



December 2006

Ohio FSA State Newsletter

Visit our website at:
www.fsa.usda.gov/OH

Customer Statement

December conjures thoughts about the end of the tax year. Producers who have signed up for a USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account have the ability to view their Customer Statement.

The Customer Statement combines a wide range of information about a producer's USDA services and program activities in a single report that's available on-line, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Viewing your Customer Statement requires the use of a user ID and password. Below is how to create a user ID and password. If you already have a user ID and password, then skip down to "Login to Your USDA Customer Statement website."

1. From your Internet browser go to the USDA eAuthentication website at:
<http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/eauthCreateAccount.html>.
2. Follow the steps described to request a Level 2 account.
 - a. Fill out the on-line registration form.
 - b. Create a user ID and password.
 - c. Respond to the confirmation email the system sends to you.



Activation Process:

1. Bring a form of official identification to the FSA county office, this includes; state ID, state driver's license, military ID or passport.
2. Ask to see a Local Registration Authority (LRA), a county office employee who can verify your identity and activate your USDA eAuthentication account.

Login to Your USDA Customer Statement website at: <http://CustomerStatement.usda.gov>.

1. Click the 'Login' button on the homepage menu bar.
2. Enter your USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account user ID and password on the USDA (security) login screen.

3. On your first visit to the Customer Statement, you will be assigned a unique USDA ID, and a default profile for your Customer Statement will be created. You may print out a page with your USDA ID from the Customer Statement on the left navigation menu.

Customer Statement Contents: The information in the statement is supplied by USDA agencies. The graphic of the Customer Statement shows the summary information initially presented when you login to the Customer Statement. It is a consolidation of all of your customer information.

If your payments do not show up when you first login, click on "Customer Statement" under "Statement Features" in the left column. Your payments should then appear.

By selecting links on the summary page, you can review the detail data and source information for each section. The links will take you to either another window within the Customer Statement that displays more information about an item in the summary, or it will take you to the application that supplied the section data for additional questions. In many cases, detail data opens in another browser window. Close the new window to return to Customer Statement.

Source links at the bottom of each section are provided to allow easy follow up with USDA personnel. If no contact information is provided, click the "Contact Us" tab or phone the county office.

To protect your identity, the Customer Statement does not show your Social Security number or Taxpayer ID. Instead, your information is linked to your USDA ID. The USDA ID is created the first time you login.

In the future, your USDA ID will enable you to share your Customer Statement information with anyone you choose without the risks associated with sharing your social security number or your USDA eAuthentication Level 2 user ID and password.

Emergency Loans Available

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has designated **10 counties in Ohio** as primary agricultural natural disaster areas, making certain farmers and other agricultural producers in the counties eligible for low-interest emergency loans from USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA).

The following counties were designated as primary natural disaster areas, due to losses caused by storms containing excessive rain and flooding that occurred from May 10, 2006, and continuing. Those counties are: Ashtabula, Geauga, Hancock, Lake, Lorain, Medina, Muskingum, Ottawa, Wood and Wyandot counties.

Counties eligible because they are contiguous to those listed above are: Allen, Ashland, Coshocton, Crawford, Cuyahoga, Erie, Guernsey, Hardin, Henry, Huron, Licking, Lucas, Marion, Morgan, Noble, Perry, Portage, Putnam, Sandusky, Seneca, Summit, Trumbull and Wayne counties.

All counties listed above were designated natural disaster areas **on Nov. 9, 2006**, making all qualified farm operators in the designated areas eligible for low-interest emergency loans from USDA's FSA, provided eligibility requirements are met. Farmers in eligible counties have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for loans to help cover part or all of their actual losses. FSA will consider each loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability. FSA has a variety of programs, in addition to the emergency loan program, to help eligible farmers recover from adversity.

USDA has also made other programs available to assist farmers, including the Emergency Conservation Program, Federal Crop Insurance and the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program.

Interested farmers may contact their local FSA county office for further information on eligibility requirements and application procedures for these and other programs. Additional information is also available on-line at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=diap&topic=landing>.

Selected Interest Rates for December 2006	
90-Day Treasury Bill	5.000%
Farm Operating - Direct	5.125%
Farm Ownership - Direct	5.375%
Limited Resource	5.000%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	4.000%
Emergency	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility	4.625%
Sugar Storage Facility	4.875%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	6.000%

LDP Deadline on Wool, Mohair and Unshorn Lamb Pelts

Eligible producers have **until Jan. 31, 2007**, to apply for LDPs for wool, mohair and unshorn lamb pelts produced during the 2006 crop year.

Eligible producers must have beneficial interest in the wool, mohair or unshorn pelts the date the CCC-633EZ, page 1 is filed; also own the sheep and goats, not less than 30 days before shearing or slaughtering. Unshorn lambs must be sold for immediate slaughter. Producers must also comply with wetland conservation and highly erodible land conservation provisions on all lands they operate or have interest in. Report all cropland acreage on applicable farms, where an eligible commodity is produced.

To qualify for a payment, pelts must have been produced by an eligible producer from live unshorn lambs of domestic origin in the U.S.

FY 2007 MILCX Option

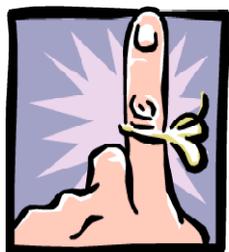
Due to October and November not being an option for start month selection at the time of sign-up for the MILCX program, numerous applicants selected December as their FY 2006 production start month. Many producers did not change their FY 2007 production start month by September 14, 2006.

Although the option to change their production start month was available, many producers assumed that their production start month for FY 2007 would begin with October 2006, which is the first month of FY 2007 with a payment rate in effect.

Relief is now authorized through close of business December 14, 2006, for eligible dairy operations to change their FY 2007 production start month selection from December to either of the following: October 2006 or November 2006.

The relief provision is only authorized for FY 2007 changes from December 2006, to either October or November 2006.

Additional information on the selection changes is available at the local FSA county office.



*Program
Reminders*



Loans for Beginning Farmers, Socially Disadvantaged

FSA is authorized to assist beginning farmers and or members of socially disadvantaged groups to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person whom:

- Has operated a farm for not more that 10 years;
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm;
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA; and
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's average size.

Each member of an entity must meet the eligibility requirements. Loan approval is not guaranteed. Socially disadvantaged groups are Hispanics, American Indians, African Americans, Asians, Pacific Islanders and women.

The Northern Bobwhite Quail Habitat Initiative

Since the blizzard of 1977, the call of the bobwhite has been silent in all but a few Ohio counties. Since 1980, the bobwhite quail populations have declined from an estimated 59 million birds to about 20 million birds in 1999. The habitats are disappearing due to urbanization, loss of native grasslands, intensive agriculture and a transitioning of once grassy fields into forests.

All counties in Ohio are eligible for the CRP Northern Bobwhite Quail Habitat Initiative. The picture to the right, illustrates the counties approved in Ohio.

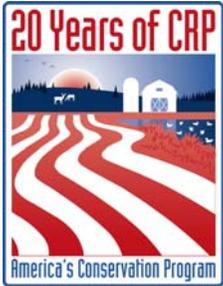
The habitat buffers for upland birds practice, commonly called practice CP33, is a border of native grasses and forbs placed between the edge of the field and the crop. The border can be between 30 and 120 ft. wide. Farmers find this practice particularly economically advantageous under field fence rows and around woods.

Presently, producers will receive annual rental payments for the length of the contract, maintenance incentive payments and cost-share assistance of up to 50 percent of the eligible practice cost to establish CP33 cover. Additionally, FSA provides producers with a signing incentive payment of up to \$100 per acre, and a practice incentive payment of up to 40 percent of the eligible establishment cost.

The purpose of this practice is to provide food and cover for bobwhite quail and other upland birds in cropland areas. Also, the practice will reduce soil erosion from wind and water, improve soil and water quality and protect and enhance the on-farm ecosystem. The program will only apply to land around field edges of eligible cropland.

CRP Northern Bobwhite Quail Habitat Initiative sign-up continues at local FSA offices. The program will run on a continuous basis, meaning eligible land may be enrolled at any time until **14,200 acres** have been enrolled in Ohio, or Dec. 31, 2007, whichever comes first. Currently, Ohio has enrolled **10,232.4 acres** in the program.

If you are interested in restoring the Bob White Quail habitat on your land or wish to learn more about the CRP Northern Bobwhite Quail Habitat Initiative then stop by your local FSA office. More information is available on FSA's Website at: www.fsa.usda.gov.



Annual Financial Statements

With the end of the year fast-approaching, now is a good time to take a look at your financial condition. No matter how large or small your farming operation is, or whether or not you borrow money, it is a good idea to put together a financial statement every year on the same date. It is an excellent habit. Whether you decide to jot down what you own and what you owe while you are watching the ball drop in Times Square or at halftime of a bowl game doesn't matter.

The important thing is that you do it the same day every year. Usually this day is Jan. 1 or the beginning of your tax year. This way you can compare your financial condition from one year to the next from the same point in time.

Most agriculture lenders would love to have all of their borrowers get into this habit. This will enable your lender to compare "apples to apples" when reviewing your financial condition and will help them make better informed credit decisions.

Blank financial statements can be obtained from your lender or from FSA.

Dates to Remember

Dec. 4	Last day to return voted ballots in county committee election.
Dec. 25	Christmas Day Holiday. FSA Offices Closed.
Jan. 1	New Year's Day Holiday. FSA Offices Closed.
Jan. 1	Elected committee members and alternates take office.
Jan. 15	Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday. FSA Offices Closed.
Jan. 31	Deadline on LDPs for wool, mohair and unshorn lamb pelts.
Continues	Continuous CRP.
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loans.
Continues	2007 DCP Enrollment will continue to June 1, 2007.

Visit our website at: www.fsa.usda.gov/oh