



November 2007

Antrim/Otsego County News

Antrim-Otsego County
USDA Service Center

Antrim-Otsego County FSA
108 Depot Street
Bellaire, MI 49615
231-533-8542 (phone)
231-533-6689 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/

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

County Committee
Mark White, Chairperson
Gary Hoeksema, Vice-Chairperson
Roger Bolhuis, Member
Barbara Fleming, Member
Deborah Milbocker, Member

The County Committee meets the second Friday of each month.

County Executive Director
Kathy Y Kozlowski

Farm Loan Manager
James Monroe
231-941-0951 (phone)

County Office Staff
Kathy Johnson

HAPPY
HOLIDAYS!!!



CROP DISASTER PROGRAM SIGN-UP BEGINS



The U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007, signed into law on May 25, 2007, by President Bush, authorizes the Crop Disaster Program.

Eligible farmers who suffered quantity losses to their crops in recent years can enroll in the Crop Disaster Program 2005-2007 (CDP) at local FSA service centers starting October 15, 2007. An ending date has not been announced yet.

Subject to final rules for the program, CDP provides benefits to farmers who suffered losses to the 2005-2007 crops from natural disasters and related conditions so long as the actual crop lost was planted or prevented from being planted before Feb. 28, 2007. **Crops planted or prevented from being planted after February 28, 2007 are not covered under this sign-up.** Producers who incurred qualifying losses in 2005, 2006 or 2007 may apply for benefits in more than one year, but will only receive benefits in their most beneficial year. Producers may apply for benefits for losses to multiple crops as long as the losses occurred in the same crop year.

Only producers who obtained crop insurance coverage or coverage under the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the year of loss will be eligible for CDP benefits.

Producers must have suffered quantity losses in excess of 35 percent to be eligible for CDP. The payment rate is set at 42 percent of the established price. Assistance, together with any crop insurance or NAP payment received for the same crop and including the value of the crop production not lost, must not exceed 95 percent of the total value of the crop absent the disaster.

FSA offices may accept information from producers about quality losses when producers.

submit applications for quantity losses. However, FSA will only consider quality loss applications complete after FSA announces the quality loss sign-up date and all other information necessary to determine eligibility is received by FSA. Also, FSA will not consider applications completed for any loss, including quantity losses, until a final rule has been issued for this program.

LIVESTOCK COMPENSATION PROGRAM ANNOUNCED

Overview

Sign-up for the Livestock Compensation Program (LCP) began on September 10, 2007. Livestock Compensation Program (LCP) provides benefits to livestock and catfish producers who suffered feed losses or incurred additional feed costs directly resulting from natural disasters occurring between Jan. 1, 2005, and Feb. 28, 2007.

Eligible Counties

Producers who owned livestock during calendar year 2005 in Michigan may be eligible for LCP with the exception of the following Counties: Alcona, Arenac, Gladwin, Iosco, Macomb, Midland, Ogemaw, and Wayne. Producers who owned livestock in calendar year 2006 in Michigan may be eligible for LCP with the exception of the following Counties:

Alcona, Arenac, Iosco, and Ogemaw. No counties are eligible for calendar year 2007. Keep in mind that producers may only receive benefits for one year.

A list of counties eligible for LCP may be found at: <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov>.

Eligible Livestock

To be eligible under LCP, livestock must:

- be dairy cattle, beef cattle, buffalo, beefalo, equine, poultry, elk, reindeer, sheep, goats, swine or deer that;

have been physically located in an eligible county on the beginning date of the applicable disaster period;
have been maintained for commercial use as part of a farming operation on the beginning date of the disaster period;
and not have been produced and maintained for reasons other than commercial use as part of a farming operation. Such excluded uses include, but are not limited to, wild free roaming animals or animals used for recreational purposes such as pleasure, hunting, pets, roping or for show.

The livestock categories are:

- adult beef cows or bulls;
- non-adult beef cattle, 500 pounds or more;
- adult buffalo or beefalo cows or bulls;
- non-adult buffalo or beefalo, 500 pounds or more
- adult dairy cows or bulls;
- non-adult dairy cattle, 500 pounds or more;
- goats;
- sheep;
- swine – less than 45 pounds
- swine – 45 to 124 pounds
- swine - 125 to 234 pounds
- swine – sow – 235 pounds or more
- swine – boar – 235 pounds or more;
- equine;
- reindeer;
- elk;
- poultry – less than 3 pounds
- poultry – 3 to 7.9 pounds
- poultry – 8 pounds or more;
- deer

Eligible Producers

To be eligible for LCP, producers must have:

- either owned or cash-leased eligible livestock (but not both for the same livestock) on the beginning date of the applicable disaster period(s); and
- suffered an eligible feed loss from produced or purchased forage or feedstuffs, or incurred additional feed costs as a result of an eligible disaster event(s) during the applicable disaster period(s)
 - and the feed lost or additional incurred feed costs were intended for use with eligible livestock.

Producers incurring a loss in more than one of the 2005 or 2006 calendar years must choose only one year for which they want to receive benefits.

Sign-up

Sign-up for LCP began Sept. 10, 2007. Livestock producers must submit applications in their administrative county FSA Office.



For More Information

For more information about FSA and its programs, visit your local USDA Service Center or online at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

LIVESTOCK INDEMNITY PROGRAM

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) compensates livestock producers for livestock losses between January 1, 2005, and February 28, 2007, that resulted from natural disasters, including losses due to blizzards that started in 2006 and continued into January 2007. Producers in primary counties declared secretarial disaster areas or certain counties declared presidential disaster areas between January 1, 2005, and February 28, 2007, are eligible as are producers located in counties contiguous to those counties. Also, producers in a primary (or contiguous) county that received an Administrator's Physical Loss Notice directly associated with a disaster declaration made by President Bush may also be eligible. Producers incurring eligible livestock losses in more than one of the 2005, 2006 or 2007 calendar years must choose only one year for which they want to apply for benefits.

Producers interested in applying for assistance should contact their local FSA county office.



NATURAL DISASTER DESIGNATION EMERGENCY LOANS

Effective November 7, 2007, the Secretary of Agriculture designated the entire State of Michigan where all counties were designated as natural disaster areas. The designation was due to losses caused by the drought that occurred starting the week of April 1, 2007 and is continuing. Counties in Northwest Michigan included in this designation are Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Kalkaska, Grand Traverse, Leelanau, and Otsego counties.

The designation means that farmers in these areas who suffered a 30% loss in crop production due to the drought conditions specified in the designation may qualify for Emergency (EM) loan assistance from FSA. If you have any questions please call your local FSA office or contact the Farm Loan Program staff headquartered in the Traverse City USDA Service Center. (231) 941-0951 extension 109

The deadline for filing an EM loan application is July 7, 2008.

APPOINTMENTS RECOMMENDED

We recommend you call to make an appointment before coming to the office to conduct business. This will enable us to prepare any necessary paperwork and research issues before your appointment. We realize how important your time is, and this will reduce the amount of time that you have to wait in the office.

Your patience is appreciated!

COC ELECTIONS

This year the County Committee election is being held in Local Administrative Area #2 which covers Chestonia, Jordan, Star, Mancelona and Warner Townships. Ballots were mailed in early November to eligible voters in these townships. The deadline to return completed ballots to the FSA Office is December 3, 2007.



BANK ACCOUNT CHANGES

As of January 1, 1999, all FSA payments are to be electronically transferred into your bank account. In order to make timely payments, you need to notify the office if you close your account or if another financial institution purchases your bank. Payments can be delayed if we are not aware of changes to your account and routing numbers.



2007 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

Michigan's farmers will soon have the opportunity to make their voices heard and help shape the future of agriculture for years to come. That opportunity will come to their mailboxes in the form of the 2007 Census of Agriculture.

Conducted every five years by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Census looks at land use and ownership, operator characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures and other topics. It provides the only source of uniform, comprehensive agricultural data for every country in the nation.

This information is used by everyone who provides services to farmers and rural communities – including federal, state and local governments, agribusinesses, and many others. Census data is used to make decisions about many things that directly impact farmers, including:

- community planning
- store/company locations

- availability of operational loans and other funding
- location and staffing of service centers
- farm programs and policies

NASS will mail out Census forms on December 28, 2007 to collect data for the 2007 calendar year. Completed forms are due by February 4, 2008. Producers can return their forms by mail or, for the first time, they have the convenient option of filling out the Census online via a secure web site.

For more information about the 2007 Census of Agriculture, please contact the NASS Michigan Field Office at (800) 453-7501 or visit www.agcensus.usda.gov online.

FOREIGN BUYERS NOTIFICATION

Foreign investors, who buy, sell or hold direct or indirect interest in U.S. agriculture land must report their holdings and transactions to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. The reporting requirement became law in 1978 when the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) was signed into law.

Failure to timely file an accurate report within 90 days of the transaction to their local Farm Service Agency office can result in a penalty with fines up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the agricultural land.

ATTENTION PRODUCERS!

Do you intend to clear timber areas to create or to expand existing crop area?

Are you converting a pasture field into a crop field?

Are there any areas on your farm that you are considering cropping that have not been cropped in recent years?

Are you disturbing a wildlife habitat area of any type?

These are questions that need to be considered to assure you remain eligible for USDA benefits. If you have any question that something you plan to do could jeopardize your eligibility, please contact your local FSA or NRCS representative.

FARM SERVICE AGENCY EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

You can view employment opportunities with the Farm Service Agency at the following <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov>

Commodity Loan Program

Commodity loans are available using harvested crops as collateral. The loan could be used to help with cash flow. The term of the loan is 9 months. The interest rate is the rate in effect for the month the loan is disbursed, subject to change in January. The deadline is March 31st for small grains and May 31st for corn, soybeans and sunflowers. To be eligible the commodity must have been produced by the producer and beneficial interest in the commodity must be maintained through the life of the loan. Beneficial interest is considered to be maintained if the producer has the risk of loss, and title of the commodity. The commodity must be kept in eligible storage and the quality must be maintained. Any quantity of the commodity that will be sold, fed or removed from the designated storage must be repaid before disposition.

For more information, please contact the Farm Service Agency.

Dates to Remember	
December 3 rd	Deadline to submit ballots for COC Elections
December 25 th	Christmas Day. FSA Office Closed
January 1 st	News Year Day. FSA Office Closed
January 21 st	Martin Luther King Jr's Birthday. FSA Office Closed.
February 18 th	George Washington's Birthday. FSA Office Closed.
March 15 th	Final application date for Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (contact your local office for crop specific deadlines).
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loans
Continues	Grasslands Reserve Program
Continues	MILC Program



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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.