

March 2007



Delaware County News

Delaware County
USDA Service Center

Delaware County FSA
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Hours

Monday – Friday
8:00 am – 4:30 pm

County Committee

Dwight Piper, Chair
Craig Pittman, Vice Chair
Bret Davis, Member
Carolyn Skinner, Advisor

County Committee meets
2nd Tuesday, 8:30 am

Staff

Don Henry, CED
Margaret Webster, PT
Patty Hope, PT
Julie Faurote, PT
Hal Clase, Field Reporter



Delaware Committee Advisor Appointed

Congratulations to Carolyn Skinner! Carolyn was reappointed as advisor to represent farmers on the Delaware committee. Carolyn was appointed to her third consecutive term which began on March 1, 2007.

Advisors play an important role by providing diverse viewpoints and by representing the interests of minorities and women in decisions made by county committees.

The Delaware County Farm Service Agency committee meets once a month. The committee has established 8:30 a.m. on the second Tuesday as its regular meeting time and the Delaware County FSA Office as its meeting place.

CREP & Continuous CRP Available

Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Johanns, has recently announced there will be **no general sign-ups scheduled for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) in 2007 or 2008.** The President's FY 2008 Budget assumed no available funding for CRP general sign-ups.

However, environmentally sensitive acreage qualifying for the Lake Erie, the Upper Big Walnut and the Scioto River Watershed Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) or Continuous CRP will still be eligible for enrollment. These targeted programs are funded, and will continue to provide a heightened environmental benefit on select areas.

Sodbuster, Swampbuster

Most Farm Service Agency programs require compliance with sodbuster and swampbuster provisions. These provisions require producers to follow an approved conservation system on all highly erodible land planted to an annual crop as determined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Be sure to have determinations made on any new land you plan to plant to annual crops. If you plan to plant a different crop on your current cropland, check with NRCS to assure the new crop will qualify under your conservation system.

Swampbuster provisions state that converting a wetland to make possible the planting of a crop will result in the loss of all USDA benefits. To avoid this possibility it is strongly recommended that producers check with NRCS before starting to work in the fields.

Update MILCX Contracts

Dairy operations are reminded to inform the county office of any entity or operation changes that may affect your Milk Income Loss Contract (MILCX). The change from an individual to a corporation or partnership, etc. would require an update to your MILCX and other applicable eligibility forms.

If you have changed creameries or dairy plants and have had your production information sent directly from them in the past, an updated authorization would need to be completed. Contact your local FSA office for additional information.

NAP Application Deadline

March 15 is the deadline date for producers to apply for Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage, using Form CCC-471. The application and service fee must be filed by the applicable closing date for each of the 2007 spring seeded NAP crops. To remain eligible for NAP, a producer must annually report the crop, including: type, variety, location, producer shares, date planted, and the intended use (fresh, processed, etc.). Once the crop is harvested the production must also be reported.



The application service fee is \$100 per crop per county or \$300 per producer per county. The fee cannot exceed a total of \$900 per producer with farming interest in multiple counties. Limited resource producers may request a waiver of service fees.

In the event of a crop failure caused by natural disaster, the producer needs to notify the local FSA office by completing a "Notice of Loss" (form CCC-576). The notice of loss must be filed in the local FSA office within 15 days of the crop damage from natural disaster, so the loss can be appraised and production counted before the crop is put to another use, abandoned or destroyed.

Honey Loans

Marketing assistance loans and loan deficiency payments for 2006 crop year honey are available **until March 31, 2007**. The national loan rate for honey is \$0.60 per pound. Market prices currently exceed the loan rate, so LDPs are not available at this time.

To be eligible for a loan, the producer must have produced honey in the United States during the calendar year for which the loan is requested, and extracted the honey on or before Dec. 31 of the applicable crop year; have continuous beneficial interest in the honey through date of repayment of the loan; and been responsible for the financial risk of keeping. Producers are responsible for maintaining the quality of farm-stored honey during the term of the loan.

The honey must be produced in the United States by an eligible producer, from an approved floral source, and stored in approved containers. The containers must be marked with the producer's name, type of honey, number of container and net weight. Pre-loan inspections are required before the loans can be disbursed.

Honey used as collateral may not be disposed of without approval of the county office staff.

Toll-Free Number for Borrowers

Direct loan borrowers with USDA's Farm Service Agency can check the status of their accounts around the clock using a new toll-free telephone number.

The toll-free number, 1-888-518-4983, is available in both English and Spanish. The system delivers information on active FSA loans 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

During the first call to the system, borrowers will enter their tax identification number or the Social Security Number associated with the loan. They also will need to enter their ZIP code. Borrowers will create a personal identification number for security. Customers must enter their PIN every time they use the system and may change their PIN. The system menu helps user's access helpful information. The system may also direct borrowers to contact their local FSA servicing office if action is necessary on their accounts.

Selected Interest Rates for March 2007

90-Day Treasury Bill	5.000%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	5.125%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	5.375%
Limited Resource Loans	5.000%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	4.000%
Emergency Loans	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility Loans	4.750%
Sugar Storage Facility Loans	5.000%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	6.125%

Minority Producer Register

Minority producers can join a voluntary register to ensure that they receive the latest farm program information from the Farm Service Agency.

By joining the register, minority producers may receive outreach materials, newsletters and program announcements from FSA and other USDA agencies. They may also receive information from USDA-approved outreach partners, such as community-based organizations, faith-based organizations and minority-serving educational institutions. USDA will control access to the register.

The register application is available at the county office.



The EZ Makes It Easy

The Farm Service Agency now employs the CCC-633 EZ in place of the old CCC-709 and CCC-633-LDP. The EZ form has been created to make the application process more user-friendly.



The CCC-633 EZ is a two-part loan deficiency payment request that allows producers to (1) indicate their intentions to receive LDP benefits *before* losing beneficial interest in the eligible commodity, and (2) submit a request for an LDP at any time during the loan/LDP availability period before or after losing beneficial interest.

The EZ form was developed to cover field direct LDPs, basic LDPs and revised to cover basic and field direct LDPs for wool, mohair and unshorn pelts.

By signing the first page of the EZ form, the producer indicates his or her intentions to receive LDP benefits. This one page covers all counties and all eligible harvested commodities for the entire crop year for the individual, joint operation or entity identified on the form.

Once the first page of the form has been signed and submitted, the producer can submit an LDP request by completing page 2 for all harvested commodities or page 4 for wool, mohair and unshorn pelts. The LDP request can be submitted at any time during the loan availability period, before or after losing beneficial interest.

A key point to remember is that page 1 of the EZ form must be signed by the producer before beneficial interest in the commodity is lost. Once beneficial interest is lost, the commodity is ineligible for an LDP even if beneficial interest is regained.

All producers are encouraged to submit page 1 of the EZ for each crop year whether or not they plan to subsequently request a loan or LDP.

Share vs. Cash Lease

Producers should be careful to differentiate between "share leases" (more commonly known as flexible or hybrid leases) vs. cash leases when reporting to the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

The FSA considers flexible, hybrid leases as, in which the producer pays a base rent, and offers a bonus on yield and/or price increase to a land-owner. For example: A lease that is for \$100 per acre plus an additional \$40 per acre if the crop exceeds \$4/bushel or 170 bushels corn/acre or \$7/bushel or 40 bushels of soybeans per acre is by FSA procedure considered a share lease, **not a cash lease**. Cash leases specify a fixed amount, not subject to changes from yield or price.

Each year FSA participants are subject to spot-check and need to update the CCC-502 using the Continuation Sheet for Leased or Owned Land. FSA participants, who agree on a share lease as described above, should contact their local FSA office and update the producer's CCC-502 file, to avoid possible violations with FSA payments.

CRP Cover Maintenance

Participants are required to maintain Conservation Reserve Program acres according to the Conservation Plan agreed to with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Participants must:

- Have adequate approved vegetative cover to control erosion for the contract period;
- Control weeds and other types of undesirable vegetation; and
- Take control measures outside of the primary nesting season which is **March 1-July 15**.

Please keep in mind mowing for cosmetic purposes is prohibited at all times. That is why it is important to review your Conservation Plan and talk to NRCS for the best control method(s), if you think undesirable plant species are invading your CRP land.

Early detection is the key to effective control of noxious weeds. Producers need to scout their fields during the nesting period and look for noxious weeds and other undesirable species. If noxious weeds are present on CRP land, producers should contact their local FSA and NRCS offices during the nesting season, so the County Committee (COC) and NRCS can determine if spot treatment is needed on the acreage. Spot treatment includes spot spraying and spot mowing, and is limited to the immediate area of infestation. Spot treatments may be performed outside the nesting season without COC approval.

In Ohio, the following plants are prohibited noxious weeds:

- Shatter cane,
- Russian thistle,
- Johnsongrass,
- Wild parsnip,
- Wild carrot,
- Oxeye daisy,
- Wild mustard,
- Grapevines (when growing in groups of one hundred or more and not pruned, sprayed, cultivated or otherwise maintained for 2 consecutive years),
- Canada thistle,
- Poison hemlock,
- Cressleaf groundsel,
- Musk Thistle,
- Purple loosestrife,
- Mile-A-Minute Weed,
- Giant Hogweed,
- Apple of Peru and
- Maretail.

Dates to Remember	
Mar. 15	Deadline to obtain 2007 NAP coverage on spring planted crops.
Mar. 31	Final Availability for 2006 crop wheat, barley, oats, honey loans and LDPs.
June 1	Sign-up ends for 2007 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program.
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loans.
Continues	Grasslands Reserve Program.
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve program.

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