



August 2006

# Ohio FSA State Newsletter

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[www.fsa.usda.gov/oh](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/oh)

## **Election Update**

The period to nominate candidates for the upcoming county committee election **is closed**. Nominations were due in the county office on **Tuesday, Aug. 1**. Ballots will be mailed to all eligible voters **by Nov. 3**. Voted ballots must be returned to the county office **by Dec. 4**.

If no valid nominations have been filed, the Secretary of Agriculture may nominate up to two individuals to be placed on the ballot.

County committee elections give farmers and producers an important opportunity to ensure that their FSA county committees represent them.

Farmers and producers who serve on county committees help make decisions necessary to administer federal farm programs offered in their communities. County committees make decisions on agricultural issues such as; commodity price support loans and payments, conservation programs, disaster payments and employing County Executive Directors.

If you participate or cooperate in programs administered by FSA and live in the local administrative area conducting an election, you may be nominated for candidacy for a committee. You can obtain a complete list of eligibility requirements by visiting the county office or online at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/publications/facts/html/cocelig06.htm>.

- Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters **by Nov. 3**. The last day to return voted ballots to the county office **is Dec. 4**.
- Newly elected county committee members take office **Jan. 1, 2007**.

For detailed information about FSA county committees visit the county office or go online at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/publications/elections/Default.asp>.

## **Security Guidelines**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has released a booklet entitled, "Pre-Harvest Security Guidelines and Checklist 2006" to help agricultural producers enhance security at the farm level. The booklet contains practical measures to help protect against natural disasters, as well as the unintentional or intentional introduction of plant or animal diseases. To get a copy, stop by the county office. More information is available at: <http://www.usda.gov/homelandsecurity>.

## **Soldier's and Sailor's Relief Act**

Producers who are full time members of the military or have been called to active duty with their Reserve or National Guard units should know about the protections provided by the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act of 1940.

Producers or borrowers should notify the county office if they are full-time members of the armed services or have been called to active duty status whether or not their financial situation has been adversely affected.

## **Land for Sale**

Producers and investors are encouraged to bookmark this Website at: <http://www.resales.usda.gov/>. This site provides a national list of all inventory farms that are available for sale by the Farm Service Agency.

These properties were acquired by the agency through mortgage defaults and oftentimes represent a good value. They may also represent an opportunity for beginning farmers to obtain a parcel of real estate and are initially targeted to beginning farmers for financing by the FSA.





## Beneficial Interest Clarified

The Farm Service Agency National office staff has clarified its policy on open storage by rescinding part of a notice issued in July. Producers who deliver to an approved Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), Federal or State licensed warehouse and place the commodity in open storage must receive from the warehouse a negotiable warehouse receipt or other form of acceptable production evidence, if requested.

For details on the policy, contact the County office staff. National FSA notices are available on the agency's Website at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

Selected Interest Rates for August 2006	
90-Day Treasury Bill	4.875%
Farm Operating - Direct	5.500%
Farm Ownership - Direct	5.750%
Limited Resource	5.000%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	4.000%
Emergency	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility	5.125%
Sugar Storage Facility	5.250%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	6.250%
Tobacco (TTPP) Discount Rate	10.000%

## Reasonable Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If special accommodations are required, please call the Farm Service Agency county office staff, and we will be happy to make any arrangements that are necessary.

## NAP Coverage

The Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) was designed to reduce financial losses that occur when natural disasters cause a catastrophic loss of production or prevented planting of an eligible crop by providing coverage equivalent to catastrophic (CAT) insurance. Statute limits NAP to each commercial crop or agricultural commodity, except livestock, for which CAT is not available and is produced for food or fiber.

The application deadline date for the 2007 NAP crops is soon approaching.

Producers who already have coverage on 2006 NAP crops may choose to continue coverage on the same crop or crops for 2007, if the applicable service fee is submitted by the application closing date. A new CCC-471, application for coverage is not required to be signed when applying for continuous coverage of the same crop or crops.

Producers who choose to add a new crop(s) or delete a crop(s) from previous year's coverage or change crop shares must file a new CCC-471 with signatures and pay the applicable service fee. Producers with 2006 NAP coverage must remember to complete the following to qualify for benefits:

- Timely file acreage reports and keep track of harvested production using acceptable methods. For example, bale weights or other means of determining quantities of hay are required.
- File a "Notice of Loss" within 15 days of when a loss is apparent, due from natural disaster.

## e-Forms

Producers, if you have Internet access you can electronically access, fill out and print a variety of FSA paper forms in the comfort of your home as your schedule allows. You can also register for secure electronic access that will allow you to electronically sign and transmit some forms directly to the county office staff.

To access e-Forms, simply point your browser to <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/>. To sign and transmit forms electronically, you must sign-up and get a username and password. To sign-up in person, visit the county office and complete form AD-2016. The staff will verify your identity and enter your information into the system. You will receive a letter with your temporary ID. You will be sent a second letter with your temporary password and instructions on how to activate your account. You then go to the Activation Website and select a permanent ID and password.

You can also register by mail or fax. Call the county office staff and ask for form AD-2016 or go online and download the form and print a paper copy. Then fill the form out, complete with a notarized signature. Then mail or fax the form to the county office. You will be mailed two separate letters. One will have your temporary ID, and the second will have your temporary password and in-



structions to activate your account. You then go to the Activation Website and select a permanent ID and password.

Why try e-Forms? It's convenient, you can access information anytime day or night and it's faster. Forms and applications can be submitted and received in the county office in a matter of minutes, not days or weeks.

### **Controlled Substances**

Program participants convicted under federal or state law of any planting, cultivating, growing, producing, harvesting or storing a controlled substance are ineligible for program payments and benefits.

If convicted of one of these offenses, the program participant shall be ineligible during that crop year and the four succeeding crop years for Direct and Counter-cyclical payments, Price Support loans, Loan Deficiency payments, Market loan gains, Storage payments, Farm Facility loans, Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program payments or disaster payments.

Program participants convicted of any federal or state offense consisting of the distribution (trafficking) of a controlled substance shall, at the discretion of the court, be ineligible for any or all program payments and benefits:

- for up to 5 years after the first conviction;
- for up to 10 years after the second conviction; and
- permanently for a third or subsequent conviction.

Program participants convicted of federal or state offense for the possession of a controlled substance shall be ineligible, at the discretion of the court, for any or all program benefits, as follows:

- up to 1 year upon the first conviction; and
- up to 5 years after a second or subsequent conviction.

### **Commodity Loans Maturing**

Reminder that 2005 commodity loans for farm stored corn and soybeans may mature in August and September. Take a second to view the condition of the grain during this weather pattern of humid air and fluctuating temperatures.

Do not forget, grain under Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) loan cannot be removed without prior authorization or repayment. Unauthorized removal, which includes removal for cleaning of seed or planting, is a violation and is subject to monetary and administrative penalties.

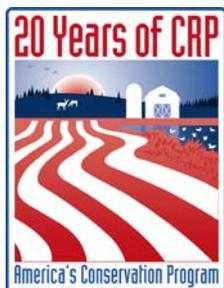
Your loans are subject to a spot-check. Determined shortages must be repaid with principal plus interest, and additional monetary penalties plus loss of future loan eligibility may apply. Producers planning to remove or clean CCC loan grain should contact the county office staff for additional information.

### **Is CREP for You?**

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is a subset of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), the largest voluntarily conservation program in America. CREP enables farmers and landowners options to fine tune their conservation goals in harmony with goals for the watershed. CREP provides an economically viable alternative to cropping environmentally sensitive land. CREP helps farmers and landowners convert environmentally sensitive land to conservation practices to decrease erosion, restore wildlife habitat and safeguard ground and surface water.

CREP is a partnership with Federal, State and local government and is limited to specific geographic areas in Ohio, the areas are: **the Lake Erie CREP, the Upper Big Walnut Creek CREP and the Scioto River CREP.**

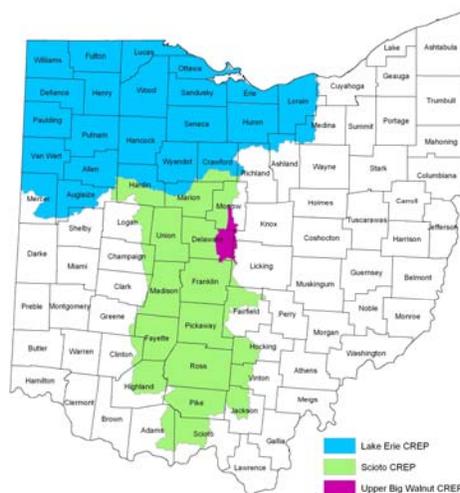
Like CRP, CREP contracts require a 14 to 15 year commitment to keep lands out of agricultural production. CREP provides premium payments to participants who offer eligible land. Federal payments include; annual rental, maintenance incentive payment, plus cost-share of up to 50 percent of the eligible costs to install the practice. Further, through the help of other State partners, financial bonuses and a sign-up incentive are offered to participants to install specific practices that are good for the watersheds.



Land must be owned or leased for at least one year prior to enrollment to be eligible, and must be physically and legally capable of being cropped in a normal manner.

Land must also meet cropping history and other eligibility requirements. Enrollment can be on a continuous basis, permitting farmers and producers to join the program at anytime rather than waiting for specific sign-up periods.

For more details about Ohio's three CREP's, stop by your local FSA county office. Below is a map of the CREP areas in Ohio.



Dates to Remember	
August 1	<b>Deadline</b> to submit COC nomination forms.
August 1	<b>Final date</b> to request farm reconstitution for current fiscal year.
Sept. 4	Labor Day Holiday. <b>FSA offices closed.</b>
Sept. 29	<b>Final date</b> for 2006 DCP contract revisions.
Sept. 29	<b>Last day</b> for late file sign-up for the 2006 DCP program. \$100 late fee.
Nov. 3	County committee election ballots mailed.
Dec. 4	Last day to return voted ballots in county committee election.

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