



**U.S. Department
of Agriculture**

Name County FSA
Gladwin/Clare Co. office
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Hours
Monday - Friday
7:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

County Committee
Al Wentworth, Chairman
Ken Brown
Dick Brushaber
Mark Iciek
Randy Sheehan
Linda Freier, advisor

Staff
Peggy McKimmy
Jessie Engelhardt

Loan Officers
Betty Garrett

Loan Manager
Jerry Spickerman

**County Executive
Director**

Dick Rankin

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Farm Service Agency

FSA UPDATES

January 2007

Happy New Year!

New Committee Member Elected

Congratulations to Mark Iciek and Randy Sheehan! Mark was elected to represent farmers from Sage, Grout and Beaverton townships and Randy was re-elected representing Sherman, Butman, Clement, Bourret, Gladwin, Secord and N. Grim on the County Committee. This is Mark's 1st term and Randy's 2nd term as a County Committee member.

Thanks again to Darrin Haines who completed his term on the county committee.

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The County Committee system works only because of your participation.

The Committee members held their organizational meeting January 10th and voted Albert Wentworth as chairman and Dick Brushaber as Vice-Chairman for the coming year.

Foreign Buyers Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA. Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA within 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25% of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, Realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

Power of Attorney

If you're too busy getting work done around the farm to come into your local FSA office to conduct business and complete your paperwork, here's a solution. Retain an agent to act on your behalf for programs and transactions authorized under the 2002 Farm Bill and most other FSA administered programs. This can be done by completing an FSA-211, Power of Attorney. The form is available at your local USDA Service Center or on-line at <http://forms.sc.egov.usdda.gov>. Forms that are obtained and completed outside USDA Service Centers offices must be notarized. To find out more, call the office

Payment Limitation/Eligibility

USDA payments and benefits are subject to producer eligibility and limitation provisions as defined by law. Documents and forms to determine eligibility and limitation once completed are reviewed on an annual basis. It is the producer's responsibility to report changes in the farming operation which may affect payment eligibility and payment limitation. The following payments apply to DCP for each contract year under the current Farm bill through both direct and counter-cyclical payments. For all covered commodities, \$40,000 for direct payments and \$65,000 for counter-cyclical payments. The Environmental Quality Incentive Program has a \$450,000 payment limitation total for fiscal years 2002 - 2007. The Conservation Reserve Programs annual limit is \$50,000 per person. Entities such as corporations, limited partnerships, trusts and estates are required to provide names, addresses, and ID numbers of their members.

Bank Account Changes?

As of January 1, 1999, all FSA payments are supposed to be electronically transferred into your bank account. In order to make timely payments, you need to notify the office if you close your account or if another financial institution purchases your bank. Payments can be delayed if we are not aware of changes to your account and routing numbers.

DCP Sign Up Underway

We can now issue 2007 advance direct payments (**22% of your total**) under the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program. Update your DCP contract and put the advance payment to work for your farm today. Farmers who want to update their contracts need to address land and business issues:

- Will you continue to rent the same property you rented last year? If not, notify the office so we can update your farm records or perform a reconstitution to remove land from your farming operation.
- A cash-rent certification may be used if you rented the land last year, however, an advance payment cannot be issued for the farm until July 1, 2007.
- Are you changing the structure of your operation? For example, is the farm converting from an individual to a partnership or Limited Liability Corporation (LLC)? Are you changing shares within the business or is one of the shareholders leaving the business? These questions need to be answered prior to sign-up.



Attention Producers, Landowners!

- Do you intend to clear timber areas to create or to expand existing crop areas?
- Are you converting a pasture field into a crop field?
- Are there any areas on your farm(s) that you are considering cropping that have not been cropped in recent years?
- Is there a wet spot in a field that you want drain to make cropping easier?
- Are you disturbing a wildlife habitat area of any type?
- Are you doing anything different on your farm(s) this year?

These are Highly Erodible and Wetlands provision questions that need to be considered each year by producers to assure that they may remain eligible for USDA benefits. If you have any question or concern that something you plan to do on your farm could jeopardize your eligibility for benefits, please contact your NRCS representative before you begin work.

Special Accommodations

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the county FSA office directly or by phone.

Spousal Signatures

Husbands and wives may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation programs in which either has an interest. This option is automatically available unless a written request for exclusion is made to the county office staff by either spouse. This procedure does not apply to the commodity loan or Loan Deficiency Program. Spouses must have an FSA211 on file to sign commodity loan documents on behalf of each other. Spouses may not sign FSA-211 on behalf of the other as an authorized signatory for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations or other similar entities.



Complaint Process

After an FSA official makes a decision on your request for USDA services or application, you will be sent a letter informing you of the decision and options you can pursue if you disagree.

Generally, program participants have four choices – an informal review with the original agency decision-maker, an opportunity for mediation, appeal to State Committee and appeal to the USDA National Appeal Division (NAD).



Civil Rights Complaint Process

Any person, class or group of persons may file a discrimination complaint with 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. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Assistance in filing a complaint can be obtained by calling or visiting any FSA office.



Applications for FSA Farm Loan Assistance

Farmers and ranchers that intend to apply to the Farm Service Agency for loan assistance for the upcoming crop year are encouraged to file their applications as early as possible. Filing early will help ensure that your loan is processed and approved as early as possible so that planting decisions can be made. Failure to apply early can result in a delay in processing loans due to the volume of applications that must be processed in date order. Contact your local FSA Farm Loan Manager or Officer for more details and assistance in applying.

Controlled Substance

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium poppies and other drug producing plants.

Change in Farming Operations?

Update signature authorization when changes in the operation occur. Producers are reminded to notify the office of a change in operations on a farm so records can be kept current and accurate.

Selected Interest Rates for January	
Farm Operating - Direct	5.125
Farm Ownership - Direct	5.25
Limited Resource - Farm Operating	5.00
Limited Resource - Farm Ownership	5.00
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment	4.00
Beginning Farmer or Rancher	
Emergency	3.75
Farm Storage Facility	4.50
Commodity Loans 1996- Present	6.00

MILK Program



MOO !

Just a reminder to all producers that are signed up for the MILCX program to keep submitting those milk stubs! The program continues through September, 2007.

Milk producers that are not already signed up may still do so at any time before the program end date. When the BCI milk price is below \$16.94 per hundredweight (cwt), the payment rate is determined by subtracting the BCI milk price per cwt from \$16.94 and then multiplying the difference times 34% during the period beginning October 1, 2005 through August 31, 2007. The payment rate for September, 2007

CCRP and CREP

Applications are still being taken for those 'environmentally sensitive' areas, i.e., filter strips, riparian buffers, wetland restorations, grass waterways, windbreaks, etc., under the Continuous CRP or CREP for those whose land is in the Saginaw Bay Watershed. The land must have been cropped in four out of the years 1996-2001. In return for entering into a 10 - 15 year contract, landowners receive annual rental payments, special financial incentives, and 50% cost-sharing to establish the practice.

Maintenance operations may be performed during times OUTSIDE of the August 1-20 window IF you have problem areas AND you submit a written request to the Glsdwin/Clare FSA Committee detailing what specific operations you wish to perform and when you wish to perform them.

Annual Acreage reports for 2007 can be filed at any time now!! The deadline is July 15, 2007; it's closer than what you think. Contact this office or NRCS for further information.

**Now Open For
Fun and Games**



FSA Kids

www.fsa.usda.gov/fsakids

Gladwin/Clare Co. Office
1501 N. State St.
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PRESORTED STANDARD
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PERMIT #19

Guaranteed Loan Limits Have Increased



Effective October 1, 2006, FSA's guaranteed loan limits increased. Limits include new guaranteed loan(s) plus any outstanding direct or guaranteed principal balances, as indicated, owed by anyone who will sign the promissory note.

The total outstanding:

- combined guaranteed farm ownership (FO) and operating loan (OL) principal balance cannot exceed \$899,000;
- direct and guaranteed FO principal balance cannot exceed \$899,000;
- direct and guaranteed OL principal balance cannot exceed \$899,000; and
direct and guaranteed FO and OL and emergency loan principal balance cannot exceed \$1,599,000.

**Remember you can see this edition of the FSA
Updates on line at: www.fsa.usda.gov/mi/**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program 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) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of Discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.
