



# Lorain County News

June 2009

## County Committee Elections "FSA Counts on You"

Lorain County  
USDA Service Center

**Lorain County FSA**  
42110 Russia RD  
Elyria, OH 44035  
(440) 326-5830  
(440) 323-9035 (fax)  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/oh](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/oh)

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

**County Committee**  
Neil Breyley  
Kathy Duplaga  
Allen Grobe

*County Committee  
meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday each  
month*

**Staff**  
Theresa Johnson, CED  
Becky McDonnell, PT  
Jessica Fye, PT  
Kathy Frombaugh, PT  
Penny Gregory, PT

### 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.

From **June 15 through Aug. 3**, farmers and ranchers can nominate eligible peers as candidates for election to the Lorain 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 Lorain County Committee position for LAA-2, which is comprised of the following townships: Brownhelm, Sheffield, Sheffield Lake, Elyria, Avon, Avon Lake, Amherst, Carlisle, North Ridgeville and New Russia.

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 county FSA office. You may also go on-line and download the form from our Ohio FSA website at: [www.fsa.usda.gov/oh](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/oh). The document is located under the "I Want To" section on the right side of the screen.

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.

Talk to Theresa Johnson, County Executive Director at (440) 326-5830 for details on the types of decisions county committee members make, or visit the County Committee Elections website to learn more about the Election process and read over the fact sheets at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections>.

Remember, the nomination period runs **June 15<sup>th</sup> through August 3**. The completed nomination form must be returned to the county office by close of business on Aug. 3 or postmarked by midnight Aug. 3, 2009. Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters November 6<sup>th</sup> and must be returned by December 7, 2009. The elected Committee Member and Alternates will take office January 1, 2010.

## Final Acreage Reporting Dates Quickly Approaching

FSA reminds 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 (including dates planted) 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 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.

Please call the county office today for an appointment to file the required FSA-578 certification report before the deadline. Filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed and prevented planting acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs.



## 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 re-apply 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) in 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 contact the county office by June 26<sup>th</sup> to find out more about enrolling in the GRP or other Conservation programs.

## Farm Reconstitutions

At FSA, farms are "constituted" to group all tracts having the same owner and the same operator under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation take place, a farm reconstitution is necessary.

The reconstitution—or recon—is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by **August 1** for farms enrolled in specific programs.

## Removing CCC Loan Collateral and Maintaining Grain Quality

Producers are reminded, if you have grain under Commodity Credit Corporation loan it cannot be removed or disposed of without prior county office staff authorization or repayment. The county office staff may issue release authorizations based on a telephone call or in person request when you are ready to move the grain. A loan violation is subject to monetary and administrative penalties, such as repaying the loan at principal plus interest, liquidated damages, calling the loan and denial of future farm-stored loans and loan deficiency payments.

All commodity loans are subject to spot check. Locking in a market loan repayment rate is not a marketing authorization. If you are planning to move CCC loan grain, call the county office before you HAUL!

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

## New Commodity Loan Repayment Rates

Since April 15, 2009, FSA began using an improved and more stable system for determining non-recourse marketing assistance loan repayment rates and loan deficiency payment rates for wheat, feed grains, pulse crops, oilseeds, wool, mohair and honey. The new method reduces the effects daily market volatilities have on loan repayment rates, and provides more certainty for producers who have taken advantage of marketing assistance loans or loan deficiency payments.

The loan repayment rate may now be determined as the lesser of the loan rate plus interest and a rate based on: 1) average market prices during the previous 30 days, or 2) an alternative method the secretary may develop.

Beginning April 15, for wheat, corn, grain sorghum, soybeans, barley, oats, canola, flaxseed and sunflower seed, the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) determines and publishes daily loan repayment rates based on the average market prices during the preceding 30 days. At the same time, CCC will announce each day a repayment rate based on the preceding five days. The new method will replace the current one, which is based on the previous day's market rates. **The effective alternative repayment rate will be the lower of either the 30-day average or the 5-day average.**

The 30-day method will reflect a 30-day moving average of all terminal market prices for the crop, adjusted by the difference between the applicable national loan rate and the county loan rate. The 5-day method will reflect a 5-day moving average of applicable terminal market prices adjusted by applicable county differential and terminal adjustments. This new loan repayment method will minimize potential forfeitures, accumulation of CCC stocks, CCC storage costs, market impediments and discrepancies in benefits across state and county boundaries.

## 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, however, the completed form must be returned to the FSA county office where the land or where the programs are administered. 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/efFileServices/Forms/FSA0153\\_010524V02.pdf](http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/efcommon/efFileServices/Forms/FSA0153_010524V02.pdf).

## 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, however, 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.

## Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) & DCP

Sign-up for the 2009 Direct & Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) and the ACRE program have been announced & will continue through August 14, 2009.

To give producers an option in lieu of traditional price-based counter-cyclical payments under DCP, the ACRE program was created in the 2008 Farm Bill. Producers may elect to enroll in ACRE for the 2009 crop year even if they have already accepted advance direct payments under DCP.

The ACRE program is a revenue-based option which provides eligible producers a state-level revenue guarantee, based on the 5-year state Olympic average yield and the 2-year national average price. ACRE payments are made when both state and farm-level triggers are met. Producers who elect the ACRE program for a farm agree to:

- forgo counter-cyclical payments;
- accept a 20-percent reduction in direct payments; and
- accept a 30-percent reduction in loan rates for all commodities produced on the farm.

To elect ACRE for a farm, producers must complete a CCC-509ACRE, which irrevocably elects ACRE for the farm through crop year 2012. Also, all land owners must sign the election form. The ACRE signup involves a two step process:

1. Run out the ACRE Election form for all owners to sign
2. After all signatures are received, run out an ACRE Contract for operator to sign.

NOTE: Neither Counter-cyclical nor ACRE payments are guaranteed. Counter-cyclical payments are contingent on national average market prices and ACRE payments are contingent on a farm's revenue, both of which are not known at the time of signup. Therefore it is not possible to predetermine which program is most beneficial. It is important for each producer to research the benefits of ACRE.

To aid you in your decision process, detailed ACRE information packets are available at the county office. We also have an ACRE spreadsheet that we can customize for your specific farm. Please call Jessika at the office if you would like to sit down and review your farm. Producers are encouraged to check out ACRE calculators available from various universities and agricultural services. More information on ACRE, including an ACRE calculator is available online at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dcp>.

Contact the county office today for an appointment to sign your DCP and/or ACRE contracts before the **August 14<sup>th</sup>** deadline. **No late-filed applications will be accepted.**

LORAIN COUNTY FSA OFFICE  
 42110 RUSSIA RD  
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### Newsletter/Info

Our monthly newsletter is also available at [www.fsa.usda.gov/oh](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/oh). Once on the homepage, look on the left side under "browse by subject" and click on "newsletters". This site also provides recent news releases, important dates to remember & program information.

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%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.500%

Dates to Remember	
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](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/oh)