



## Hillsdale County FSA News

### Hillsdale County USDA Service Center

#### Hillsdale FSA

588 Olds St. Bldg 2  
Jonesville, MI 49250  
Phone 517 849-9890 X 2  
FAX 517 849-9895

#### Hours

Monday - Friday  
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

#### County Committee

Duane Towne, Chairman  
Tom Schroeder, Vice-Chair  
Sheryl Kies, Member

#### Commodity Staff

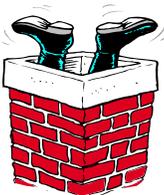
Nina Draper, CRP  
Cindy Gabbard, Crop Rept  
Linda Kline, Price Support  
Carri McCollough, Fm Rec  
Pattie Nichols, Adm  
Shirley Shoemaker, DCP  
Judy Hostetler, CED

#### Farm Loan Staff

Jackie Keenan, Fm Loans  
Deb Parkhurst, Fm Loans  
Mack Francoeur, FLO  
Russ LaFollette, Loan Mgr

#### Web Sites

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov>  
<http://www.sc.egov.usda.gov>  
<http://www.usda.gov>



### County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to David Godfrey who was elected to represent farmers from Adams, Wheatland, Jefferson, Pittsford and Wright Townships. This is David's first term as a county committee member. We say thank you to Duane Towne who served 9 years on the County Committee for a job well done! The County Committee meets in regular session the second Tuesday of every month at 8:30 am at the FSA Office. These regular sessions are open to the public. David takes office Jan 1<sup>st</sup>.

### DCP Sign Up Underway

DCP contract participation is an annual event. Producers need to sign a new CCC-509, Contract each year.

Farmers who want to sign a contract 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 your farm records can be updated or perform a reconstitution to remove land from your farming operation prior to your sign-up.
- 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 2007.

Producers can enroll in DCP online. USDA provides eDCP services in a secure online environment that protects participants' privacy through stringent security measures. FSA provides all producers with DCP nationwide customer service, meaning you may visit any FSA office throughout the country to complete your DCP contract. Producers must have a Level 2 eAuthentication account. To begin your eDCP signup, please visit FSA's eDCP website at

[www.eauth.egov.usda.gov](http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov) or contact our office for more details.

### Crop Loans on 2006 Grain

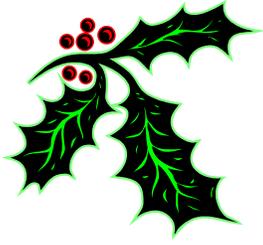
Marketing assistance loans are available to producers for farm or warehouse stored corn, soybeans, wheat, oats, barley, canola, grain sorghum or sunflower seed. These 9-month loans allow a producer growing eligible crops to store production and use the loan proceeds to meet cash flow needs without selling the crop. These loans are non-recourse because a producer pledges the crop as collateral and has the option of delivering the pledged commodity to CCC as full settlement of the loan at maturity.

A producer may repay a marketing assistance loan at any time. The loan repayment rate equals the lower of the CCC determined posted county price (PCP) or the loan rate plus accrued interest. Loans mature on the last day of the ninth calendar month following the month in which the loan is approved. A producer may settle an outstanding non-recourse loan during the 9-month loan period by repaying the loan or upon maturity by forfeiting the commodity to CCC.

A producer is also eligible for a Loan Deficiency Payment (LDP) in lieu of obtaining a loan. The LDP rate equals the amount by which the applicable county loan rate where the commodity is stored exceeds the loan repayment rate for the respective county. The LDP equals the LDP rate times the quantity of commodity for which the LDP is requested.

- March 31, 2007 is the deadline to request loans or LDP on 2006 crop wheat, oats, barley, and canola.
- May 31, 2007 is the deadline to request loans or LDP on 2006 crop corn, soybeans, grain sorghum, and sunflower seed.

At the present there are not any LDPs because of higher grain prices.



### **Maintaining Grain Collateral Quality**

Many producers are hard pressed to find adequate storage for every bushel they harvested. Overfilling storage bins can result in spoiled grain. Bins are meant to hold a level volume of grain. When bins are overfilled and grain is heaped up, air-flow is hindered and the chance of spoilage increases.



Producers who take out marketing assistance loans and use the farm-stored grain as collateral should remember that they are responsible for maintaining the quality of the commodity through the term of the loan.

### **Emergency Loan Program**

Hillsdale Farmers may apply for low interest emergency loans as the result of inclement weather conditions in 2006. The first deadline is July 9, 2007. Emergency Loans may be made to any farmer who suffered a 30% loss in crop production, are unable to receive credit elsewhere, can provide collateral to secure the loan and have repayment ability.

**Loans will be repaid within 1 to 20 years depending on the terms of the loan.**

**Contact Russ LaFollette or Mack Francoeur at (517) 849-9890 Ext. 2.**



### **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.

- Feb 1 – Onions
- Mar 15 – Spring seeded crops
- Sept 1 – Value loss crops such as Christmas Trees
- Sept 30 – Forage Crops, Wheat
- Nov 20 – Perennials – Apples, Asp, Blueberries, Cherries, Grapes, Peaches, Strawberries, etc.
- Dec 1 – Honey & Maple Sap

### **FSA Farm Loans**

FSA makes both direct and guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans to family-size farmers who can not obtain commercial credit from a bank, Farm Credit System institution or other lender. FSA loans can be used to purchase land, livestock, equipment, feed, seed and supplies. The loans can also be used to construct buildings or make farm improvements. If you're having trouble getting commercial credit, check with the county office staff about eligibility, as well as maximum loan amounts, rates, term and use of proceeds.

### **Loans Available for Beginning Farmers, Socially Disadvantaged**

FSA is authorized to assist beginning farmers and 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 than 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. Does not own a farm in excess of 30% of the county's average size.

### **Bank Account Changes?**

As of January 1, 1999, all FSA payments are to be electronically transferred into your bank account. 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.

### **Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)**

NAP coverage is a requirement for anyone who received a disaster payment on their spring-seeded crops. Applications fees are \$100 per crop not to exceed \$300 in a county or \$900 for multi-counties. Fees must be paid before the application can be approved. NAP purchase is available by appointment with Shirley, Phone (517)849-9890 Ext. 109.

NAP Coverage period:

- Annual crops begin the later of 30 days after application for coverage or the date the crop is planted not to exceed the final planting date.
- Perennial crops always begin 30 calendar days after the application closing date.

Sales closing dates:

### **Special Accommodations**

Special Accommodations will be made for the physically handicapped, visually impaired or hearing impaired upon request. If accommodation is required, contact Judy Hostetler, CED at (517) 849-9890.



### **Report Changes in Farm Records**

Failure to notify FSA of changes in your farming operation may adversely impact your eligibility for USDA benefits. Changes to report are addition or removal of farms that you operate, changes in your rental agreements, ownership changes, or changes from agricultural to non-ag land uses. These changes need to be reported to Carri McCollough before you schedule your DCP appointment.

### **Spousal Signatures**

Husbands and wives may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and CCC programs in which either has an interest. This option is automatically available unless a written request for excluding is made by either spouse. The exception to this is Commodity Loans. The Spouse must have an FSA-211, Power of Attorney on file in the office if a spouse wants to sign on behalf of the other spouse.

### **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. FSA 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 percent 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.

### **FSA Appointment Policy**

Please note that all producers are encouraged to call for an appointment. Appointments allow us to efficiently have records and applications ready for you when you arrive. Walk-ins will be accommodated but those with scheduled appointments will take precedence.

### **Used Office Equipment for Sale**

The Hillsdale FSA Office has office equipment for sale and all items may be viewed there. Sealed Bids must be received in the office by Friday, January 26, 2007. Items will be sold individually or in a group.

- 2 Printer Tables, Woodgrain Top, 30"w x 36"L x 27"h
- 1 Sharp Model SF-2035 Double Sided Copier with 20 Bin Sorter

### **Measurement Service Fee Changes**

Measurement Service Fees for farm visits have changed to 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. Please take note of these changes.

### **Wool & Mohair Loan & LDP Deadline is Jan. 31, 2007.**

The final date to request a loan or LDP on wool or mohair harvested in 2006 is January 31, 2007. The market price has been below the loan rate, so there has been a loan deficiency payment in effect.

### **Improper Payments Information Act (IPIA) of 2002**

requires Federal agencies to reduce the number of improper payments. As a result of payment reviews 11 percent were considered improper payments to producers. Of that 11% - 1% were incorrect disbursements and 10% were incomplete paperwork. It is a requirement to reduce the total % to 2%. To accomplish this task, FSA offices nationwide are undergoing a complete review of all eligibility documents filed before any more payments can be issued to producers. Special attention is being paid to signature authorities. I want to thank our farmers for being patient while we go through this process. What this means for farmers is that some paperwork will have to be revised or obtained if it was not properly completed previously. This will delay payments somewhat. It is our priority to get this done so that we can get payments out to you farmers. Again,,, Thank you for your patience and understanding!!!!

*Judy Hostetler, CED.*

### ***Unauthorized Disposition***

Loan grain is not to be disposed of through feeding, selling, or any other form of disposal without prior written authorization. The financial penalties for this are severe. Always call the office before any loan grain is fed or sold.



### **Conservation Reserve Program**

Hillsdale County has been authorized Habitat Buffers for Upland Birds. These buffer strips will be planted to native grasses to attract quail, pheasants, songbirds and other upland birds. The width of the buffer will be 30' to 120' and will be around fields. They do not have to go around the entire field but can be just on one side or next to a windbreak, etc. Cost share assistance up to a maximum of 90% is available to help establish the grasses. Contact Nina for more details.



### ***Important Dates to Remember***

Jan 1 New Year's Holiday-Office Closed  
Jan 5 COC Advisor Nominations Due  
Jan 9 COC Meeting  
Jan 15 Martin Luther King Holiday Office Closed  
Jan 31 Deadline to Request 2006 Wool and Mohair Loan & LDP  
Feb 1 Deadline to purchase NAP-Onions  
Feb 13 – COC Meeting  
Feb 19 George Washington Holiday Office Closed  
Mar 15 Deadline to Purchase NAP Coverage for Spring Seeded Vegetables  
Mar 31 Deadline to request 2006 Crop Wheat, Oats, Barley & Hone Loans & LDPs.

***Real Estate for Sale*** Visit the following web site for government owned farms, houses, lots & buildings.  
<http://www.resales.usda.gov>

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 202-720-2600 (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.