



August 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, Mem-
ber

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

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program

Overview

USDA's Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) provides financial assistance to producers of noninsurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory or prevented planting occurs due to natural disasters.

Eligible Producers

An eligible producer is a landowner, tenant or sharecropper who shares in the risk of producing an eligible crop. The annual gross revenue of the eligible producer, and any individual or entity combined as one "person" with the eligible producer, cannot exceed \$2 million.

Eligible Crops

To be eligible for NAP assistance, crops must be noninsurable crops and agricultural commodities for which the catastrophic risk protection level of crop insurance is not available, and must be any of the following commercially produced crops:

- crops grown for food;
- crops planted and grown for livestock consumption, including, but not limited to, grain and forage crops, including native forage;
- crops grown for fiber, such as cotton and flax (except for trees);
- crops grown under a controlled environment, such as mushrooms and floriculture;
- specialty crops, such as honey and maple sap;
- value loss crops, such as aquaculture, Christmas trees, ginseng, ornamental nursery and turfgrass sod;
- sea oats and sea grass; and
- seed crops where the propagation stock is produced for sale as seed stock for other eligible NAP crop production.

Please contact a crop insurance agent if you have questions regarding whether a crop is insurable in your county. For further information on whether a crop is eligible for NAP

coverage, please contact your local FSA office.

Eligible Natural Disasters

An eligible natural disaster is any of the following:

- damaging weather, such as drought, freeze, hail, excessive moisture, excessive wind or hurricanes;
- an adverse natural occurrence, such as earthquake or flood; or
- a condition related to damaging weather or an adverse natural occurrence, such as excessive heat, disease or insect infestation.

The natural disaster must occur before or during harvest and must directly affect the eligible crop.

Applying for Coverage

Eligible producers must apply for coverage of noninsurable crops using Form CCC-471, "Application for Coverage," and pay the applicable service fees at their local FSA office. The application and service fees must be filed by the application closing date as established by the producer's FSA state committee. The service fee is the lesser of \$100 per crop or \$300 per producer per administrative county, not to exceed a total of \$900 per producer with farming interest in multiple counties.

Limited resource producers may request a waiver of service fees. To qualify for an administrative service fee waiver, the producer must meet both of the following criteria:

- earn no more than \$100,000 gross income in farm sales from each of the previous two years;
- have a total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of four, or less than 50 percent of county median household income in both of the previous two years.

Limited resource producer status can be determined using the USDA Limited Resource Farmer and Rancher Online Self Determination Tool at <http://www.lrftool.sc.egov.usda.gov/tool.asp>. The automated system calculates and displays adjusted gross farm sales per year and the higher of the national poverty level or county median household income.

Coverage Period for NAP

The coverage period for NAP may vary depending on whether the producer grows annual, perennial or value-loss crops.

The coverage period for annual crops begins the later of:

- 30 days after application for coverage and the applicable service fees have been paid; or
- the date the crop is planted and does not exceed the final planting date and ends the earlier of:
 - the date the crop harvest is completed;
 - the normal harvest date for the crop;
 - the date the crop is abandoned; or
 - the date the entire crop acreage is destroyed.

The coverage period for perennial crops, other than those intended for forage, begins 30 calendar days after the application closing date and ends the earlier of:

- 10 months from the application closing date;
- the date the crop harvest is completed;
- the normal harvest date for the crop;
- the date the crop is abandoned; or
- the date the entire crop acreage is destroyed.

Please contact your local FSA office for information on the coverage periods for perennial forage crops, controlled-environment crops, specialty crops, and value loss crops.

Information Required to Remain Eligible for NAP

To remain eligible for NAP assistance, the following crop acreage information must be reported annually:

- name of the crop (lettuce, clover, etc.);
- type and variety (head lettuce, red clover, etc.);
- location and acreage of the crop (field, sub-field, etc.);
- share of the crop and the names of other producers with an interest in the crop;
- type of practice used to grow the crop (irrigated or non-irrigated);
- date the crop was planted in each field; and
- intended use of the commodity (fresh, processed, etc.).

It benefits producers to report crop acreage shortly after planting (early in the risk period) to ensure reporting deadlines are not missed and coverage is not lost.

In addition, producers must annually provide the following production information:

- the quantity of all harvested production of the crop in which the producer held an interest during the crop year;
- the disposition of the harvested crop, such as whether it is marketable, unmarketable, salvaged or used differently than intended; and
- verifiable or reliable crop production records

Producers must provide production information in a manner that can be easily understood by the FSA county committee. Questions regarding acceptable production records should be directed to your local FSA office.

Failure to report acreage and production information may result in reduced or zero NAP assistance. Be aware that acreage reporting and final planting dates vary by crop and by region. Contact your local FSA office for your local dates.

For aquaculture, floriculture and ornamental nursery operations, producers must maintain records according to industry standards, including daily crop inventories. Unique reporting requirements apply to beekeepers and producers of Christmas trees, turfgrass sod, maple sap, mushrooms, ginseng and commercial seed or forage crops. Please contact your local FSA office for these requirements.

FSA Usage of Reported Acreage and Production

FSA uses acreage reports to verify the existence of the crop and record the number of acres covered by the application. Also, the acreage report in combination with the production report are used to calculate the approved yield (expected production for a crop year). The approved yield is the average of your actual production history (APH) for a minimum of 4 to a maximum of 10 crop years (5 years for apples and peaches). To calculate your APH, FSA divides your total production by your crop acreage.

The approved yield may be calculated by using substantially reduced yield data if you do not report acreage and production, or report less than 4 years of crop production.

Applying for NAP Assistance When a Natural Disaster Strikes

When a crop or planting is affected by a natural disaster, you must notify your local FSA office and complete Part B, (the Notice of Loss portion) of the application, which is Form CCC-576, the Notice of Loss and Application for Payment. This must be completed within 15 calendar days of the:

- natural disaster occurrence;
- final planting date if your planting was prevented by a natural disaster;
- date damage to the crop or loss of production becomes apparent to you.

To receive NAP benefits, producers must complete Form CCC-576, Notice of Loss and Application for Payment, parts D, E, F as applicable, and G, no later than the immediately subsequent crop year acreage reporting date for the crop. The CCC-576 requires producers to provide evidence of production and note whether the crop was marketable, unmarketable, salvaged or used differently than intended.

Amount of Production Loss to Receive a NAP Payment

The natural disaster must have either:

- reduced the expected unit production of the crop by more than 50 percent; or
- prevented the producer from planting more than 35 percent of the intended crop acreage.

Expected production is the amount of the crop produced in the absence of a natural disaster. FSA compares expected

production to actual production to determine the percentage of crop loss.

Defining a NAP Unit

The NAP unit includes the specific crop acreage in the county in which the producer has a unique crop interest. A unique crop interest is either:

- 100 percent interest; or
- a shared interest with other producers.

How Much Loss NAP Covers

NAP covers the amount of loss greater than 50 percent of the expected production based on the approved yield and reported acreage.

Information FSA Uses to Calculate Payment

The NAP payment is calculated by unit using:

- crop acreage;
- approved yield;
- net production;
- 55 percent of an average market price for the specific commodity established by the FSA state committee;
- a payment factor reflecting the decreasing cost incurred in the production cycle for the crop that is harvested, unharvested or prevented from being planted.

More Information

Further information on NAP is available from your local FSA office or on FSA's Web site at: www.fsa.usda.gov.

NAP Sales Closing Dates

Forage (Production) – September 30th
Pasture – September 30th
Apricots – November 20th
Cherries – November 20th
Grapes – November 20th
Peaches – November 20th
Pears – November 20th
Plums – November 20th
Strawberries – November 20th
Nectarines – November 20th
Dry Beans – March 15th
Beans (Pr) – March 15th
Sweet Corn – March 15th
Sunflowers – March 15th

If you grow a crop not listed here, contact your local FSA office for the closing dates.

AGRICULTURAL ASSISTANCE ACT OF 2007

On May 25, 2007, President Bush signed into law the "U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007" (2007 Act).

The 2007 Act provides, among other things, about \$3 billion in agricultural disaster aid for America's farmers and ranchers.

Specifically, the 2007 Act provides funds for a Crop Disaster Program (CDP), Livestock Compensation Program (LCP), Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) and Dairy Disaster Assistance Program (DDAP). The majority of these programs are for those losses that occurred January 1, 2005 through February 28, 2007. Specific information will be issued in the future.

The 2007 Act also extends the Emergency Forestry Conservation Reserve Program (EFCRP).

Additionally, the 2007 Act extends the Milk Income Loss Contract program through September 2007.

USDA will move as rapidly as possible to deliver the aid.

USDA will publish regulations and fact sheets detailing CDP, LCP, LIP and DDAP in the weeks and months ahead.

Loans for Socially Disadvantaged Applicants

The Farm Service Agency can make direct and guaranteed loans to socially disadvantaged applicants to buy and operate family-size farms and ranches. Funds for these loans are reserved each year.

A socially disadvantaged applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities. For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

Direct loans may be made to applicants by FSA for both farm operating and farm ownership loans. Guaranteed farm loans also may be made for ownership or operating purposes, and may be made by any lending institution subject to federal or state supervision (e.g., banks and units of the Farm Credit System) and guaranteed by FSA. FSA typically guarantees 90 or 95 percent of a loan against any loss that might be incurred if the loan fails.

Persons who are primarily and directly engaged in farming and ranching on family-size operations may apply.

Socially disadvantaged loan applicants *do not* receive automatic approval. Individual applicants under this program must meet *all* requirements for FSA's regular farm loan program assistance.

Contact the county office staff or USDA Service Center for more information.

COC ELECTIONS

This year the County Committee elections are being held in Local Administrative Area # 2 which covers Chestonia, Jordan, Star, Mancelona and Warner Townships. The deadline to submit a nomination was August 1st. Ballots are to be mailed to eligible voters in these townships on November 2, 2007. The deadline to return completed ballots to the FSA Office is December 3, 2007.

Dates to Remember	
Sept. 3	Labor Day. FSA Office Closed
Sept. 30	Deadline to enroll in DCP. \$100.00 late filing fee applies.
Sept. 30	2008 NAP deadline on certain crops – contact FSA Office for specific crops.
October 8	Columbus Day. FSA Office Closed
Nov. 12	Veterans Day. FSA Office Closed
Nov. 20 th	2008 NAP deadline on certain crops – Contact FSA Office for specific crops.
Nov. 22 nd	Thanksgiving Day. FSA Office Closed.
Dec. 3 rd	Deadline to submit ballots for COC Elections.

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C., 20250-9410, or call 800-795-3272 (voice) or 202-720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.