Ohio FSA State Office

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Hours
Monday - Friday
7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

May 2012

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

DCP/ACRE Sign-Up Deadline

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) would like to remind Ohio producers who have not contacted their local FSA Office about DCP or ACRE enrollment to do so before the sign-up deadline ends. It is important producers contact their local FSA office to set up appointments before the June 1, 2012, deadline.
All signatures must be obtained by the deadline for both the DCP and ACRE programs. In all cases, it is the responsibility of the operator and owners of a farm to obtain and submit all necessary signatures on election and enrollment forms by the June 1, 2012, deadline.

For more information or to schedule an appointment to enroll in the DCP/ACRE programs, please contact your local FSA office.

2010 SURE Sign-Up Deadline

The sign-up for 2010 SURE losses continue through **June 1, 2012.**

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters that incurred in the crop year 2010. SURE is available to eligible producers on:

- Farms in counties with Secretarial disaster declarations, including contiguous counties, that have incurred crop production or quality losses, or both, and includes all crops grown by a producer nationwide, except grazed crops.
- Any farm in which, for the crop year, the actual production on the farm because of disaster-related conditions is 50 percent or less than normal production of the farm.

Eligible producers who suffered losses during the 2010 crop year are encouraged to visit their local FSA office to learn more about the SURE program. FSA also has SURE information available online at: www.fsa.usda.gov/sure.

Final Loan and LDP Availability Date

Producers are reminded that the final commodity loan and LDP availability date for 2011 Crop Year Corn, Dry Peas, Grain Sorghum, Lentils, Mustard Seed, Safflower Seed, Small Chickpeas, Soybeans and Sunflower seed **will be May 31, 2012.**

USDA Celebrates 150th Anniversary

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) is celebrating the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) 150th anniversary. USDA was founded May 15, 1862 when President Abraham Lincoln signed the Department of Agriculture Act that established the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Since the start, USDA has helped support the tremendous growth and success of American agriculture. FSA realizes that farmers and ranchers take risks everyday and FSA is looking forward to continue serving the producers while addressing the changing needs of agriculture and rural America.

Banking Changes?

If you changed banks and did 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 a 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.

2012 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 Farm Service Agency is looking for individuals interested in serving on the County Committee. 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 each FSA county office. The form is also available online at the Ohio FSA website: www.fsa.usda.gov/oh. The form is located under the "I Want To" section on the homepage.

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 County Executive Director or stop in the office 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 15th and runs until August 1, 2012. Nomination forms for the 2012 election must be postmarked or received in the local FSA office by close of business on Aug. 1, 2012. Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters November 5th and must be returned by December 3, 2012. The elected Committee Member and Alternates will take office January 1, 2013.

For more information about county committee elections, contact the county office staff.

Reporting Crop Acreage

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. 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.

Adjusted Gross Income

USDA and the Internal Revenue Service have established an electronic information exchange process for verifying compliance with the adjusted gross income (AGI) provisions for farm programs. Written consent is required from each producer or payment recipient for the tax review process. No actual tax data will be included in the report that IRS sends to FSA.

This ensures that payments are not issued to producers whose AGI exceeds certain limits. The limits set in the 2008 Farm Bill are $500,000 nonfarm average AGI for commodity and disaster programs; $750,000 farm average AGI for direct payments; and $1 million nonfarm average AGI for conservation programs.

Participants in CCC programs subject to average AGI rules must submit form CCC-931 to their local FSA County Office to avoid interruption of program benefits. This form may be obtained from local FSA and NRCS offices or online at: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ccc931.

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.

March MILC Payments for Dairy Producers

Producers participating in USDA's Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) program will receive payments for the month of March. USDA makes MILC payments on a monthly basis when the Boston Class I milk price falls below $16.94 per hundredweight after adjustment for the cost of dairy feed rations.

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 releases the data for determining the Average Dairy Feed Ration Cost monthly. Using this information, the MILC payment trigger for the month of March has been adjusted to $16.94, for a final MILC payment rate of $0. 8262432 per hundredweight.

For more information about the MILC program, please visit your local FSA office or go online to: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/milc2011.pdf.

Selected Interest Rates for May 2012	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating Loans -- Direct	1.500%
Farm Ownership Loans -- Direct	3.500%
Farm Ownership Loans -- Down Payment	1.500%
Emergency Loans	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility Loan -- 7 year	1.500%
Farm Storage Facility Loan -- 10 year	2.125%
Farm Storage Facility Loan -- 12 year	2.375%
Sugar Storage Facility Loans	2.625%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.125%

Farm Loans for Socially Disadvantaged

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) 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 $300,000. Guaranteed loans (loans made by a commercial lender where FSA acts as guarantor) can reach a maximum indebtedness of $1,214,000. 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.

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

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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.

Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC)

Producers intending to remove fence rows, convert woodlots to cropland, install new drainage, or improve or modify existing drainage, must notify the FSA and update Form AD-1026. FSA will notify NRCS and NRCS will make HEL and wetland technical determinations. Farmers with HEL determined soils are reminded of tillage, crop residue and rotation requirements per their conservation plan. Failure to obtain ADVANCE approval for any of these situations can result in the loss of eligibility and all federal payments.

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

Dates to Remember	
May 28	Memorial Day Holiday. **FSA Offices Closed.**
May 31	Deadline to apply for 2011 commodity loans and LDP's on feed grains, soybeans, pulse crops.
June 1	**Deadline** to sign-up for 2012 ACRE and Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program.
June 1	Deadline to sign-up for the 2010 SURE program.
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.
Aug. 1	**Final date** to request farm reconstitution for current fiscal year.
Aug. 1	**Last day** to file County Committee Nomination forms.
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loan Program.
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve program.

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."