

Farm Service Agency

Monmouth ~ Mercer ~ Middlesex County FSA

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~ Farm Service Agency ~ Natural Resource Conservation Service ~

Service Center Newsletter

April 23, 2008

Hours: M-F; 8:00 am to 4:30 pm

Acreage Reporting – It is that time of year again! Appointments are being taken now to report any wheat, barley, oats, rye, or other small grain acreage that has been planted. The deadline to report these acres is **May 31, 2008**. For all other crops the deadline is **July 15, 2008**. Acreage reporting is required for the Non-insured Assistance Program (NAP), Commodity Loans, Loan Deficiency Payments, and the Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program. Please call the office to schedule an appointment.



Farm Bill Extended - Passage of the farm bill, currently being debated by Congress, has been a difficult process, requiring an extension of the current Farm Bill that was recently passed and signed by President George W. Bush. "America's farmers deserve better than a series of short-term extensions of our current law," says Secretary of Agriculture Ed Schafer. "They need to know what farm policy is going to be so that they can make sound business decisions about what to plant this year and how they are going to finance it." The current farm bill will now extend to April 25th. Congress will have until that date to pass a consolidated bill.

Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) – If you are a participant in the NAP program, and you have not provided your previous year(s) production figures, the final date to report 2007 or earlier crop production is **June 30, 2008**. All production records must be summarized and may be producer certified without supplying original receipts if done prior to the deadline. Keep in mind that certifications must be supported by records and receipts, and would need to be provided to FSA in the case of a spot check. By reporting production records timely you will ensure that the highest possible benefits are received. Any producer that fails to report production by the cutoff will only receive 65% of the County yield for the first year as a NAP policy holder. If production records are not provided in the second year of participation, an assigned yield (75% of the previous year's reduced yield) for the crop will be used to calculate benefits. Beyond that, a zero-credited yield will apply. Any losses must be reported to our office and a Notice-of-Loss (CCC-576) filed within 15 calendar days after the disaster occurrence or the date the damage became apparent.



Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation Compliance - Operators should remember that in order to receive payments, compliance with Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions are required. Farmers with HEL soils need to be aware of tillage, crop residue, and rotation requirements as specified in your conservation plan. Don't wait until after the ground has been worked to find out that compliance requirements are not being met. Also, it is important to contact this office before modifying (tiling, draining, dredging, filing, or leveling) any wetland or drainage ditch. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in loss of all Federal payments and eligibility.

Farm Storage Facility Loans - Low cost loans for storage facilities are available for producers to build or remodel farm storage facilities for a variety of commodities, including wheat, rice, soybeans and corn. The seven-year Farm Storage Facility Loans are available for the purchase and installation of eligible storage facilities, permanently affixed drying or handling equipment, or remodeling existing facilities. Eligible facilities include new conventional-type cribs or bins and new and remanufactured oxygen-limiting and other upright silo-type structures. All Farm Storage Facility Loans are secured by a promissory note and security agreement. The maximum amount that may be borrowed is 85 percent of the net cost of the storage or handling equipment, up to \$100,000 for each borrower. A down payment is also required, so for more info call your FSA office.

Socially Disadvantaged Applicant Loans - FSA offers specially-targeted farm loans known as Socially Disadvantaged Applicant (SDA) Loans which are designed to help farmers purchase and operate family farms. With these loan programs, FSA hopes to help reverse the declining number of farmers and ranchers across the United States and especially here in New Jersey. Farm ownership loan funds may be used to purchase or enlarge a farm or ranch, purchase easements or rights of way needed in the farm's operation, build or improve existing buildings such as a dwelling or barn, promote soil and water conservation and development, and pay closing costs. Farm operating loan funds may be used to purchase livestock, poultry, farm equipment, fertilizer, and other materials necessary to operate a successful farm. Operating Loan funds can also be used for family living expenses, refinancing debts under certain conditions, paying salaries for hired farm laborers, installing or improving water systems for home, livestock, or irrigation use, and other similar improvements. For additional information or applications for all FSA direct loan programs contact your local FSA Office located in the USDA Service Center nearest you. Additional information and assistance in locating the USDA office that serves your area is also available on the FSA home page at: www.fsa.usda.gov.



Dates to Remember!

May 7, 2008 – Next scheduled County Committee Meeting (7:30 pm.)

Ongoing – Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)/Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) signup.

If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please let us know. Also, if you know of anyone that would like to receive this newsletter, please supply us with their address. Also, you may visit our State website at www.fsa.usda.gov/nj.

Area FSA Committee: Gary Mount, Chairman Richard Bullock, Vice Chairman Thomas Orgo II, Member Terri Tindall, Advisor

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