



NEWSLETTER



Ohio FSA State Office

200 North High St.
Rm. 540
Columbus, OH 43215

614-255-2441 phone
614-255-2542 fax

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

June 2012

Ohio FSA State Executive Director,
Steve Maurer

Farm Loan Chief,
David Drake

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

FSA Seeks Comments on New Microloan Proposal

To further assist beginning farmers and ranchers, FSA is seeking comments on a new Microloan program that would simplify and streamline the process for producers obtaining loans under \$35,000. The new Microloan program would cut the paperwork in half and simplify the loan application process.

The proposed microloan program rule may be viewed at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/federalNotices?area=home&subject=lare&topic=frd-pi>. Comments must be submitted no later than July 23, 2012, through the following website: <http://www.regulations.gov> or by mail to Director, Loan Making Division (LMD), FSA, USDA, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Stop 0522, Washington, DC 20250-0522.

Final Acreage Reporting Dates Quickly Approaching

The Farm Service Agency (FSA), would like to remind 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 **July 2 deadline for small grains** and by **July 16 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 July 2 for small grains and July 16 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 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.

2011 ACRE Benchmark Farm Yields

Producers that participated in the ACRE program for program year 2011 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 2011, the benchmark farm yield is comprised of data from crop years 2007 through 2011. 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.

Production must be reported on form FSA-658. Producers will be required to certify, but not submit, the documents to support their production at the time FSA-658 is filed. However, the documentation will be required at a later date to verify the reported production. The production reporting deadlines to establish the 2011 benchmark farm yields is July 16, 2012 for small grains and other crops.

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. 1

County Committee Nominations

From **June 15 through Aug. 1**, farmers and ranchers can nominate eligible peers as candidates for election to the 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.

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

This is an important time for LAA communities, because county committee members make decisions that have significant effects on you and the area's agricultural sector as a whole. For example, committee members make decisions on applications for federal farm program and disaster payments. Committee members play a vital role by helping local farmers and ranchers manage tough financial times and natural disasters.

Talk to the County Executive Director at 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>.

Remember, the nomination period runs **June 15 through August 1**. The completed nomination form must be returned to the county office by the close of business on Aug. 1, or postmarked by midnight Aug. 1, 2012. Voting takes place in the fall. Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters by Nov. 5. Dec. 3 is the last day to return voted ballots to the county office. Newly elected committee members and alternates take office Jan. 1, 2013.

April 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 April has been adjusted to \$21.60, for a final MILC payment rate of \$1.2109586 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

Minority Farm Register

Minority farmers and ranchers across the nation can voluntarily join the USDA Minority Farm Register to receive information and opportunities from USDA agencies.

The register is a shared outreach list that will help USDA, community-based organizations and minority-serving educational institutions communicate with minority farmers and ranchers. Producers who join the register may receive outreach materials, newsletters and program announcements from USDA agencies and approved outreach partners. USDA will carefully control access to and use of the Register.

Individuals wishing to join the Register can visit their local FSA office and complete the registration form. Registration forms are also available in Spanish (AD-2035SP) and English (AD-2035) on the FSA website www.fsa.usda.gov under "Forms."

Farm Reconstitutions

For FSA program purposes, tracts having the same owner and the same operator are grouped 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 **Aug. 1** for farms enrolled in specific programs.

The following are the different methods used when doing a farm recon:

- **Estate Method** — the division of bases, allotments and quotas for a parent farm among heirs in settling an estate;
- **Designation of Landowner Method** — may be used when (1) part of a farm is sold or ownership is transferred; (2) an entire farm is sold to two or more persons; (3) farm ownership is transferred to two or more persons; (4) part of a tract is sold or ownership is transferred; (5) a tract is sold to two or more persons; or (6) tract ownership is transferred to two or more persons. In order to use this method the land sold must have been owned for at least three years, or a waiver granted, and the buyer and seller must sign a Memorandum of Understanding;
- **DCP Cropland Method** — the division of bases in the same proportion that the DCP cropland for each resulting tract relates to the DCP cropland on the parent tract;
- **Default Method** — the division of bases for a parent farm with each tract maintaining the bases attributed to the tract level when the reconstitution is initiated in the system.

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!

Power of Attorney

FSA has a required power of attorney form available for those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., that enables the participant to designate another person to conduct his or her business at the office. This can be done by completing an FSA-211, Power of Attorney. The form is available at your local USDA Service Center or online at:

http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/efcommon/eFileServices/Forms/FSA0211-0211A_081217V02.pdf .

The FSA-211 form obtained and completed outside the USDA Service Centers offices must be notarized. To find out more, call the office.

Selected Interest Rates for June 2012	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	1.500%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	3.625%
Farm Ownership Loans -- Down Payment	1.500%
Emergency Loans	3.750%
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%

Maintenance of CRP Cover

Participants are required to maintain CRP and CREP acres according to the Conservation Plan agreed to with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). All CRP and CREP maintenance activity must be conducted outside the primary nesting season for wildlife and in accordance with the conservation plan. The primary nesting season is March 1 through July 15th. Spot treatment of the acreage to control noxious and invasive species may be allowed during the primary nesting season if prior approval is received from FSA County Committee.

2011 ACRE Program Production Reports

Producers that participated in the ACRE program for 2011 are required to report 2011 production to be used to compute 2011 ACRE payments, if applicable, and 2012 benchmark farm yields. The reporting deadline date for 2011 production reports is **July 16, 2012** for small grains and other crops. Production reports may be submitted by the 2011 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.

2012 Compliance and Spot-Check Review

Compliance and spot-checks will once again be utilized during the 2012 crop year. Instead of locally selecting farms, contracts, deficiency loans, etc. for spot-check and review, a nationwide selection of producers is used to achieve a statistical sampling of participating producers. Spot-check selections are to be conducted based on a producer's participation in the following programs/activities: ALAP, ACRE, CRP maintenance and practice checks, DCP, ELAP, FSA-578's, HELC/WC compliance, LDP's/MAL's, LFP, LIP, MILC, NAP, TAP and SURE.



FSA may review a producer’s operations in multiple states and counties, depending on the scope of the producer’s operations. FSA will review both the accuracy of the representations made by the selected producers in connection with participation in FSA programs as well as the producer’s compliance with applicable program requirements. The reviews may need to be conducted at various times throughout the year depending on the FSA programs in which the producer is participating. If an entity is selected from the national database that is no longer farming or participating in the 2012 crop year, a notation shall be made on the spot-check list.

FSA appreciates the cooperation of its customers as the agency continues to enhance its operations. FSA’s goal is to ensure that program dollars are delivered effectively and efficiently so America’s farmers and ranchers can provide safe and abundant food, fiber and fuel for consumers at home and abroad. For more information about the new spot-check selection procedure, feel free to contact your local FSA office for additional clarification.

Dates to Remember	
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.
July 2	Final certification date for small grains.
July 4	Independence Day Holiday. FSA Offices Closed.
July 16	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.
Aug. 1	Deadline to request re-enrollment of continuous CRP contracts expiring Sept. 30, 2012.

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

“The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all of 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, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual’s income is derived from any public assistance program. (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 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.”