission to spot treat your CRP grass cover during Ohio's primary nesting season (**March 1st – July 15th**). Plan to have your CRP cover assessed for the need of mid-contract management activities that are designed to enhance your CRP cover for wildlife. Mid-contract management is a contractual obligation that is outlined in your CRP-1 Appendix and conservation plan. Contact your local FSA office for more information on proper maintenance and management of CRP practice cover. Remember, beauty is in the eye of the conservationist.

2011 SURE Sign-Up Deadline Ends Soon

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) will continue to accept SURE applications for 2011 crop losses through **June 7, 2013**. The SURE Program provides payments to producers when crop revenues are less than the crop guarantee. The SURE Program payment is equal to 60 percent of the difference between the crop guarantee and revenue.

To be eligible for the 2011 SURE Program, producers must have crop insurance on all insurable crops. For crops that are not covered by crop insurance such as pumpkins and cucumbers, producers must have purchased Non Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage from FSA. The Crop Insurance and NAP purchase requirement is waived for crops that are not economically significant to the farming operation. To be eligible, the producer must have at least one crop with a 10 percent production loss.

Contact the Hancock County FSA office at 419-422-5438 (Ext. 2), if you have not signed up.

Dates to Remember	
May 13	CRP Continuous Sign-up 44 starts and continues through Sept. 30, 2013.
May 20	CRP General Sign-up Period starts and continues through June 14.
May 27	Memorial Day Holiday. FSA Offices Closed.
May 31	Deadline to apply for 2012 commodity loans and LDP's on feed grains, soybeans, pulse crops.
June 3	Deadline to sign-up for 2013 ACRE program.
June 7	Deadline to sign-up for the 2011 SURE program.
June 15	County Committee Nomination period begins.
July 4	Independence Day Holiday. FSA Offices Closed.
July 15	Final certification date to report burley tobacco; cabbage planted through May 31; corn, grain sorghum, hybrid corn seed, spring oats, potatoes, popcorn, sugar beets, tomatoes and other crops.
Aug. 1	Final date to request farm reconstitution for current fiscal year.
Aug. 3	Last day to file County Committee Nomination forms.

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

Receive USDA FSA Information Electronically

Producers can enroll into GovDelivery service at: <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USFS>

Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation Compliance

Landowners and operators are reminded that in order to receive payments from USDA, compliance with Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions is required. Farmers with HEL-determined soils are reminded to comply with tillage, crop residue, and rotation requirements specified in their conservation plan. Farmers are to notify the USDA Farm Service Agency prior to conducting land clearing or drainage projects to insure compliance. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these activities can result in the loss of eligibility for certain USDA program benefits.

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To file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax at (202) 690-7442 or e-mail at program.intake@usda.gov. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."