



# Medina/Cuyahoga County News

June 2010

## 2010 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 Medina County Farm Service Agency is looking for individuals interested in serving on the Medina County Committee. This year LAA #2 and LAA #4 will be having an election. LAA-2 is comprised of the following townships: Chatham, Harrisville, Spencer, and Homer. LAA #4 is comprised of Cuyahoga County. 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 Medina County FSA office. You may also go online and download the form from our Ohio FSA website at:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/oh>. The form is located under the "I Want To" section.

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, call 330-722-2628 or visit

the County Committee Elections website to learn more about the Elections process and read over the fact sheets at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/>

The nomination period begins June 15<sup>th</sup> and run. Nomination forms for the 2010 election must be postmarked or received in the local FSA office by close of business on Aug. 2, 2010.

Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters November 5<sup>th</sup> and must be returned by December 6, 2010. The elected Committee Member and Alternates will take office January 1, 2011.

## Final Acreage Reporting Dates

Acreage reporting requirements 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 contact the 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.

### Medina County USDA Service Center

Medina-Cuyahoga FSA  
6090 Wedgewood Rd  
Medina, OH 44256  
(330) 722-2628  
(330) 725-5829  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/oh](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/oh)

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

County Committee  
Brian Cadnum  
Russell Hendricks  
Marie Keister  
Gary Vaughn

County Committee  
meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday each month

Staff  
Theresa Johnson, CED  
Amy Huttlinger, PT  
Robin Smith, PT  
Carroll Weinbroer, P



---

## ***Will A General CRP Sign-up Happen This Year?***

A CRP general sign-up may occur in Fiscal Year (FY) 2010, however the National FSA office said details and the specific sign-up start date will be announced upon completion of an Environmental Impact Statement. The completion of the Environmental Impact Statement is expected to finish later this summer.

## ***CRP Participants – Think Twice before Mowing***

A few years ago, 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 utilize 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 1<sup>st</sup> – July 15<sup>th</sup>). 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 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.

## ***2009 ACRE Benchmark Farm Yields and Production Reports***

Producers that participated in the ACRE program for program year 2009 must establish a benchmark farm yield for each covered commodity that was planted. A benchmark farm yield is the Olympic average of the average yield per planted acre for the farm for the 5 most recent crop years. For 2009, the benchmark farm yield is comprised of data from crop years 2004 through 2008. Because of situations where producers did not have control of farms for the preceding 5 years or a specific covered commodity may not have been planted on the farm in 1 or more of the preceding 5 crop years, "plug yields" were established by commodity and county. Producers may use the ACRE plug yield to establish the benchmark farm yield or may report production evidence.

Also, Producers that participated in the ACRE program for 2009 are required to report 2009 production to be used to compute 2009 ACRE payments, if applicable, and 2010 benchmark farm yields. The reporting deadline date for 2009 production reports has been extended **until July 15, 2010** for small grains and other crops. Production reports may be submitted by the 2009 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.

## ***MILC Payments for 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.

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 28, 2010. Using this information, the MILC payment trigger for the month of April has been adjusted to \$16.94, for a final MILC payment rate of \$0.2115000.

For more information about the MILC program, go online to: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA>.

## ***Banking Changes?***

If you have changed banks and not notified FSA, your payment could be delayed. Payments are electronically transferred into your bank account, if we are not aware of

changes to your account and routing numbers, there could be problems. In order to make timely payments, you need to notify the office if you close your account or if another financial institution purchases your bank. It is important that any changes in producer's account such as type account, bank mergers, routing number or account numbers, be provided to the county office promptly to avoid possible payment delay.

## Farm Loans for Socially Disadvantaged

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 \$1,094,000. 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 FSA office to setup an appointment with a Loan Approval Official.

## Tree Assistance Program

Orchardists and nursery tree growers may apply to receive Tree Assistance Program (TAP) benefits beginning May 10, 2010, for losses suffered during calendar years **2008** and **2009**, and for losses suffered during **January 1, 2010, to May 7, 2010**. TAP provides financial assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes, and vines that were lost by natural disasters occurring on or after January 1, 2008, and before October 1, 2011.

To qualify for TAP, orchardists and nursery tree growers must:

- Suffer qualifying tree, bush, and vine losses in excess of 15% mortality (after adjustment for normal mortality) from an eligible natural disaster for the individual stand
- have owned the eligible trees, bushes, and vines when the natural disaster occurred; however, eligible growers are not required to

own the land on which eligible trees, bushes, and vines are planted

- Replace eligible trees, bushes, vines within 12 months from the date the application is approved.

The following table provides the final dates to submit a TAP application and supporting documentation.

For more information about the TAP, including the TAP factsheet go to:

[http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA\\_File/tap051010.pdf](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/tap051010.pdf)

## Removing CCC Loan Collateral

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 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 staff, before you HAUL!

## Transition Incentives Program

The Transition Incentives Program (TIP) - a new program under the Conservation Title of the 2008 Farm Bill - to encourage retired or retiring owners or operators to transition their land to beginning or socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers.

TIP provides annual payments for up to two additional years after the date of the expiration of the CRP contract, provided the transition is not a family member. To be eligible for TIP, an owner or operator must be a retired or retiring farmer or rancher on land enrolled in an expiring CRP contract. The retired/retiring owner must agree to sell, or have a contract to sell, or agree to a long term lease of land enrolled under CRP contract to a beginning or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher.

## Maintaining Stored Grain Quality

With the high temperatures this spring, producers are reminded to keep an eye on the condition and quality of the stored grain. Producers with a CCC loan should contact the FSA office if they notice changes in the condition and quality of stored grain.

### 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

Selected Interest Rates for June 2010	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	3.125%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	5.125%
Farm Ownership Loans — Down Payment	1.500%
Emergency Loans	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility Loan -- 7 year	3.000%
Farm Storage Facility Loan -- 10 year	3.625%
Farm Storage Facility Loan -- 12 year	3.875%
Sugar Storage Facility Loans	4.125%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.375%

May 31	Memorial Day Holiday. <b>FSA Offices Closed.</b>
June 1	Deadline to apply for 2009 commodity loans and LDP's on feed grains, soybeans, pulse crops.
June 1	<b>Deadline to sign-up for 2010 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program.</b> USDA will not accept any late-filed applications.
June 15	County Committee Nomination period begins.
June 15	Deadline to submit the CCC-927 and CCC-928 consent forms to the IRS.
June 30	Final certification date for small grains.
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loan Program.
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve program.

Visit our website at: [www.fsa.usda.gov/oh](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/oh)

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."