



# IMPORTANT INFORMATION FROM YOUR FARM SERVICE AGENCY OFFICE FOR INGHAM AND LIVINGSTON COUNTIES

Newsletter #2 – August 1, 2007

## Ingham County FSA Office

**8:00 am-4:30 pm**  
521 N. Okemos St.  
Mason, MI 48854  
517-676-4644 Ext. 2  
FAX - 517-676-7011

## Farm Loan Program

Dave Hemker, Farm Loan Manager  
Phone: 989-723-8263 Ext. 2

## Staff

JoAnna Rogers, PT  
Karen Vozarik, PT  
Gretchen Wasper, PT  
Ralph Huss, Field Asst.

## Combined County Committee

Jeff Oesterle, Chairperson  
Joan Wright  
Vern Elliott  
Gary Hoisington  
Terrence Butler  
Eddie Thomas, Advisor

## County Executive Director

Ronda K. Bozek-Smith



*Farm Service Agency*

## DATES TO REMEMBER

- **August 3, 2007** - Deadline to sign 2007 DCP Contracts without late charge and deadline to submit farm changes for 2007
- **November 2, 2007** - COC election ballots will be mailed to all eligible voters
- **January 31, 2008** - Last day to request 2007 Wool and Mohair Loans and LDPs
- **March 31, 2008** - Deadline for 2007 Wheat and Honey loans and LDPs
- **May 31, 2008** - Final date to request 2007 Corn and Soybean Loans and LDPs

## ONGOING SIGN-UPS

- **Farm Storage Facility Loans**
- **Continuous CRP**
- **On Line Access!** It's easy and will save you time. Apply for Level 2 Access at: <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov>

## 2007 FEDERAL HOLIDAYS Office Closed

**Sept. 3....Labor Day**  
**Oct. 8.....Columbus Day**  
**Nov. 12...Veterans' Day**  
**Nov. 22...Thanksgiving Day**  
**Dec. 25....Christmas Day**

PLEASE REMEMBER TO MAKE AN  
APPOINTMENT BEFORE VISITING THE  
INGHAM COUNTY FSA OFFICE  
Call 517-676-4644 Ext. 2

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## MAINTENANCE OF CRP COVER

Attention Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) participants: cover maintenance is your responsibility and must be done according to your conservation plan. Mowing for cosmetic purposes or general weed control is not allowed and may result in financial penalties. Mowing maintenance activities may be allowed once per year if it's needed to maintain the approved cover, but only that portion of the planting in need of maintenance can be mowed. Mowing is only allowed between August 1st and August 20th to protect ground-nesting wildlife and to allow adequate re-growth for winter cover.

Non-mowing maintenance activities are only allowed between August 1st and April 30th and may only be done once per year if needed to maintain the approved cover. **Contact the FSA Office prior to conducting any maintenance on your CRP acres.** Producers must request permission to perform maintenance activities prior to the date specified in their contracts and each project must be approved by the COC on a case-by-case basis.

## UNAUTHORIZED DISPOSAL OF LOAN COMMODITY

Grain under loan that has been disposed of through feeding, selling or any other form without prior written authorization from the FSA staff is considered unauthorized disposition. The financial penalties are severe and it may affect a producer's ability to obtain future farm-stored loans. Always call the FSA Office before any loan grain is fed, moved or sold.

## DIRECT DEPOSIT CHANGES

Please notify the office if you close or change your account or if your bank is purchased by another financial institution. Payments may be delayed if we are not aware of changes to account and routing numbers.

## COC Election Timeline

- Nov 2<sup>nd</sup> Ballots mailed to eligible voters
- Dec 3<sup>rd</sup> Deadline to return completed ballots to FSA county office
- Jan 1<sup>st</sup> New committee members and alternates take office

If you feel that you are eligible to vote and are unsure of your voter status with our agency, please call the FSA Office to make sure all farm records on file in our office are updated. This way we can be sure all eligible voters receive ballots.

## HEL AND WC PROVISIONS

If you intend to clear any land to create or expand existing crop acres, drain a wet area, convert a pasture field into cropland, disturb a wildlife habitat of any type or clear timber areas please contact the FSA office before you begin any work. There are Highly Erodible (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions that need to be followed in order for a producer to remain eligible for USDA benefits. Many times a field visit by NRCS is required to determine wetland areas.

## 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.



## **COC MEMBER CHANGES**

The Ingham and Livingston County FSA sends a heartfelt "Thank You" to William Chamberlain, Albert Gramer and Ron Humrich, past County Committee members, for their dedicated service to FSA and American agriculture. Due to term limits they are no longer able to serve on the FSA County Committee board. Our thanks and best wishes go out to them.

Terrence Butler, Joan Wright and Gary Hoisington have stepped up to fill the open COC positions. Thank you to each of them for offering their services to the COC and to the farmers in Ingham and Livingston Counties.

## **NEW COMPLIANCE PROCESS**

A new compliance and spot check selection process has been implemented for the 2007 crop year. Instead of locally selecting farms, contracts, deficiency loans, etc. for spot check and review, a nationwide selection of producers has been made using a statistical sampling method. Spot check selections are to be conducted based on a producer's participation in CRP, DCP, DCP marketing assistance loans (MAL's), and NAP.

For more information about the new spot check selection process feel free to contact the FSA office for additional clarification.

## **ADDRESS CHANGES**

We are now mailing this newsletter through our FSA State Office. If you receive multiple newsletters at the same address, or if you are not interested in the material provided, PLEASE let us know so that the necessary corrections can be made for future mailings.

## **REAL ESTATE FOR SALE**

Visit the following web site for government owned farms, houses, lots and buildings:  
<http://www.resales.usda.gov>

## **MILK INCOME LOSS CONTRACTS**

The Milk Income Loss Contract Extension (MILCX) Program is coming to an end. Sign up ends September 30, 2007. Production evidence must be submitted for those months no later than November 1, 2007.

## **MEASUREMENT SERVICE RATE CHANGES**

Measurement service fees for farm visits have changed to a minimum of \$46 per farm for the first hour and \$8 for every 30 minutes thereafter needed to complete the necessary measurements. Travel time to and from the site will be included when computing hours for the fee.

## **CRP MANAGED HAYING AND GRAZING PROVISIONS**

Many areas of Michigan are experiencing abnormally dry to drought conditions. I'm sure this comes as no surprise to anyone in the farming community, but what may surprise you is that so far there have been no Michigan counties designated as level "D3 Drought-Extreme" according to the U.S. Drought Monitor.

Therefore, the Michigan State FSA Committee has ruled out Emergency Haying and Grazing of CRP acreage but they have authorized *managed* haying and grazing of cool season grasses and legumes beginning August 1st, 2007, for Ingham and Livingston Counties. All other policies remain in effect so please contact the Ingham/Livingston FSA Office if you have any questions regarding haying and grazing of your CRP land.

CRP participants who do not own or lease livestock may rent or lease the grazing privilege to an eligible livestock farmer located in an approved county. Producers with CRP acreage that is hayed or grazed will be assessed a reduction in their annual rental payment.

## FARM LOAN PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

FSA's loan programs are designed to help family farmers who are temporarily unable to obtain private, commercial credit. Several types of farm loans are available to qualified applicants.

- **Guaranteed Loans:** An approved lender makes the loan at their rates, terms and conditions. FSA guarantees the loan up to 90% to assist producers with their financial needs.
- **Direct Loans:** Producers unable to qualify for a guaranteed loan from a commercial lender may be eligible for a loan directly from FSA. Direct loans can be used for the same types of purchases as guaranteed loans.
- **Socially Disadvantaged Loans:** This program has been developed to specifically target funding for individuals who are identified as belonging to a Socially Disadvantaged Group. A socially disadvantaged applicant is one who has been subject to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice. The Agency has identified these groups as women, Asians, African-Americans, American Indians, Hispanics, Alaskan Natives and Pacific Islanders.
- **Beginning Farmer Loans:** FSA provides direct and guaranteed loan assistance for beginning farmers who are unable to obtain financing from commercial credit sources.
- **Emergency Loss Loans:** Used for disaster relief.
- **Rural Youth Loans:** Helps youth sponsored by a project advisor such as a 4-H club leader.
- **Indian Land Acquisition Loans:** Enables Indian Tribes to purchase privately held lands that lie within their reservations.

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and click on Newsletters in the left hand column.**