



February 2009

**District B - Pennsylvania FSA**

-- To skip directly to the newsletter for your county, move your mouse to the servicing County Office on the list below and left-click.

Bradford  
Carbon / Monroe  
Lackawanna / Wayne / Pike  
Luzerne  
Lycoming  
Northampton / Lehigh  
Potter / McKean / Cameron  
Susquehanna  
Tioga  
Wyoming / Sullivan



# Bradford County News

## Bradford County USDA Service Center

**Bradford County FSA**  
RR 5 Box 5030A  
Towanda, PA 18848  
570-265-3146 Ext: 2  
(phone)  
570-265-7435 (fax)  
www.fsa.usda.gov/

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

**County Committee**  
Robert J. Taylor  
Myra McNeal  
Gary Kline  
Elizabeth Shedden

**Staff**  
Kelly Sundy, CED  
Beth Abbott, PT  
Jeanette Fields, PT  
Michael Lamb, PT  
Myra Silverstrim, PT  
Sheryl Potocek, FLM  
Keith Kline, FLO

Rick Brown, FA  
Brad Haflett, FA

## County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Robert Taylor! Bob was re-elected to represent farmers from Litchfield, Windham, Rome, Wysox, Warren, Orwell, Pike, Stevens, Standing Stone, Herrick, Tuscarora, & Wyalusing on the county committee. Bob was elected to his 3rd consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area 2 are:

Robert Taylor — Elected to the  
county committee (COC),

Debra Russell — 1<sup>st</sup> alternate to COC,  
Rexford Russell — 2<sup>nd</sup> alternate to COC

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

The committee members held their organizational meeting in January to determine who will serve as the county committee chairman and vice-chairman.

Robert Taylor - COC Chairperson  
Myra McNeal - COC Vice-Chairperson  
Gary Kline - Regular Member

## DCP Sign Up Underway

Sign-up has started for the 2009 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment (DCP) Program for farms with base acres. You can sign up online or at local USDA service centers. Sign up will continue until June 1, 2009. The June 1, 2009 deadline is mandatory for all participants. FSA will not accept any late-filed applications.

The electronic DCP (or eDCP) service will save you time, reduce paperwork and speed up contract processing at FSA offices. It is available to anyone eligible to participate in the DCP Program and can be accessed at [www.fsa.usda.gov/dcp](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dcp). To access this on-line service, you must have an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires filling out an online registration form at <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov> followed by a visit to the local USDA Service Center for identity verification. FSA computes DCP Program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2009, you may request to receive advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment

for each commodity associated with the farm. FSA will issue advance direct payments later this month. Counter-cyclical payment rates vary depending on market prices and are issued only when the effective price for a commodity is statutorily set below its target price.

Producers who are eligible for the DCP Program will also be eligible to enroll in the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program. The enrollment period for the ACRE Program will begin in the spring. You may first enroll in the DCP Program, receive advance direct payments and then later modify your enrollment to include the ACRE program or you may wait and elect to enroll in DCP and ACRE at the same time in Spring 2009.

## MILC Sign Up Underway

Sign up for the Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC) is underway and will continue through the program's expiration date, Sept. 30, 2012.

The 2008 Farm Bill reauthorizes the MILC Program, which operates similarly to the counter-cyclical payment program for crops, and makes three key changes in program operation. Under the Farm Bill, the MILC payment rate and the per-operation poundage limit are modified, depending on when the milk is produced. In addition, a "feed cost adjuster," is introduced over the life of the 2008 Act, which adjusts the \$16.94 per hundred-weight (cwt.) benchmark price upward depending on the cost of feed rations. When available, MILC payments are based on a payment rate percentage that is multiplied by the difference between a now-flexible target (\$16.94 per cwt. or higher) and the specific month's Boston Class I price of milk.

The 2008 Farm Bill made changes to the provisions for payment eligibility and adjusted gross income (AGI). If the individual or entity has non-farm AGI greater than \$500,000, the individual or entity is not eligible for MILC benefits. For more information on the MILC program, contact your local USDA Service Center.

## Customer Statement

January signals the beginning of a new year, and a time to starting thinking about filing taxes. Producers who have signed up for a USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account will be able to access their farm data via their Customer Statement.



## **Special Accommodations**

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the county FSA office staff directly or by phone.



## **Foreign Buyers Notification**

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA.

Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, Realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

The Customer Statement puts a range of USDA services and programs into a single report that's at your fingertips and available online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It allows USDA customers to view their participation, application and payment status in various commodity and conservation programs; information on farm loans; and conservation plan and land unit information.

## **Bank Account Changes**

Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into your bank account. In order for timely payments to be made, producers need to notify the FSA county office if your account has been changed or if another financial institution purchases your bank. Payments can be delayed if the FSA office is not aware of updates to your account and routing numbers.

## **USDA Enacts Changes to Payment Limitations, Income Qualifications, and Implements Direct Attribution**

USDA recently published an interim final regulation in the Federal Register announcing changes to both Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) qualifications, program payment limitations, and direct attribution for FSA and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs, which became effective in accordance with the 2008 Farm Bill.

For commodity and disaster programs, the AGI limitation was reduced from \$2.5 million AGI from all sources to a three-year average non-farm AGI of \$500,000 such that a person or entity shall not be eligible for such programs if the non-farm AGI exceeds \$500,000. Also, under the new regulations, an individual or entity must have a 3-year average AGI less than or equal to \$750,000 per year from farm income in order to qualify for direct payments issued under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program.

The definition of income derived from farming, ranching and forestry operations was expanded to include, among other items, such items as the packing, storing and transporting of agricultural commodities; production of livestock products; farm-based production of renewable bio-energy; and in some instances, the providing of operational inputs to farmers, ranchers and foresters.

For conservation programs, the average non-farm AGI limitation is \$1 million or less for eligibility with allowances for certain exceptions. Individuals and entities must be "actively engaged in farming" with respect to a farming operation in order to be eligible for specified payments and benefits. To be "actively engaged in farming," the individual or entity must make significant contributions to the farming operation of: (1) capital, equipment, land, or a combination; and (2) per-

sonal labor or active personal management, or a combination.

Public comments on this interim final rule must be submitted to the Department by within 30 days of the date of publication.

## **Controlled Substance**

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium, poppies and other drug producing plants.

## **Power of Attorney**

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., FSA has a power of attorney form available that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. If you are interested, please contact our office or any Farm Service Agency office near you for more information.

## **Appeal Process**

After an FSA official makes a decision on your request for USDA services or application, you will be sent a letter informing you of the decision and options you can pursue if you disagree.

Program participants have choices — an informal review with the original agency decision-maker, an opportunity for mediation, an appeal to the next level of authority within the agency and appeal to the national appeals division.

## **Loans for Socially Disadvantaged**

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) can make and guarantee loans to socially disadvantaged applicants to buy and operate family size farms and ranches. Funds specifically for these loans are reserved each year. A socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of the group without regard to their individual qualities. For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, and Asians and Pacific Islanders. Contact your local FSA Farm Loan Manager or Officer for more details and assistance in applying.

## **Youth Loans**

Remember FSA makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to establish and operate income producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be



initiated, developed, carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organization or with a vocational teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and operated with the assistance of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. Contact your local FSA office for more details

## Kansas City Mails 1099-G

During the last week of January, producers who have received payments from FSA should have received a CCC-1099-G from the Kansas City office. A CCC-1099-G is a report to the Internal Revenue Service about FSA payments made to you in calendar year 2008. The CCC-1099-G is a service to help participating producers report taxable income. It is not intended to replace the program participant's responsibility to report income to the IRS.

If you received a CCC-1099-G, we recommend that you check the amounts shown with those in your records to see that the amounts are correct. Refunds will no longer be reported on the 1099-G, but will be available online from the FSA Financial Inquiries (FSA-FI) web-based database. Program participants with eAuthentication user ID's and passwords can access their refund information at FSA-FI and select "Inquiry Type 1099/Refund Reports". Refund amounts are displayed on the Producer's Year-to-Date Activity web page; or you may contact your local FSA office. If you choose to visit the office, bring your CCC-1099-G with you.

## NAP Coverage Deadline

The Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) provides financial assistance to producers of crops not insured by the Risk Management Agency (RMA). It protects producers when they experience low yields as a result of natural disasters. Producers who are interested in purchasing NAP coverage are reminded that they must make an application on or before the application closing date for the specific crop. Applications are filed at your local FSA County Office and all fees must be paid before the application is accepted by FSA.

Most noninsurable spring planted crops can be covered if an application is filed by **March 16, 2009**, at your FSA County Office. Service fees amount to \$250.00, but not more than \$750 per producer per county, or not more than \$1875 total per producer for all counties.

Once insured by NAP, the producer is responsible to report the acres of crop planted and notify the FSA County Office within 15 days of when damage occurs due to a natural occurrence. Once notified of the damage, FSA will conduct an inspection to determine the amount and cause of the damage.

More information on NAP and additional

disaster assistance programs is available online at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/>

## Changes to Farming Operation

Participation in FSA farm programs requires all records to be accurate and up to date. *It is the producer's responsibility* to inform FSA of changes to his/her farming operation including, but not limited to, land ownership changes, adding or dropping a tract of land (leases), entity type or ID number changes, marriage, divorce, or deaths. A copy of the deed must be submitted for ownership changes; copies of written lease agreements must be submitted for all cash leases.

## Why should USDA's Farm Service Agency be your lender of first opportunity?

The farming industry has undergone many changes in recent years, resulting in new types of small farming and ranching enterprises. These include value-added farming operations, organic farming, immigrant farming, and the growing of crops for local retailers or direct sale to consumers.

New federal programs have been enacted to stimulate beginning and younger farmers to establish new, or retain ownership of existing, small family farms. These exciting new trends in rural America present the USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) Farm Loan Programs (FLP) with opportunities for increased lending activity in the farming community.

-----So, why should USDA's Farm Loan Programs be your lender of first opportunity?

**We are your advocates.**

Farm Loan Programs staff are predisposed to award loans, therefore putting the agent on the customer's side. FSA wants to see you succeed. This is evident in our consultative approach, offering low rates and identifying other resources to our clients in an advisory fashion throughout the life of the loan.

**We think outside the box.**

Our loan staff keep up with the industry trends and constantly look for emerging and non-traditional farm business models. Our commitment to doing things better in the industry provides you with fresh perspectives, alternatives, and creative ways of growing your business.

**We offer solutions.**

Our staff can refer customers to other public financial aid sources that can serve as a blend with the Farm Loan Programs loan. This results in acquiring more comprehensive resources and a tailored financial solution that works for unique lending situations.

**We specialize in:**

- Loans for beginning farmers, disaster recovery, operational financing,
- and farm ownership
- Farm planning and counseling
- Supervised credit and assistance through the life of your loan
- Sustained financial planning services

## Farm-Storage Facility Loans (FSFL)

Loans on new farm storage structures are available through your local FSA Office. Eligible structures include grain bins, silos, and handling equipment. To be eligible for these loans, you must have a need for additional storage and you must grow an eligible crop. A satisfactory credit history is required and you must demonstrate the ability to repay the debt. The interest rate for loans disbursed in February of 2009 is 1.875 percent. Contact your county office for additional details.



## PREVENTED PLANTING

The growing season is right around the corner and weather is always unpredictable. If any producer experiences adverse weather conditions that prevent you from planting a crop, you will need to contact your local FSA office to complete a form CCC-576 (prevented planting notice of loss.) This form will need to be completed in order to meet eligibility requirements for a potential claim.

Selected Interest Rates for March 2009	
Farm Operating - Direct	2.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct	3.50%
Limited Resource - Farm Operating	5.00%
Limited Resource - Farm Ownership	5.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.5%
Emergency	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility	2.25%
Commodity Loan	1.50%

Visit our Web site at  
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/>

**For more information re:  
 the Farm Loan Programs**  
 Contact your local USDA-FSA Office

Dates to Remember	
3-16-2009	Final day to purchase or change your coverage with Nap or Crop Insurance
5-25-2009	Office Closed - Memorial Day Observed
6-1-2009	DCP Deadline - No Late-File
6-15-2009	Final day to report small grain acres
7-3-2009	Office Closed - Independence Day Observed
7-15-2009	Final day to report course grain, fruit and veggies, forage, any CRP/CREP acreage
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program 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 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, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



# Carbon/Monroe County News

## Carbon/Monroe County USDA Service Center

## Carbon/Monroe County FSA

5664 Interchange RD  
Leighton, PA 18235  
610-377-6300 (phone)  
610-377-6665 (fax)  
www.fsa.usda.gov/pa

## Hours

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

## County Committee

Melanie Gethen  
Blake Gregory  
Althea Shoenberger  
Robert Ziegler  
William Bond, Jr.

## Staff

Danadee M. Miller-Boyle  
County Executive Director

LaVerne M. Hunsicker  
Program Technician

Diane Bochicchio  
Program Technician

## County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Blake Gregory! Blake was re-elected to represent farmers from Banks, Lausanne, Packer, Lehigh, Kidder, Penn Forest, Coolbaugh, Barrett, Price, Paradise, Pocono, Tobyhanna, Tunkhannock, Chestnuthill Townships and Boroughs of Weatherly, Jim Thorpe, and Mt. Pocono on the county committee.

Blake was elected to his second consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area 1 are:

Blake Gregory — Elected to the county committee (COC),  
Mark Heckman — 1<sup>st</sup> alternate to COC,

Congratulations to William Bond, Jr! William was re-elected to represent farmers from Jackson, Hamilton, Stroud, Smithfield, and Middle Smithfield Townships and Boroughs of Stroudsburg, East Stroudsburg, and Delaware Water Gap on the county committee. William was elected to his first consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area 5 are:

William Bond, Jr. — Elected to the county committee (COC),  
Mark Smith — 1<sup>st</sup> alternate to COC

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The committee members held their organizational meeting in January to determine who would serve as the county committee chairman and vice-chairman as follows:

Melanie Gethen – Chairperson  
Blake Gregory – Vice-Chairperson  
Althea Shoenberger – Regular Member  
Robert Ziegler – Regular Member  
William Bond, Jr. – Regular Member

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Our loan staff keep up with the industry trends and constantly look for emerging and non-traditional farm business models. Our commitment to doing things better in the industry provides you with fresh perspectives, alternatives, and creative ways of growing your business.

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<b>Dates to Remember</b>	
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5-31-2009	NAP Deadline for Buckwheat
6-1-2009	DCP Deadline – No Late-file
6-15-2009	Deadline to Crop Report Small Grains.
7-15-2009	Deadline to Crop Report Corn, Soybeans, and all other crops.
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve program

Visit our Web site at  
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pa>

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program 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 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, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



# Lackawanna-Wayne-Pike County News

## County Committee Election Results

Lackawanna-Wayne-Pike  
County  
USDA Service Center

Lackawanna-Wayne-Pike  
County FSA  
1300 Old Plank Road  
Mayfield, PA 18433  
570-282-8732 (phone)  
570-281-5379 (fax)  
www.fsa.usda.gov/\*\*

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

County Committee  
Brian Tranovich  
Clyde Eitz  
Carl Shepstone  
Paul Manning  
Julie Yatsonsky  
Bonnie Rosiak-Advisor

County Committee meets  
3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday

Staff  
Elizabeth Kotkiewicz-CED  
Lucy DelBuono  
John Stinavage

Congratulations to Paul Manning! Paul was re-elected to represent farmers from Local Administrative Area #1 on the county committee. Paul was elected to his 3rd consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area #1 are:

Paul Manning — Elected to the county committee (COC),

Congratulations to Julie Yatsonsky! Julie was elected to represent farmers from LAA #5 on the county committee. Julie was elected for her 1<sup>st</sup> consecutive term. The election results for LAA#5 are:

Julie Yatsonsky-Elected to the county committee(COC).

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The electronic DCP (or eDCP) service will save you time, reduce paperwork and speed up contract processing at FSA offices. It is available to anyone eligible to participate in the DCP Program and can be accessed at [www.fsa.usda.gov/dcp](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dcp). To access this on-line service, you must have an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires filling out an online registration form at <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov> followed by a visit to the local USDA Service Center for identity verification.

FSA computes DCP Program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2009, you may request to receive advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment for each commodity associated with the farm. FSA will issue advance direct payments later this month. Counter-cyclical payment rates vary depending on market prices and are issued only when the effective price for a commodity is statutorily set below its target price.

**Producers who are eligible for the DCP Program will also be eligible to enroll in the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program.** The enrollment period for the ACRE program will begin in the spring. You may first enroll in the DCP Program, receive advance direct payments and then later modify your enrollment to include the ACRE program or you may wait and elect to enroll in DCP and ACRE at the same time in Spring 2009.

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The 2008 Farm Bill reauthorizes the MILC Program, which operates similarly to the counter-cyclical payment program for crops, and makes three key changes in program operation. Under the Farm Bill, the MILC payment rate and the per-operation poundage limit are modified, depending on when the milk is produced. In addition, a “feed cost adjuster” is introduced over the life of the 2008 Act, which adjusts the \$16.94 per hundred-weight (cwt.) benchmark price upward depending on the cost of feed rations. When available, MILC payments are based on a payment rate percentage that is multiplied by





the difference between a now-flexible target (\$16.94 per cwt. or higher) and the specific month's Boston Class I price of milk.

The 2008 Farm Bill made changes to the provisions for payment eligibility and adjusted gross income (AGI). If the individual or entity has non-farm AGI greater than \$500,000, the individual or entity is not eligible for MILC benefits.

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The definition of income derived from farming, ranching and forestry operations was expanded to include, among other items, such items as the packing, storing and transporting of agricultural commodities; production of livestock products; farm-based production of renewable bio-energy; and in some instances, the providing of operational inputs to farmers, ranchers and foresters.

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**For more information re: the Farm Loan Programs**

Contact your local USDA-FSA Office

**Dates to Remember**

6-1-2009	DCP Deadline – No Late-file
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve program

Visit our Web site at  
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pa>

**Selected Interest Rates for February 2009**

Farm Operating - Direct	2.125%
Farm Ownership - Direct	3.75%
Limited Resource - Farm Operating	5.00%
Limited Resource - Farm Ownership	5.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.5%
Emergency	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility	1.875%
Commodity Loan	1.375%

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program 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 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, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



# Luzerne County News

## Luzerne County USDA Service Center

**Luzerne County FSA**  
911 West Main Street  
Plymouth, PA 18651  
570-779-0732 (phone)  
570-779-5714 (fax)  
www.fsa.usda.gov/pa

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

**County Committee**  
Jon Lucas  
Dorothy Larock  
Paul Young

**Staff**  
Danadee M. Miller-Boyle  
County Executive Director

Betty Crilley  
Program Technician

Julia Czajkowski  
Program Technician

Bob Kashubski  
Field Assistant

Bob Stola  
Field Assistant

## County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Dorothy Larock! Dorothy was elected to represent farmers from Nescopeck, Conyngham, Hollenback, Dorrance, Black Creek, Sugarloaf, Butler, Foster, and Hazle Townships on the county committee. Dorothy was elected to her first consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area 3 are:

Dorothy Larock — Elected to the county committee (COC),  
Keith Hilliard — 1<sup>st</sup> alternate to COC,

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

The committee members held their organizational meeting in January to determine who would serve as the county committee chairperson and vice-chairperson as follows:  
Jon Lucas, Chairperson  
Dorothy Larock, Vice-Chairperson  
Paul Young, Member

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**For more information re:  
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Limited Resource - Farm Operating	5.00%
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Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.5%
Emergency	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility	2.25%
Commodity Loan	1.50%

<b>Dates to Remember</b>	
5-31-2009	NAP Deadline for Buckwheat
6-1-2009	DCP Deadline – No Late-file
6-15-2009	Deadline to Crop Report Small Grains.
7-15-2009	Deadline to Crop Report Corn, Soybeans, and all other crops.
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve program

Visit our Web site at  
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# Lycoming County News

## Lycoming County USDA Service Center

**Lycoming County FSA**  
542 County Farm Road  
Montoursville, Pa 17754  
570-433-3902 (phone)  
570-433-3907(fax)  
www.fsa.usda.gov/\*\*

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

**County Committee**  
Nancy Jarrett  
Don Hepburn  
Thomas Styer

County Committee meets:  
March 19, 2009  
May 21, 2009  
July 16, 2009  
September 17, 2009  
November 19, 2009

**Staff**  
Michael Sherman  
County Executive Director

Kathryn Probst  
Program Technician

Michelle Engel  
Program Technician

## County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Thomas Styer! Thomas was re-elected to represent farmers from Franklin, Jordan, Moreland, Muncy, Muncy Creek, Penn, Shrewsbury, and Wolf Townships on the county committee. He was elected to his second consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area 3 are:

Thomas Styer — Elected to the County Committee (COC),  
Kenneth Singer — 1<sup>st</sup> alternate to COC,

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New federal programs have been enacted to stimulate beginning and younger farmers to establish new, or retain ownership of existing, small family farms. These exciting new trends in rural America present the USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) Farm Loan Programs (FLP) with opportunities for increased lending activity in the farming community. -----So, why should USDA's Farm Loan Programs be your lender of first opportunity?

### **We are your advocates.**

Farm Loan Programs staff are predisposed to award loans, therefore putting the agent on the customer's side. FSA wants to see you succeed. This is evident in our consultative approach, offering low rates and identifying other resources to our clients in an advisory fashion throughout the life of the loan.

### **We think outside the box.**

Our loan staff keep up with the industry trends and constantly look for emerging and non-traditional farm business models. Our commitment to doing things better in the industry provides you with fresh perspectives, alternatives, and creative ways of growing your business.

### **We offer solutions.**

Our staff can refer customers to other public financial aid sources that can serve as a blend with the Farm Loan Programs loan. This results in acquiring more comprehensive resources and a tailored financial solution that works for unique lending situations.

### **We specialize in:**

- Loans for beginning farmers, disaster recovery, operational financing,
- and farm ownership
- Farm planning and counseling
- Supervised credit and assistance through the life of your loan
- Sustained financial planning services

## **CREP Opportunities for Nutrient Credit Trading on Horizon**



Lycoming County is taking a proactive countywide approach to comply with the new Chesapeake Bay regulations. Opportunities may exist for CREP participants to receive compensation for nutrient credits through CREP practices already installed. We are continuously accepting CREP offers from landowners and livestock producers for a variety of CREP practices. Numerous best management practices can be implemented through the CREP Program such as riparian buffers, stream bank fencing, watering facilities, stream crossings, and heavy use walkways just to name a few. Riparian buffers and all associated livestock components are still eligible for 140% cost share on eligible costs. Contact the Lycoming County FSA Office for further details.

**For more information re: the Farm Loan Programs**

Contact your local USDA-FSA Office

**Dates to Remember**

6-1-2009	DCP Deadline – No Late-file
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve program

**Selected Interest Rates for February 2009**

Farm Operating - Direct	2.125%
Farm Ownership - Direct	3.75%
Limited Resource - Farm Operating	5.00%
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Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.5%
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Farm Storage Facility	1.875%
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# Northampton/Lehigh County News

**Northampton/Lehigh  
County  
USDA Service Center**

**Northampton/Lehigh  
County FSA**  
3910 Adler Place  
Suite 110  
610-625-8392 (phone)  
610-625-8397(fax)  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/)

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

**County Committee**  
Brian Fulmer  
Kenneth Gehringer  
Dale Remaley  
LeRoy C Stahler, Jr  
John Valkovec

**Staff**  
Brian Ranck, CED  
Dorothy Dewhirst, PT  
Sandra Garr, PT  
Jane Oswald, PT

## County Committee

### Election Results

Congratulations to Dale Remaley (LAA 3) was elected to represent farmers from Washington, Whitehall & North Whitehall Townships in Lehigh County & Allen, East Allen, Lehigh & Hanover Townships in Northampton County. LeRoy Stahler (LAA 2) was elected to represent farmers in Upper & Lower Macungie, South Whitehall, Upper & Lower Milford, Upper Saucon & Salisbury Townships. Election results for Local Administrative Area 2 are:

LeRoy C Stahler, Jr – elected to County Committee  
Robert Gehman, Sr — 1<sup>st</sup> alternate to County Committee

Election results for Local Administrative Area 3 are:

Dale Remaley – elected to County Committee  
Joann Hunsicker – 1<sup>st</sup> alternate to County Committee

John Valkovec elected Chairperson  
Kenneth Gehringer elected Vice-Chairperson  
Joann Hunsicker nominated for Advisor

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

Brian Ranck recently completed one year of in service training and effective 3/1/2009 he will be the new County Executive Director.

### DCP Sign-up Underway

Sign-up has started for the 2009 Direct and Countercyclical Payment (DCP) Program for farms with base acres. You can sign up online or at local USDA service centers. Sign-up will continue until June 1, 2009. **The June 1, 2009 deadline is mandatory for all participants. FSA will not accept any late-filed applications.**

The electronic DCP (or eDCP) service will save you time, reduce paperwork and speed up contract processing at FSA offices. It is available to anyone eligible to participate in the DCP Program and can be accessed at [www.fsa.usda.gov/dcp](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dcp). To access this on-line service, you must have an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires filling out an online registration form at <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov> followed by a visit to the local USDA Service Center for identity verification.

FSA computes DCP Program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2009, you may request to receive advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment for each commodity associated with the farm. FSA will issue advance direct payments later this month. Counter-cyclical payment rates vary depending on market prices and are issued only when the effective price for a commodity is statutorily set below its target price.

**Producers who are eligible for the DCP Program will also be eligible to enroll in the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program.** The enrollment period for the ACRE program will begin in the spring. You may first enroll in the DCP Program, receive advance direct payments and then later modify your enrollment to include the ACRE program or you may wait and elect to enroll in DCP and ACRE at the same time in Spring 2009.

**MILC Sign-up Underway**  
**Sign-up for the Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC) is underway. Applications can be accepted through the program's expiration date, Sept. 30, 2012.**

The 2008 Farm Bill reauthorizes the MILC Program, which operates similarly to the





counter-cyclical payment program for crops, and makes three key changes in program operation. Under the Farm Bill, the MILC payment rate and the per-operation poundage limit are modified, depending on when the milk is produced. In addition, a “feed cost adjuster” is introduced over the life of the 2008 Act, which adjusts the \$16.94 per hundred-weight (cwt.) benchmark price upward depending on the cost of feed rations. When available, MILC payments are based on a payment rate percentage that is multiplied by the difference between a now-flexible target (\$16.94 per cwt. or higher) and the specific month’s Boston Class I price of milk.

The 2008 Farm Bill made changes to the provisions for payment eligibility and adjusted gross income (AGI). If the individual or entity has non-farm AGI greater than \$500,000, the individual or entity is not eligible for MILC benefits.

For more information on the MILC program, contact your local USDA Service Center.

## **USDA Enacts Changes to Payment Limitations, Income Qualifications, and Implements Direct Attribution**

USDA recently published an interim final regulation in the Federal Register announcing changes to both Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) qualifications, program payment limitations, and direct attribution for FSA and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs, which became effective in accordance with the 2008 Farm Bill.

For commodity and disaster programs, the AGI limitation was reduced from \$2.5 million AGI from all sources to a three-year average non-farm AGI of \$500,000 such that a person or entity shall not be eligible for such programs if the non-farm AGI exceeds \$500,000. Also, under the new regulations, an individual or entity must have a 3-year average AGI less than or equal to \$750,000 per year from farm income in order to qualify for direct payments issued under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program.

The definition of income derived from farming, ranching and forestry operations was expanded to include, among other items, such

items as the packing, storing and transporting of agricultural commodities; production of live-stock products; farm-based production of renewable bio-energy; and in some instances, the providing of operational inputs to farmers, ranchers and foresters.

For conservation programs, the average non-farm AGI limitation is \$1 million or less for eligibility with allowances for certain exceptions. Individuals and entities must be “actively engaged in farming” with respect to a farming operation in order to be eligible for specified payments and benefits. To be “actively engaged in farming,” the individual or entity must make significant contributions to the farming operation of: (1) capital, equipment, land, or a combination; and (2) personal labor or active personal management, or a combination.

Public comments on this interim final rule must be submitted to the Department within 90 days of the date of publication.

## **Foreign Buyers Notification**

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA.

Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

## **Controlled Substance**

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium, poppies and other drug producing plants.

## **Special Accommodations**

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the county FSA office staff directly or by phone.

## Power of Attorney

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., FSA has a power of attorney form available that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. If you are interested, please contact our office or any Farm Service Agency office near you for more information.



## Bank Account Changes

Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into your bank account. In order for timely payments to be made, producers need to notify the FSA county office if your account has been changed or if another financial institution purchases your bank. Payments can be delayed if the FSA office is not aware of updates to your account and routing numbers.

## Appeal Process

After an FSA official makes a decision on your request for USDA services or application, you will be sent a letter informing you of the decision and options you can pursue if you disagree.

Program participants have choices — an informal review with the original agency decision-maker, an opportunity for mediation, an appeal to the next level of authority within the agency and appeal to the national appeals division.

## Customer Statement

January signaled the beginning of a new year, and a time to starting thinking about filing taxes. Producers who have signed up for a USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account will be able to access their farm data via their Customer Statement.

The Customer Statement puts a range of USDA services and programs into a single report that's at your fingertips and available online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It allows USDA customers to view their participation, application and payment status in various commodity and conservation programs; information on farm loans; and conservation plan and land unit information.

## Youth Loans

Remember, FSA makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to es-

establish and operate income producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be initiated, developed, and carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organization or with a vocational teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and operated with the assistance of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. Contact your local FSA office for more details.

## Why should USDA's Farm Service Agency be your lender of first opportunity?

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- Sustained financial planning services

<b>Selected Interest Rates for March 2009</b>	
Farm Operating - Direct	2.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct	3.50%
Limited Resource - Farm Operating	5.00%
Limited Resource - Farm Ownership	5.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.5%
Emergency	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility	2.25%
Commodity Loan	1.50%

**Dates to Remember**

3/31/2009	Deadline to Request small grain MAL's
6-1-2009	Dealine for corn, sorghum & soybean MAL's
6-1-2009	DCP Deadline – No Late-file
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve program

**NON-INSURABLE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (NAP)**

Crops not insurable by Federal Crop Insurance can be covered by FSA's NAP insurance. The basic provisions (BP) are available at our office or at this website: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov> or through a link on the State website: <http://fsa.usda.gov/pa>

**For more information re: the Farm Loan Programs**

Contact your local USDA-FSA Office

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# Potter/McKean/Cameron County News

**Potter County  
USDA Service Center**

**Potter/McKean/Cameron  
County FSA  
103 Market St  
Coudersport, PA 16915  
www.fsa.usda.gov/**

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

**County Committee  
James Larson, Chair**  
Rodney Lane, Vice Chair  
Carl Long, Member  
John Mason, Member  
Harlan Lindsay, Member  
Susan Supplee, Advisor

County Committee meets  
Every Sixth Thursday

**Staff**  
David S Stratton, CED  
Sandra L Austin, PT  
Melanie A Housler, PT  
Gordon Erway, FA

## County Committee

### Election Results

Congratulations to Harlan Lindsay! Harlan was elected to represent farmers from Annin, Ceres, Eldred, Otto, Wetmore and Foster Townships on the county committee. Harlan as elected to his first consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area 1 are:

Harlan Lindsay— Elected to the county committee (COC),  
David Peterson — 1<sup>st</sup> alternate to COC

Congratulations to John Mason! John was Elected to represent farmers from Liberty, Roulette, Eulalia, Sweden, Portage and All townships in Cameron County:

John Mason---- Elected to the county committee COC  
Gene H Mantz – 1<sup>st</sup> alternate to COC  
Jonathan L Blass-- 2<sup>nd</sup> alternate to COC

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

### DCP Sign-up Underway

Sign-up has started for the 2009 Direct and Countercyclical Payment (DCP) Program for farms with base acres. You can sign up online or at local USDA service centers. Sign-up will continue until June 1, 2009. **The June 1, 2009 deadline is mandatory for all participants. FSA will not accept any late-filed applications.**

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**For more information re: the Farm Loan Programs**

Contact your local USDA-FSA Office

**Dates to Remember**

6-1-2009	DCP Deadline – No Late-file
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve program

Visit our Web site at  
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pa>

**Selected Interest Rates for February 2009**

Farm Operating - Direct	2.125%
Farm Ownership - Direct	3.75%
Limited Resource - Farm Operating	5.00%
Limited Resource - Farm Ownership	5.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.5%
Emergency	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility	1.875%
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# Susquehanna County News

## Susquehanna County USDA Service Center

## Susquehanna County FSA

RR 7 Box 7113  
Montrose, PA 18801  
570-278-1197 Ext: 2  
(phone)  
570-278-2648 (fax)  
www.fsa.usda.gov/

## Hours

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

## County Committee

Arthur B. Cole  
Levi Ransom  
Mark Tompkins  
Jean Castrogiovanni

## Staff

Kelly Sundy, Acting CED  
Debra Lynn, PT  
Diane Nowalk, PT  
John Benscoter, FA  
Delbert Potts, FA

## County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Arthur Cole! Art was re-elected to represent farmers from Auburn, Brooklyn, Dimock, Lathrop, Rush and Springville on the county committee. Art was elected to his 3rd consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area 2 are:

Arthur Cole – Elected to the  
county committee (COC),

Dennis LaRue – 1<sup>st</sup> alternate to COC,

Tina Carlin – 2<sup>nd</sup> alternate to COC

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

The committee members held their organizational meeting in January to determine who will serve as the county committee chairman and vice-chairman.

Arthur Cole - COC Chairperson

Levi Ransom - COC Vice-Chairperson

Mark Tompkins - Regular Member

## DCP Sign Up Underway

Sign-up has started for the 2009 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment (DCP) Program for farms with base acres. You can sign up online or at local USDA service centers. Signup will continue until June 1, 2009. The June 1, 2009 deadline is mandatory for all participants. FSA will not accept any late-filed applications.

The electronic DCP (or eDCP) service will save you time, reduce paperwork and speed up contract processing at FSA offices. It is available to anyone eligible to participate in the DCP Program and can be accessed at [www.fsa.usda.gov/dcp](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dcp). To access this on-line service, you must have an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires filling out an online registration form at <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov> followed by a visit to the local USDA Service Center for identity verification. FSA computes DCP Program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2009, you may request to receive advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment for each commodity associated with the farm.

FSA will issue advance direct payments later this month. Counter-cyclical payment rates vary depending on market prices and are issued only when the effective price for a commodity is statutorily set below its target price.

Producers who are eligible for the DCP Program will also be eligible to enroll in the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program. The enrollment period for the ACRE Program will begin in the spring. You may first enroll in the DCP Program, receive advance direct payments and then later modify your enrollment to include the ACRE program or you may wait and elect to enroll in DCP and ACRE at the same time in Spring 2009.

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Signup for the Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC) is underway and will continue through the program's expiration date, Sept. 30, 2012.

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The 2008 Farm Bill made changes to the provisions for payment eligibility and adjusted gross income (AGI). If the individual or entity has non-farm AGI greater than \$500,000, the individual or entity is not eligible for MILC benefits. For more information on the MILC program, contact your local USDA Service Center.

## Customer Statement

January signals the beginning of a new year, and a time to starting thinking about filing taxes. Producers who have signed up for a USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account will be able to access their farm data via their Customer Statement.

The Customer Statement puts a range of USDA services and programs into a single report that's at your fingertips and available online, 24 hours a



## **Special Accommodations**

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the county FSA office staff directly or by phone.



## **Foreign Buyers Notification**

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA.

Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, Realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

day, seven days a week. It allows USDA customers to view their participation, application and payment status in various commodity and conservation programs; information on farm loans; and conservation plan and land unit information.

## **Bank Account Changes**

Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into your bank account. In order for timely payments to be made, producers need to notify the FSA county office if your account has been changed or if another financial institution purchases your bank. Payments can be delayed if the FSA office is not aware of updates to your account and routing numbers.

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For commodity and disaster programs, the AGI limitation was reduced from \$2.5 million AGI from all sources to a three-year average non-farm AGI of \$500,000 such that a person or entity shall not be eligible for such programs if the non-farm AGI exceeds \$500,000. Also, under the new regulations, an individual or entity must have a 3-year average AGI less than or equal to \$750,000 per year from farm income in order to qualify for direct payments issued under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program.

The definition of income derived from farming, ranching and forestry operations was expanded to include, among other items, such items as the packing, storing and transporting of agricultural commodities; production of livestock products; farm-based production of renewable bio-energy; and in some instances, the providing of operational inputs to farmers, ranchers and foresters.

For conservation programs, the average non-farm AGI limitation is \$1 million or less for eligibility with allowances for certain exceptions. Individuals and entities must be "actively engaged in farming" with respect to a farming operation in order to be eligible for specified payments and benefits. To be "actively engaged in farming," the individual or entity must make significant contributions to the farming operation of: (1) capital, equipment, land, or a combination; and (2) personal labor or active personal management, or a combination.

Public comments on this interim final rule must be submitted to the Department by within 30 days of the date of publication.

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Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium, poppies and other drug producing plants.

## **Power of Attorney**

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., FSA has a power of attorney form available that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. If you are interested, please contact our office or any Farm Service Agency office near you for more information.

## **Appeal Process**

After an FSA official makes a decision on your request for USDA services or application, you will be sent a letter informing you of the decision and options you can pursue if you disagree.

Program participants have choices – an informal review with the original agency decision-maker, an opportunity for mediation, an appeal to the next level of authority within the agency and appeal to the national appeals division.

## **Loans for Socially Disadvantaged**

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) can make and guarantee loans to socially disadvantaged applicants to buy and operate family size farms and ranches. Funds specifically for these loans are reserved each year. A socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of the group without regard to their individual qualities. For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, and Asians and Pacific Islanders. Contact your local FSA Farm Loan Manager or Officer for more details and assistance in applying.

## **Youth Loans**

Remember FSA makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to establish and operate income producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be initiated, developed, carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organization or



with a vocational teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and operated with the assistance of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. Contact your local FSA office for more details

## Kansas City Mails 1099-G

During the last week of January, producers who have received payments from FSA should have received a CCC-1099-G from the Kansas City office. A CCC-1099-G is a report to the Internal Revenue Service about FSA payments made to you in calendar year 2008. The CCC-1099-G is a service to help participating producers report taxable income. It is not intended to replace the program participant's responsibility to report income to the IRS.

If you received a CCC-1099-G, we recommend that you check the amounts shown with those in your records to see that the amounts are correct. Refunds will no longer be reported on the 1099-G, but will be available online from the FSA Financial Inquiries (FSA-FI) web-based database. Program participants with eAuthentication user ID's and passwords can access their refund information at FSA-FI and select "Inquiry Type 1099/Refund Reports". Refund amounts are displayed on the Producer's Year-to-Date Activity web page; or you may contact your local FSA office. If you choose to visit the office, bring your CCC-1099-G with you.

## NAP Coverage Deadline

The Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) provides financial assistance to producers of crops not insured by the Risk Management Agency (RMA). It protects producers when they experience low yields as a result of natural disasters. Producers who are interested in purchasing NAP coverage are reminded that they must make an application on or before the application closing date for the specific crop. Applications are filed at your local FSA County Office and all fees must be paid before the application is accepted by FSA.

Most noninsurable spring planted crops can be covered if an application is filed by **March 16, 2009**, at your FSA County Office. Service fees amount to \$250.00, but not more than \$750 per producer per county, or not more than \$1875 total per producer for all counties.

Once insured by NAP, the producer is responsible to report the acres of crop planted and notify the FSA County Office within 15 days of when damage occurs due to a natural occurrence. Once notified of the damage, FSA will conduct an inspection to determine the amount and cause of the damage.

More information on NAP and additional disaster assistance programs is available online at

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/>

## Changes to Farming Operation

Participation in FSA farm programs requires all records to be accurate and up to date. *It is the producer's responsibility* to inform FSA of changes to his/her farming operation including, but not limited to, land ownership changes, adding or dropping a tract of land (leases), entity type or ID number changes, marriage, divorce, or deaths. A copy of the deed must be submitted for ownership changes; copies of written lease agreements must be submitted for all cash leases.

## Why should USDA's Farm Service Agency be your lender of first opportunity?

The farming industry has undergone many changes in recent years, resulting in new types of small farming and ranching enterprises. These include value-added farming operations, organic farming, immigrant farming, and the growing of crops for local retailers or direct sale to consumers.

New federal programs have been enacted to stimulate beginning and younger farmers to establish new, or retain ownership of existing, small family farms. These exciting new trends in rural America present the USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) Farm Loan Programs (FLP) with opportunities for increased lending activity in the farming community.

-----So, why should USDA's Farm Loan Programs be your lender of first opportunity?

**We are your advocates.**

Farm Loan Programs staff are predisposed to award loans, therefore putting the agent on the customer's side. FSA wants to see you succeed. This is evident in our consultative approach, offering low rates and identifying other resources to our clients in an advisory fashion throughout the life of the loan.

**We think outside the box.**

Our loan staff keep up with the industry trends and constantly look for emerging and non-traditional farm business models. Our commitment to doing things better in the industry provides you with fresh perspectives, alternatives, and creative ways of growing your business.

**We offer solutions.**

Our staff can refer customers to other public financial aid sources that can serve as a blend with the Farm Loan Programs loan. This results in acquiring more comprehensive resources and a tailored financial solution that works for unique lending situations.

**We specialize in:**

- Loans for beginning farmers, disaster recovery, operational financing,
- and farm ownership
- Farm planning and counseling
- Supervised credit and assistance through the life of your loan
- Sustained financial planning services



## Farm-Storage Facility Loans (FSFL)

Loans on new farm storage structures are available through your local FSA Office. Eligible structures include grain bins, silos, and handling equipment. To be eligible for these loans, you must have a need for additional storage and you must grow an eligible crop. A satisfactory credit history is required and you must demonstrate the ability to repay the debt. The interest rate for loans disbursed in February of 2009 is 1.875 percent. Contact your county office for additional details.

## PREVENTED PLANTING

The growing season is right around the corner and weather is always unpredictable. If any producer experiences adverse weather conditions that prevent you from planting a crop, you will need to contact your local FSA office to complete a form CCC-576 (prevented planting notice of loss.) This form will need to be completed in order to meet eligibility requirements for a potential claim.

Selected Interest Rates for March 2009	
Farm Operating - Direct	2.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct	3.50%
Limited Resource - Farm Operating	5.00%
Limited Resource - Farm Ownership	5.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.5%
Emergency	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility	2.25%
Commodity Loan	1.50%

Visit our Web site at  
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**For more information re:  
 the Farm Loan Programs**  
 Contact your local USDA-FSA Office

Dates to Remember	
3-16-2009	Final day to purchase or change your coverage with Nap or Crop Insurance
5-25-2009	Office Closed - Memorial Day Observed
6-1-2009	DCP Deadline - No Late-File
6-15-2009	Final day to report small grain acres
7-3-2009	Office Closed - Independence Day Observed
7-15-2009	Final day to report course grain, fruit and veggies, forage, any CRP/CREP acreage
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program 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 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, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



February 2009

# Tioga County News

Tioga County  
USDA Service Center

**Tioga County FSA**  
50 Plaza Lane  
Wellsboro, PA 16901  
570-724-4812 (phone)  
570-724-6542 (fax)  
www.fsa.usda.gov/pa

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

**County Committee**  
Duane Seymour, Chair  
Dixie Coolidge, Vice-chair  
Karl Kroeck, Member  
Mary Ann Porter, Advisor

County Committee meets  
2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesdays, 9 am, as  
needed

**Staff**  
Sherri Butters, CED  
John Felondis, FLM  
Pamela Reese, PT  
Carol Truman, PT  
Catherine Lingle, PT  
Billie Williams, PT  
Jehanna Howe, FLO  
Tim Repine, FLO

## County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to R. Duane Seymour who was re-elected to represent farmers from Jackson, Rutland, Sullivan, Richmond, Tioga, Lawrence, and Covington Townships on the county committee. Duane was elected to his third consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area #2 are:

Duane Seymour — Elected to the county committee, and  
Pamela Barnes — 1<sup>st</sup> alternate to COC

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

## DCP Sign Up Underway

Sign-up has started for the 2009 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment (DCP) Program for farms with base acres. You can sign up online or at local USDA service centers. Sign up will continue until June 1, 2009. The June 1, 2009 deadline is mandatory for all participants. FSA will not accept any late-filed applications.

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## Applications for FSA Loans

Farmers and ranchers that intend to apply to the Farm Service Agency for loan assistance for the upcoming crop year are encouraged to file their applications as early as possible. Filing early will help ensure that your loan is processed and approved as early as possible so that planting decisions can be made. Failure to apply early can result in a delay in processing loans due to the volume of applications that must be processed in date order. Contact your local FSA farm loan manager or officer for more details and assistance in applying.

## Youth Loans

Remember FSA makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to establish and operate income producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be initiated, developed, carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organization or with a vocational teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and operated with the assistance of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. Contact your local FSA office for more details

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Emergency	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility	2.125%
Commodity Loan	1.625%

<b>Dates to Remember</b>	
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2-27-2009	05-07 Crop Disaster Program Signup Deadline
6-1-2009	DCP Deadline – No Late-file
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve program

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# Wyoming/Sullivan County News

**Wyoming/Sullivan  
County  
USDA Service Center**

**Wyoming/Sullivan  
County FSA**  
1 Hollowcrest Complex  
Tunkhannock, PA 18657  
570-836-5111 (phone)  
570-836-5559 (fax)  
[www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)

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

**County Committee**  
Wayne Sherwood  
Michael Saxe Jr.  
Judy Petras  
Joe Mislevy  
Harvey Vough

**County Committee  
meets:**  
May 6, 2009  
July 1, 2009  
September 2, 2009  
November 4, 2009

**Staff**  
Michael Sherman, Acting  
CED  
Jan Ambrutis, PT  
Tammy Finan, PT  
John Benscoter, FA

## County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Wayne Sherwood and Mike Saxe Jr. Wayne and Mike were re-elected to the county committee to represent farmers from the following Townships:

LAA#1- Wyoming County  
Braintrim, Forkston, Mehoopany, Meshoppen,  
North Branch, Windham, Washington and  
Lemon

LAA #5 – Sullivan County  
Cherry, Colley, Laporte and Davidson

Wayne and Mike were both elected to their second consecutive term.

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

The committee members will hold their organizational meeting in January to determine who will serve as the county committee chairman and vice-chairman.

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For conservation programs, the average non-farm AGI limitation is \$1 million or less for eligibility with allowances for certain exceptions.

Individuals and entities must be "actively engaged in farming" with respect to a farming operation in order to be eligible for specified payments and benefits. To be "actively engaged in farming," the individual or entity must make significant contributions to the farming operation of: (1) capital, equipment, land, or a combination; and (2) personal labor or active personal management, or a combination.

Public comments on this interim final rule must be submitted to the Department by within 30 days of the date of publication.

## **Foreign Buyers Notification**

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA.

Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, Realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

## **Controlled Substance**

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium, poppies and other drug producing plants.

## **Special Accommodations**

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the county FSA office staff directly or by phone.

## Power of Attorney

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., FSA has a power of attorney form available that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. If you are interested, please contact our office or any Farm Service Agency office near you for more information.



## Bank Account Changes

Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into your bank account. In order for timely payments to be made, producers need to notify the FSA county office if your account has been changed or if another financial institution purchases your bank. Payments can be delayed if the FSA office is not aware of updates to your account and routing numbers.

## Appeal Process

After an FSA official makes a decision on your request for USDA services or application, you will be sent a letter informing you of the decision and options you can pursue if you disagree.

Program participants have choices — an informal review with the original agency decision-maker, an opportunity for mediation, an appeal to the next level of authority within the agency and appeal to the national appeals division.

## Customer Statement

January signals the beginning of a new year, and a time to starting thinking about filing taxes. Producers who have signed up for a USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account will be able to access their farm data via their Customer Statement.

The Customer Statement puts a range of USDA services and programs into a single report that's at your fingertips and available online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

It allows USDA customers to view their participation, application and payment status in various commodity and conservation programs; information on farm loans; and conservation plan and land unit information



## Why should USDA's Farm Service Agency be your lender of first opportunity?

The farming industry has undergone many changes in recent years, resulting in new types of small farming and ranching enterprises. These include value-added farming operations, organic farming, immigrant farming, and the growing of crops for local retailers or direct sale to consumers.

New federal programs have been enacted to stimulate beginning and younger farmers to establish new, or retain ownership of existing, small family farms. These exciting new trends in rural America present the USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) Farm Loan Programs (FLP) with opportunities for increased lending activity in the farming community.

----So, why should USDA's Farm Loan Programs be your lender of first opportunity?

### **We are your advocates.**

Farm Loan Programs staff are predisposed to award loans, therefore putting the agent on the customer's side. FSA wants to see you succeed. This is evident in our consultative approach, offering low rates and identifying other resources to our clients in an advisory fashion throughout the life of the loan.

### **We think outside the box.**

Our loan staff keep up with the industry trends and constantly look for emerging and non-traditional farm business models. Our commitment to doing things better in the industry provides you with fresh perspectives, alternatives, and creative ways of growing your business.

### **We offer solutions.**

Our staff can refer customers to other public financial aid sources that can serve as a blend with the Farm Loan Programs loan. This results in acquiring more comprehensive resources and a tailored financial solution that works for unique lending situations.

### **We specialize in:**

- Loans for beginning farmers, disaster recovery, operational financing,
- and farm ownership
- Farm planning and counseling
- Supervised credit and assistance through the life of your loan
- Sustained financial planning services

## Youth Loans

Remember FSA makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to establish and operate income producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be initiated, developed, carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organization or with a vocational teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and operated with the assistance of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. Contact your local FSA office for more details

## Wyoming Sullivan County Acting CED

Michael Sherman, the County Executive Director for Lycoming County, will serve as Acting CED for the Wyoming/Sullivan County Committee. Michael's home office is located in Montoursville. He will be available to speak with producers directly should the need arise by calling the Lycoming County FSA Office at 570-433-3902. Michael will also be available to assist producers at the Wyoming County Service Center one day per week. Please call and schedule an appointment.

### Dates to Remember

5-25-2009	Office Closed – Memorial Day
6-1-2009	DCP Deadline – No Late-file
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve program

### Selected Interest Rates for March 2009

Farm Operating - Direct	2.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct	3.50%
Limited Resource - Farm Operating	5.00%
Limited Resource - Farm Ownership	5.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.5%
Emergency	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility	2.25%
Commodity Loan	1.50%

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