



May 2008

Ohio State FSA Newsletter

When Weather Prevents or Damages Crops

When bad weather prevents planting or damages crops, the Ohio Farm Service Agency (FSA) would like to remind producers to report the acreage to the FSA office within 15 days of the final planting date of the crop. This applies to all crops, whether covered by crop insurance, not covered by insurance, or covered by FSA's Non-insured Assistance Program (NAP). Final planting dates vary among counties and crop types.

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

Producers who have their crops insured through a private crop insurance company should contact the insurance agent immediately and advise them of the damaged crops. Additionally, a CCC-576, *Notice of Loss Application*, must be completed in person at the FSA office, and the prevented and/or failed acres reported.

For those crops covered under FSA's NAP, producers should immediately contact the FSA office to report the acres and file a CCC-576, *Notice of Loss Application*. Producers with NAP coverage should report their losses within 15 calendar days of crop damage from natural disaster, so the loss can be appraised and production counted before the crop is put into another use, abandoned or destroyed.

Crops not covered with a private insurance or NAP policy should still be reported to the local FSA office, and producers should file a Notice of Loss Application. This will provide FSA with a historical record of your crop should disaster assistance become available.

For more information about reporting prevented planting or failed acres, contact or stop in the FSA office.

Final Loan and LDP Availability Date

Producers are reminded that the final commodity loan and LDP availability date for 2007 Crop Year Corn, Dry Peas, Grain Sorghum, Lentils, Mustard Seed, Safflower Seed, Small Chickpeas, Soybeans and Sunflower seed **is May 31, 2008.**

Sign-Up Continues for USDA FSA Disaster Programs

Eligible farmers and producers who suffered livestock, livestock feed and crop losses that occurred before Dec. 31, 2007, can still apply to receive disaster payments.

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) continues to accept applications and make payments for quantity losses under Crop Disaster Program (CDP) that occurred before Dec. 31, 2007. FSA continues to issue Livestock Compensation Program (LCP) and Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) payments for losses that occurred in designated disaster counties. **No ending date has been announced for LIP, LCP and CDP.** FSA will conduct sign-up and begin making payments for quality losses under CDP later this spring.

More information about CDP, LCP and LIP is available online at: <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov>.

Maintaining CRP Cover

Participants are required to maintain Conservation Reserve Program acres according to the Conservation Plan agreed to with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Participants must:

- Have adequate approved vegetative cover to control erosion for the contract period;
- Control weeds and other types of undesirable vegetation; and
- Take control measures outside of the primary nesting season which is **March 1-July 15.**

Please keep in mind mowing for cosmetic purposes are prohibited at all times. That is why it is important to review your Conservation Plan and talk to NRCS for the best control method(s), if you think noxious weeds or undesirable plant species are invading your CRP land.

Contact your local FSA office **if cover maintenance is required before July 15**, to control weeds or erosion problems.

County Committee Elections

The Ohio Farm Service Agency is actively looking for individuals interested in serving on the County Committee.



Your county committee members perform an important function. They represent you and your agricultural interests. They help shape how federal farm programs from Washington are implemented on the ground in local communities. Do you know someone that would make a good county committee member? How about someone that would be able to represent you and your farming interests, as well as your neighbor's interests?

Any eligible person 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 all local FSA offices. You may also go online and download the form from our Ohio FSA website at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/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. 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 your local County Committee, or stop in the office for details on the types of decisions county committee members make. You can also 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/FSA/webapp?area=newsroom&subject=landing&topic=cce>.

The nomination period begins June 15th and runs until August 1, 2008. Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters November 3rd and must be returned by December 1, 2008. The elected Committee Member and Alternates will take office January 1, 2009.

Preventing Fraud

The Farm Service Agency has joined with the Risk Management Agency to prevent fraud, waste and abuse in the Federal Crop Insurance Program. FSA has been, and will continue to, assist RMA and insurance providers by monitoring crop conditions throughout the growing season. In addition, FSA will refer all suspected cases of fraud, waste and abuse to RMA.

Producers can report suspected cases to the county office staff, RMA office, or the Office of the Inspector General.

Maintaining Farm Stored Grain Quality

Many producers sometimes struggle to find adequate grain storage. 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 commodity for the term of the loan. Before removing loan collateral call or visit your local FSA office.

Farm Storage Facility Loan Program

The Farm Storage Facility Loan Program offers producers low interest financing for the purchase of new grain storage and drying equipment. Producers may be eligible to finance up to \$100 thousand for the purchase of grain storage and drying equipment.

For information about grain storage options visit your FSA office or local extension agent.

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!

Farm Loans for Socially Disadvantaged

The Ohio Farm Service Agency would like to remind 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 \$200,000. Guaranteed loans (loans made by a commercial lender where FSA acts as guarantor) can reach a maximum indebtedness of \$949,000. 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 your local FSA office to setup an appointment with a Loan Approval Official.

Selected Interest Rates for May 2008	
90-Day Treasury Bill	1.500%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	3.125%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	5.000%
Farm Ownership Loans Beginning Farmer Down Payment	4.000%
Emergency Loans	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility Loans	3.000%
Sugar Storage Facility Loans	4.250%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	2.625%



Reporting Acreage Crop

Please remember that 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.

Failed acreage must be reported within 15 days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date.

Acreage reports are required for many Farm Service Agency programs. For crops other than Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) crops, acreage reports are to be certified by the June 30 deadline on small grains and a July 15 deadline on all other crops.

Acreage reports on crops for which NAP assistance may be paid 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.

CRP Practice of the Month – Farmable Wetlands & Buffer (CP27/28)

This Continuous CRP practice restores farmable wetlands and associated buffers by converting farmed and prior converted wetlands that have been cropped back to wetlands.

Many crop fields have depressional areas or pockets that may dry out enough in the spring to plant a crop but later in the year, the field retains enough water to destroy the crop. These areas in most years are not economically feasible to fertilize and plant to a crop, so why not enroll those areas in CRP and be guaranteed a payment for 10-15 years?

With input costs such as fertilizer, seed, and fuel continuing to rise with commodity prices, producers must take a hard look at each acre of land and determine if it is profitable to farm. Wet, poorly drained areas, in most years are not profitable to farm.

Farmers and landowners may enroll cropland in CP27/28 if it has been planted, County Committee-approved prevented planted, or considered planted to an agricultural commodity during 3 of the previous 10 crop years. Some other eligibility requirements must also be met and determined by FSA and NRCS.

Payments include Annual Rental, Signing Incentive Payment (\$100/acre), Practice Incentive Payment, and Cost Share to help pay the cost of restoring the wetland and buffer. There are some payment limitations based on the size of the practice.



(This is an example of an area eligible for Ohio Farmable Wetlands practice).

For additional information on CP27/28, farmable wetlands CRP practice, or to enroll acres into CRP, contact your local FSA Office. CRP practices offer many additional opportunities to convert unproductive cropland into conservation practices that are profitable for not only the participant, but also to the environment.

Sodbuster Regulations

The term “sodbusting” is used to identify the plowing up of erosion-prone grasslands for use as cropland. Sodbuster violations are unauthorized tillage practices on highly erodible lands that converted native vegetation such as rangeland or woodland, to crop production after Dec. 23, 1985.

Farmers and ranchers should be aware that if they use highly erodible land for crop production without proper conservation measures, they risk losing eligibility to participate in Farm Service Agency programs.

Before producers clear, plow or otherwise prepare areas not presently under crop production for planting, they are required to file an AD-1026, indicating the area to be brought into production.

If Natural Resources Conservation Service indicates on a CPA-026 that the area will be highly erodible land, the producer will be required to develop and implement a conservation plan on the affected acreage, before bringing land into production.

In addition, producers and the producer’s affiliates have to file an AD-1026 with the staff in the administrative or control county office before any farm program payments can be made. The AD-1026 is the producer’s signed certification that HELC, as well as wetland conservation, provisions will not be violated.

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Dates to Remember

May 26	Memorial Day Holiday. FSA Offices Closed.
May 31	Deadline to apply for 2007 commodity loans and LDP's on feed grains, soybeans, pulse crops.
May 31	Last day to plant or seed CRP cover this spring.
June 15	County Committee Nomination period begins.
June 30	Final certification date for small grains.
July 4	Independence Day Holiday. FSA Offices Closed.
July 15	Final certification date for all crops except small grains.
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loan Program.
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve Program.

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