



Farm Service Agency

June 2007

A Message from Ben Brancel, State Executive Director

Spring is a time of optimism on the farm. We've spent the winter making plans, and now it's time to put those plans into action. As I write this, machinery is rolling across Wisconsin fields as farmers take advantage of warm, sunny weather.

It's also a time of change, with Congress writing a farm bill that will set American agricultural policy for the next five years. We're all watching with interest, FSA employees included. Right now, I cannot predict the final outcome. But I do know that the Farm Service Agency will be ready to deliver those new programs and services with the same high standards and personal touch you have come to expect.

I want to call your attention to the County Committee elections. Whether your operation is large or small, the election of responsible agricultural producers to FSA county committees is important to you. It is crucial that every eligible producer take part in this election, because county committees are a direct link between your local farm community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The State Committee and I wish each and every one of you a happy, successful, and productive year.

2007 Acreage Reporting

After finishing spring planting, farmers are reminded to report all crop acreage to their county Farm Service Agency office by July 16th to maintain farm program eligibility.

Acreage reports are required to participate in the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP), Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Non-insured Assistance Program (NAP), and to receive loan deficiency payments (LDPs) or Marketing Assistance Loans (MALs). Acreage reporting may also be useful to track cropping history for future FSA program enrollment.

The planting date of each crop will be required on acreage reports again this year. To help reduce

the time needed to report crops, farmers are encouraged to keep track of planting dates and to bring this information to their crop reporting appointment.

Change in Late-Filing Fees! A late-filing fee will be assessed on all crop reports filed after July 16th. In the past, we've charged a basic farm fee, plus a small charge per field. For the 2007 season, we must assess a minimum fee of \$46 per FSA farm number. Since the late-fee now includes FSA travel time, along with the on-farm verification of each field, the resulting fees could be costly. So, please try to get your 2007 crop report filed before July 16th while it is still free!

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2007 Acreage Reporting continued

Prevented planting acreage, or acreage that could not be planted because of a natural disaster, should be reported to FSA within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop. Prevented planting of corn for grain dates ranges from June 8th to June 15th in Wisconsin counties. Producers should contact their local FSA office to check the final planting dates for all crops.

Failed acreage should be reported to FSA before plowing up the failed crop and replanting.

Form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report prevented or failed acreage and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. For crop losses on crops covered by the Non-insured Assistance Program (NAP), producers must contact their local FSA office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent. Producers with crop insurance should contact their local agent when losses occur and before destroying the crop.



DCP Deadline Has Been Extended

The deadline to sign-up for the 2007 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) has been extended to August 3, 2007. The extension was due to issues involving the performance of the FSA web-based computer system.

DCP contracts submitted to the FSA office after August 3 but no later than September 30th, will be assessed a late-filing fee of \$100 per farm. No 2007 DCP contracts will be accepted after September 30, 2007.

DCP Successor-in-Interest Contracts: If you've already designated your 2007 payment shares on a farm but there has since been a change in the farm's operation (such as ownerships changes, operator changes or changes in shares), you must notify our office promptly of this change but no later than September 30, 2007. Failure to obtain an updated successor-in-interest DCP contract by September 30th could result in the loss of payment for all producers on the farm in 2007.

Farm Storage Facility Loans

The Farm Storage Facility Loan Program offers producers low interest financing for the purchase of new grain storage, and drying equipment. Producers may be eligible to finance up to \$100,000 for the purchase of grain storage and drying equipment. Additional details include:

Eligible Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cribs or Bins • New and Remanufactured Oxygen Limiting Structures • Upright Bunker Type or Open Silo Structures • Commodity Handling and Drying Equipment • Renovation of Existing Structures to Increase Storage • Certain Flat Storage Structures • Electrical Equipment & Site Preparation
Ineligible Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portable Equipment • Used Structures • Structures with Useful Life Less Than 10 Years • Feed Handling or Processing Equipment • Hay Storage • Commercial Storage
Interest Rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixed Rate • Currently 4.625%
Repayment Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 Annual Installments
Maximum Loan Amount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited by Producer's Storage Need Formula • Up to 85% of Net Construction Cost • \$100,000 per Person Maximum
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loans < \$50,000 - Security Interest in Structure • Loans > \$50,000 – Real Estate Mortgage or Letter of Credit • Additional Security as Required.

Maintaining Farm Stored Grain Quality

Many producers sometimes struggle to find adequate grain storage. Overfilled grain storage bins can lead to grain quality problems.

Bins are ideally designed to hold a level volume of grain. When bins are overfilled and grain is heaped up, airflow 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 for the term of the loan.



FSA Asking for Help in Keeping Records Updated

Wisconsin county offices have diligently been requesting copies of documents that show how a producer's farming operation is set up.

The reason for these documents being requested is three fold. The documents are needed to show:



- Who the members of the entity are and their individual shares
- Who has the authority to sign on behalf of the farming operation/entity
- Any restrictions of authority in the documents that would need to be addressed.

These documents are needed for corporations, general partnerships, limited partnerships, limited liability partnerships, limited liability companies and all trusts.

The paperwork being requested includes such things as a copy of partnership papers, or corporation documents and any resolutions to the original corporation papers. This would also include the documents for LLCs or LLPs and operating agreements for these types of entities. For trusts, documentation is needed to verify who the grantor(s), beneficiaries, and trustees are.

The EZ Makes It Easy

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 and farm stored LDPs, as well as 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.



NONINSURED ASSISTANCE PROGRAM UPDATES

NAP Reporting Deadline - Producers with 2007 coverage under the Noninsured Assistance Program (NAP) on spring seeded crops, forages, small grains, winter wheat, and some perennial crops are required to report 2007 NAP crop acreage by July 16. Reports must include the crop, including: type, variety, location, producer shares, date planted, and the intended use (fresh, processed, etc.) In addition, NAP producers must also certify 2006 crop production at the same time, or prior to, reporting 2007 crop acreage. The final date to report 2006 production of NAP crops is also July 16, 2007 for most spring seeded crops.

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 completed within 15 days of the date of disaster or the date the damage becomes apparent. Prevented planting claims must be filed within 15 days of the date of the crops established final planting date

Reporting NAP Losses - You must report NAP crop losses within 15 days of the date damage occurred or 15 days from the date damage is apparent. The importance of timely reporting losses in order to insure your eligibility for benefits cannot be stressed enough. Failure to timely report losses could result in loss of benefits. Losses to your crops need to be reported after each occurrence of damage. If damage is such that the crop will not be carried to harvest, you must request an appraisal of the crop prior to destroying the crop or putting the crop to other uses.

Production Reporting For Hand Harvested Crops - NAP participants that have crops that are hand harvested and have losses, must contact their local FSA Office within 15 days after harvest is complete and before the destruction of the crop. This is so an appraisal of the remaining production can be completed. This appraisal by FSA's loss adjusters is at no cost to the NAP policy holder of hand harvested crops in years of loss or when the crop is unmarketable due to poor quality. For crops that have not suffered losses, post harvest appraisals are available for use as evidence for a crops actual production history. This is a paid for measurement service.

2007 COC Election Information

One of FSA's responsibilities is to conduct County Committee elections in an open manner that ensures accountability. County FSA Offices will be contacting local organizations representing socially disadvantaged groups and providing detailed information about the COC election process. FSA is reaching out to agricultural communities to get equitable representation on their county committees.

Groups representing socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers will be actively solicited for COC election candidates, and encouraged to fill out a nomination form (FSA-669A). Under represented farmers and producers are encouraged to step up and participate in their county's COC election process. Producers will notice posters and announcements displayed in businesses, churches, and other public places.

COC election fact sheets and nomination forms can be found online at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA> under the News & Events tab on the FSA homepage or are available from your local FSA office.

The FSA County Committee is a vital link between national USDA programs and the needs of local farmers. Minorities, female farmers and spouses are encouraged to take part in this election process. The COC election nomination period begins June 15, 2007 and ends August 1, 2007.

County Committee Advisors

In addition to the representation of the elected County Committee, producers in the majority of Wisconsin Counties are also represented by Advisors to the County Committees. The following list shows these individuals who represent their applicable county. These positions are a 1-year term, which is effective and renewed every March 1st. We wish to express our sincere appreciation to these people who represent you at the local level.

COUNTY	ADVISOR(S)
ABDI (Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, Iron)	Lou Ames
BUFFALO	June Sendelbach
CALUMET	Roberta Kestell
CHIPPEWA	Pamela Licht
COLUMBIA	Akiko Wylesky
CRAWFORD	Kim Dudenbostel
DODGE	Barb Seibel
EAU CLAIRE	Darlene Baglien
GREEN	Bobette Traul
JACKSON	Ritchie Brown, Kristin Pfaff
JUNEAU	Betty Manson
LA CROSSE	Marlane Anderson
LAFAYETTE	Alice Wang
MANITOWOC	Theresa Herrmann, Cheng Yang
MARATHON	Tina Lee and Sharon Niemann
MARINETTE	Tracy Berth
MARQUETTE / ADAMS / WAUSHARA	Enrique Soria
MONROE	Lois Andersen and Adlai J. Mann

COUNTY	ADVISOR(S)
OCONTO	Karen Fenendael
OFFV (Oneida, Florence, Forest, Vilas)	Al Milham
OUTAGAMIE	Patricia Cornelius
PEPIN	Ardyce Johnson
PIERCE	Jacki Thoen
POLK	José Trejo
RICHLAND	Fanny Bermudo
ROCK	Willie Stokes
RUSK / SAWYER	Larry Pasanen
SAINT CROIX	Txaj Chang Young
SAUK	William Quackenbush
SHEBOYGAN	Michael Willeford
TREMPEALEAU	Laurie Guza
VERNON	Sheena Schoen
WALWORTH	Susan Bellman
WAUKESHA / MILWAUKEE	Will Allen
WAUPACA	Eileen Valenzue
WOOD	Martha Lippert



County Committee Election 2007

Make a Difference: Nominate and Vote!

- June 15, 2007** Nomination period begins. Forms are available from your USDA Service Center and online, <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>
- August 1, 2007** Last day to file nomination forms at the USDA Service Center
- November 2, 2007** Ballots mailed to eligible voters
- December 3, 2007** Last day to return voted ballots to the USDA Service Center
- January 1, 2008** Elected committee members and alternates take office



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USDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

VOTE VOTE VOTE VOTE VOTE

Mark Your Calendar for the 2007 County Committee Election Open House

FSA County Offices, throughout the State, will host an "open house" on Thursday, July 19, 2007, from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm.

During this time we invite anyone interested in finding out more about the County Committee and how you can get involved to join us. Refreshments will be served.

Please plan to attend to find out how your local county committee works for you.

County Committee Meeting Dates and Times

Dates and times of local county committee meetings are available by contacting your county FSA office. Wisconsin county office phone numbers and locations can be obtained on line at:

<http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=wi&agency=fsa>

Going Organic? Our low interest Term Loans for Transition can help.

The USDA Farm Service Agency provides fixed, low interest rate loans for production agriculture. We specialize in providing credit to beginning farmers and existing operations that are reorganizing to improve profitability. This makes us a perfect fit for operations which are transitioning to organic agriculture.

We understand the financial challenge of implementing an organic farming system without immediately receiving the organic market premium. When setting loan repayment terms, our policies allow special consideration of such factors as establishing a new enterprise or developing a farm. We can finance your transition costs with a term loan featuring customized repayment schedules stretching up to 7 years.

If you are unable to obtain the credit you need on terms you can afford, we would like to talk with you. Make a call to your local Farm Service Agency office and ask them to put you in contact with their loan officer. If you need assistance locating the nearest Farm Service Agency office, we are listed in the telephone directory under USDA, or you can look it up from our national office web site: www.fsa.usda.gov.

Loans for Women and Minority Farmers

The Farm Service Agency makes direct and guaranteed loans to socially disadvantaged applicants, enabling them to buy and operate family-size farms and ranches. Funds are reserved each year specifically for these loans, but regular loan funds can also be used.

Direct loans may be made to qualified applicants by FSA for both farm operating and farm ownership purposes. Guaranteed farm loans also may be made for ownership or operating purposes, and may be made by any lending institution subject to Federal or state supervision (banks, savings and loans, and units of the Farm Credit System) and guaranteed by FSA. Some state governments also operate farm loan programs that are eligible for FSA guarantees. FSA typically guarantees 90 or 95 percent of a loan against any loss that might be incurred if the loan fails.

Persons who are primarily and directly engaged in farming and ranching on family-size operations may apply. A family-size farm is one that a family can operate and manage itself.

Socially disadvantaged loan applicants do not receive automatic approval. In addition to being members of a socially disadvantaged group, individual applicants under this program must meet all requirements for FSA's regular farm loan program assistance, including:

- Have a satisfactory history of meeting credit obligations.
- Have sufficient education; training, or at least one-year's experience in managing or operating a farm or ranch within the last five years for a direct operating loan, or, for a direct farm ownership loan, have participated in the business operation of a farm or ranch for three years;
- Be a citizen of the United States (or a legal resident alien), including Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and certain former Pacific Island Trust Territories;
- Be unable to obtain credit elsewhere at reasonable rates and terms to meet actual needs; and
- Possess legal capacity to incur loan obligations.



A socially disadvantaged person is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities. For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

Contact the FSA County Office Farm Loan Program staff for more details about this program, and other financial options.

Maintaining CRP Cover

CRP cover maintenance is the participant's responsibility and must be done according to your conservation plan. All CRP maintenance activity, such as mowing, burning and spraying, must be conducted outside the primary nesting season for wildlife and be in accordance with the conservation plan.

The nesting period begins May 15th; check your specific plan for applicable end date.

In general, CRP participants are never allowed to mow an entire field or large amounts of acreage on an annual basis. Full field mowing for generic weed control is always prohibited.

If you look at your acres and determine you have a major weed problem that threatens to take over the cover that is supposed to be on your contract, and you determine action needs to be taken during the CRP nesting period, you **must** contact the FSA office.



Continuous CRP

The Continuous Conservation Reserve Program is an environmental improvement program that allows participants the opportunity to enroll environmentally sensitive acreages in conservation practices that will reduce soil erosion, improve water and soil quality and provide wildlife habitat and food sources.

To be eligible for enrollment in the Continuous CRP, participants and acreage must meet certain requirements. Provided the eligibility requirements are met, FSA will automatically accept enrollments of acreage into Continuous CRP. Landowners may enroll in the program at any time during the year.

Included in the continuous CRP signup is an opportunity for producers to protect wellheads. Land located within 2000 feet of a public well protected by a wellhead protection plan could be eligible for continuous CRP enrollment.

For more information on Continuous CRP enrollments or local Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) availability, please contact your local FSA office.

CRP Contracts Expiring in 2007 Watch Out!

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) participants with 2007 expiring contracts need to remember that these contracts don't expire until September 30, 2007. This means that all provisions and conservation and maintenance requirements of the CRP contract must be complied with through September 30th. If you are unsure of your contract requirements, please contact your local FSA office for additional details.

CRP participants with expiring contract acres in the final year of the CRP-1, who intend to destroy cover for preparation for spring or fall-seeded crops, need pre-authorization from FSA to avoid penalty. Authorization can only be granted after a completed CRP-1G (Modification to Allow Early Preparation) is reviewed and approved by a representative of the Commodity Credit Corporation.

Haying or Grazing CRP Acreage

Certain Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage can be hayed or grazed after August 1. The participant must have written approval from the FSA Office before haying or grazing begins. Failure to obtain appropriate authorization to hay or graze CRP acreage can result in contract termination.

The participant needs to obtain a modified conservation plan to include haying or grazing requirements as determined by the NRCS. Grazing plans will specify the stocking rate for the acreage to be grazed and require that the cover not be grazed down to below 3 to 6 inches depending on the current cover.

Grazing must be completed by September 30. One crop of hay may be harvested by September 15 and bales must be removed from the acreage no later than September 30. The same acreage can NOT be hayed AND grazed. Managed haying or grazing is authorized only 1 out of every 3 years on

the same acreage and cannot be authorized until the cover is fully established.

Selling CRP Land?

If you are a current CRP contract holder and you are planning to sell part or all of your CRP acreage, please notify our office. This would include the "sale" or transfer of land as a result of a creation of a trust or living will or other entity.

We want to advise you of the procedure for transferring the contract to the new owner/operator, if that individual wants to continue with the program. Likewise, we want to inform you of the consequences for terminating a CRP contract.

Remember, your CRP agreement is a binding contract. We simply want to help you make a smooth transition concerning the transfer of the contracted acreage.

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Helping People Help the Land Wisconsin June 2007

www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov

Pat Leavenworth, State Conservationist

Check for Erosion – Keep an Eye on Grassed Waterways

Now is a good time to look at your fields and notice where you need to establish grass waterways, or where you need to repair existing ones. Waterways need to be wide enough and deep enough to carry water safely off your crop fields. A heavy rain will clearly point out where they are needed.

A grassed waterway is an area where grass is left to grow permanently to drain runoff into safe outlets, without exposing bare soil to erosion. Nearly all conservation plans will include grassed waterways. A waterway can slow the flow of water and provide a cushion of grass for the water to "ride," preventing erosion and the formation of gullies.



Keep the waterway working. Don't plant end rows that run parallel to the waterway. Use contour strip-cropping to keep crop rows perpendicular to the waterway. When operating tillage equipment, raise the implement out of the ground, then cross the waterway and enter the field on the other side staying on the contour. Crossing that way helps establish patterns that direct runoff into the waterway. When spraying, shut the sprayer off before crossing the waterway. If you hire commercial applicators, make sure they follow this process as well.

Don't "nibble" at the edges of a waterway. Lift the tillage equipment to keep the proper width with every tillage pass. A waterway is not a thoroughfare--tire tracks and livestock hooves can start gully formation.

Remember, keep ephemeral or gully erosion on cropland under control to stay in compliance for federal farm programs.

Getting the Most From Your Program Contract

If you have a program contract with NRCS to do conservation work through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), or Conservation Security Program (CSP), here are some tips to be sure your project is successful and the contract is completed:

- You, the contract holder, are responsible to complete the practices as scheduled, according to the Conservation Plan of Operations. If the practice cannot be completed as planned, contact the NRCS office to re-schedule it.
- You are responsible for completing the items on the contract according to NRCS standards and specifications. If the practices are not completed or do not meet standards and specifications, you can be held financially responsible, which may include interest and other penalties.
- Be sure to inform NRCS when the practice is completed. Payments can't be made until this is done.
- If the contract is not with an individual but with a partnership or other entity, you need to supply documentation as to who has the Power of Attorney to legally sign for the business, partnership, or other entity.
- Payments are always electronically deposited, so participants must be willing to supply accurate banking information and notify NRCS of any changes.
- Program contracts can be quite lengthy, up to ten years, and can also include maintenance requirements that may last for several years after the practice is completed.
- If you are not sure of your responsibilities, or if your circumstances change so that you are unable to complete the practices on the contract check with NRCS.

Demand is high for conservation programs. Once a contract is signed, those dollars are set aside for that contract, and no longer available to other farmers who applied but weren't able to be funded.

If you notice signs of erosion and small gullies forming in your fields, now is the time to start planning. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) can help eligible landowners to install or repair grassed waterways. Contact your local NRCS office for assistance.



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DATES TO REMEMBER

June 15	Nomination period begins for 2007 COC election
July 4	Offices closed for Fourth of July Holiday
July 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final date to complete a free 2007 crop acreage report - 2006 NAP production reporting deadline
July 19	Statewide County Committee Open House
August 1	Last day to file County Committee nomination form with FSA
August 3	Final application date for 2007 DCP at no cost
September 30	Final date to enroll in 2007 DCP
Continuous	Farm Storage Facility Loans
Continuous	Conservation Reserve Program continuous signup

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (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, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.