



Berrien County FSA News

**USDA Service Center
Berrien County FSA**
3334 Edgewood
Berrien Springs, MI 49103
(269) 471-9111 (phone)
(269) 471-3773 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/

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

HAPPY
HOLIDAYS!!!



County Committee
Calvin Gnodtke
Rodney Winkle
Mary Wagner

Staff
Farm Programs -
Barb Dumke, PT
Sue Kraklau, PT
Nova Little, PT
Marquita Sommer, PT
Kathryn Warmbein, Temp.
Steve Kraklau, Field Asst.
Hope Gentile, CED

Farm Loans -
William Hogan, FLM
Paul Wagner, FLO
Delores Whitson, PT

Crop Disaster Program

Signup for the 2005-2007 Crop Disaster Program (CDP) for quantity loss began on October 15, 2007. This program offers benefits to farmers who suffered qualifying losses to 2005-2007 crops from natural disasters and related conditions. The actual crop must have been planted or prevented from being planted before February 28, 2007.

To be eligible:

- Must have had crop insurance coverage or coverage under the Noninsured Assistance Program (NAP) for the year of the loss to be eligible for CDP benefits.
- Loss must have been a result of damaging weather.
- Must have filed a Crop Acreage Report.
- Loss must exceed 35% of the expected production of the unit.
- Must be in compliance with the Highly Erodible Land Conservation & Wetland Conservation provisions
- Must supply verifiable and reliable production records – FSA will use RMA loss records where available.

The maximum CDP benefits a person may receive is \$80,000, and for only one of the qualifying years.

**Call (269) 471-9111 for
an appointment.**

Quality Loss

CDP also offers benefits to producers that suffered 25% quality losses on 2005-2007 crops from natural disasters and related conditions. 2007 crops must have been planted or prevented from being planted before February 28, 2007. Signup dates will be announced at a later date.

Livestock Compensation Program (LCP)

This program is part of the disaster legislation. Signup began September 10, 2007. This program offers benefits to eligible producers who: Either owned or cash-leased eligible livestock on the beginning date of the applicable disaster period(s); and suffered an eligible feed loss from produced or purchased forage, 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 may receive no more than \$80,000 under LCP.

Are You Eligible?
Call today to check it out!

Wool & Mohair Loan & LDP Deadline

The 2007 crop year for wool and mohair began January 1st. Marketing assistance loans and loan deficiency payments (LDP's) are available for 2007 wool and mohair thru January 31, 2008. Make sure you have a CCC-633EZ on file before you lose beneficial interest.



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.

Measurement Service Rates



Measurement Service Fees for farm visits are a minimum of \$46.00 for the first hour and \$8 for every 30 minutes after the first hour. The rate includes time for travel and paperwork completion. This is the fee for grain bin measurements, late acreage reports, and cropland measurements.



Bank Account Changes

All FSA payments are to be made by direct deposit unless there is a financial hardship to prevent it.

The county office will be sending out letters in the near future if you still receive a paper check. This letter will instruct you how to sign up for Direct Deposit. In the near future, the county office will not have the option to print paper checks. Get signed up today for Direct Deposit, to make sure there is no interruption in receiving your program payments.

Please notify the office if your financial institution is purchased, you close your bank account, or you change banks. These can all delay receipt of your payments.



2007 Commodity Crop Loans

Marketing assistance loans provide producers interim financing at harvest time to meet cash flow needs without having to sell their commodities when market prices are typically low. Loans mature on the last day of the ninth calendar month following the month in which the loan is approved. To apply, the grain must be harvested, stored in grain storage either on the farm or in an approved warehouse. Producers may certify to the quantity in their grain bins or may request a measurement service.

Disbursement of loans will be by appointment.

FARM LOAN PROGRAMS

The Farm Service Agency provides credit to agricultural producers unable to secure credit from commercial lending sources including: Operating Loans Farm ownership, Beginning farmers, Youth loans, Guaranteed Loans and Emergency loans.



EMERGENCY LOANS DUE TO DISASTER DESIGNATION

Berrien County has been declared an agricultural disaster area, making farmers immediately eligible for USDA/FSA production loss emergency loans. The natural disaster area designation is due to losses caused by drought that occurred April 1, 2007 and continuing (application due by July 7, 2008). In addition, there is a natural disaster area designation due to frost/freeze event beginning April 4, 2007 through June 13, 2007 (applications due by July 14, 2008). These designations make qualified farm operators eligible for low-interest production loss emergency loans, providing eligibility requirements are met. FSA will consider each loan application on its own merit, taking into account the extent of loss, ability to obtain other credit, security available and repayment ability. For more information Berrien County producers can contact Paul Wagner, Farm Loan Officer or Delores Whitson at (269) 471-9111 ext. 2. More information may also be obtained at www.fsa.usda.gov then click Farm Loan Programs

National Compliance & Spot Check Review

FSA is committed to delivering accurate program payments to America's agricultural producers. The accuracy of payments not only benefits farmers and ranchers, but also maximizes taxpayer dollars and government efficiency.

As part of the 2007 National Compliance Review, FSA's national office is requiring local FSA county offices to conduct compliance reviews and spot checks of certain producers selected by the national office through a statistical sampling method. A statistical sample of FSA employees, County Committee (COC) and State Committee (STC) members have also been selected for review using this same process.

FSA may review a producer's operations in multiple states and counties, depending on the scope of the producer's operations. FSA will review both the accuracy of the representations made by the selected Producers in connection with participation requirements. The reviews may need to be conducted at various times throughout the year depending on the FSA programs in which the producer is participating. FSA appreciates the cooperation of its customers as the agency continues to enhance its operations.

FSA's goal is to ensure that program dollars are delivered effectively and efficiently so America's farmers and ranchers can provide safe and abundant food, fiber and fuel for consumers at home and abroad.

eGOV Customer Registration Process

Do you want to be able to sit home and do some of your paperwork instead of coming into the office?

Then access one of the following website:

USDA Customer Statement -

<http://customerstatement.usda.gov>

LDP Signup -

http://www.fsa.usda.gov/egov/eldp_default.htm

DCP Signup -

http://www.fsa.usda.gov/egov/edcp_default.htm

You will have to create a profile and apply for Level 2 access. The process will require a visit to the local office.

Check it out online or contact your local office.

YOUR VOICE

The 2007 Census of Agriculture is your chance to share your voice. Your response provides vital information that impacts decisions about community development, funding availability, farm policy and other key issues. By actively participating in the Census, you join with other voices to make positive changes.

Look for the Census in your mailbox in early January 2008. Complete and return it by February 4, 2008. Remember, when you lend your voice, you help ensure a better future for your operation, your family and your community.



2007 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

United States Department of Agriculture • National Agricultural Statistics Service

www.agcensus.usda.gov

PROGRAM OUTREACH



FSA is constantly striving to seek out persons from minority, female, and/or underrepresented groups to ensure they are informed of the agricultural services and programs that our offices administer. Any person of legal age who has an interest in a farm as an owner or operator is eligible to participate in FSA programs and to vote in the FSA county committee election process. If you or someone you know may be eligible for our programs or would like to be included in our mailings please contact your local FSA office for more information.



Civil Rights Complaint Process

Any person, class or group of persons may file a discrimination complaint within 180 days of an alleged discriminatory action. Complaints may be filed in writing or orally with the agency head, any designated agency official or the Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Dept of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Assistance in filing a complaint can be obtained by calling any FSA Office.

*The Staff wishes
everyone
a safe and joyous
Holiday Season!*

Important Dates to Remember

December 3, 2007 – Last day to return ballots for the County Committee Election.

December 25, 2007 – Office Closed for Christmas

January 1, 2008 – Office Closed for New Year's Day

January 21, 2008 – Office Closed for Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday Holiday

January 31, 2008 – Deadline to request 2007 Wool or Mohair loans and LDP's



Special Accommodations

Special Accommodations will be made for the physically handicapped, visually impaired or hearing impaired upon request. If accommodation is required, contact Hope R. Gentile, CED at (269) 471-9111.

The U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, 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 202-720-2900 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave, 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.