

PROGRAM NEWSLETTER
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
ALPENA -ALCONA-MONTMORENCY COUNTIES

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NEWSLETTER NO. 2

JULY, 2008

EVENTS & DEADLINES

- July 4, 2008 – Independence Day Holiday
- July 18, 2008 – Livestock Compensation Program
- August 1, 2008 – Return nomination petitions
- August 15, 2008 - To report planted wheat
- August 15, 2008 – To report all other planted crops

OFFICE PERSONNEL

Paul J. Anstead – County Executive Director
Mack Francoeur – Farm Loan Manager
Desiree Compeau – Program Technician – FLP
Michelle Katona – Program Technician – FP
Janet Marwede – Program Technician - FP
Tom Hoppe – Field Assistant

TOPICS THIS ISSUE

- Lloyd Parks Retires
- Farm Loan Manager
- Crop Acreage Reporting
- County Committee Elections
- Livestock Compensation Program
- Payment Limitation and Eligibility
- Federal Crop Insurance Program Integrity
- Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation Compliance
- USDA Online Services

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Special accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required please call Paul Anstead at 989-356-3596.

LLOYD PARKS RETIRES

Lloyd Parks retired as Farm Loan Manager of the Alpena Farm Service Agency. Lloyd's career started with the FmHA and then he assumed the duties of Farm Loan Manager with Farm Service Agency. We thank Lloyd for serving the producers of Northeast Michigan for 20 years, with his expertise in agriculture and financial management. We wish Lloyd a joyful and healthy retirement.



FARM LOAN MANAGER

We welcome Mack Francoeur to the Alpena Farm Service Agency. Mack assumed the duties of Farm Loan Manager on June 8, 2008. Mack has 17 years of experience working with Farm Loan Programs. Mack was detailed to Alpena from Hillsdale County before Lloyd retired to become familiar with the loan portfolio. Mack has extensive experience in agriculture and financial management to serve producers of Northeast Michigan. When you are in the Alpena FSA Office, welcome Mack to the Alpena area.

CROP ACREAGE REPORTING

Producers are required to file a FSA-578, Report of Acreage, to certify reported acres by the final reporting date listed below to be eligible for the following benefits. Because of the delay in announcing the provisions of the 2008 Farm Bill and extreme weather conditions the crop reporting date for 2008 crops has been extended until August 15, 2008.



BENEFIT

REQUIREMENT

| | |
|--|---|
| Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program Payments..... | All crops and cropland must be reported. |
| Commodity Loans & Loan Deficiency Payments..... | Acreage of the crops for which loans & LDP's will be requested. |
| Conservation Reserve Program.(CRP)..... | CRP acreage according to CRP-1 Appendix. |
| Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)..... | Crops for which NAP benefits are requested. |

ACREAGE REPORTING DATES

| | |
|--|--|
| Fall Seeded Small Grains (Wheat)..... | August 15. |
| Ornamental Nursery, Aquaculture (NAP)..... | Sept. 30 of prior year. |
| Honey (NAP).... | Jan. 2 or within 30 days of when the bees are acquired or brought into the county. |
| Hay Crops | August 15 |
| Maple Sap (NAP)..... | February 1 |
| All Other Crops..... | August 15 |

ALL PREVENTED PLANTED CROPS OR CROPS AFFECTED BY A WEATHER RELATED CONDITION WHICH AFFECT THE YIELD MUST BE REPORTED PRIOR TO THE DISPOSITION OF THE CROP ACREAGE.

Please call for an appointment to certify your crop acreage as soon as your planting is completed.

COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTIONS



Nominations are being solicited for the Alpena-Alcona-Montmorency FSA County Committee Elections. The FSA County Committee is composed of five members, elected by producers for three year terms, to represent producers from the five Local Administrative Areas (LAA). This year elections will be held in Local Administrative Area # 5, which is composed of the townships of Haynes, Gustin, Harrisville, Mikado, and Greenbush of Alcona County. Nominations are being accepted now through August 1, 2008 for eligible candidates. Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters by November 3, 2008 and must be returned by December 1, 2008.

The farmer elected County FSA Committee is a vital link in the effective administration of farm programs within your county. The Committee is responsible for carrying out programs in full accordance with the regulations, national and state policies, procedures, and instructions. To ensure farmer understanding and wide program participation, committees must see that County Office operations are farmer oriented and that farmers receive timely and quality service.

To be eligible to vote and to hold office, a person shall be of legal voting age and have an interest in a farm or ranch as an owner, operator, or sharecropper, and be eligible to participate in any FSA program. A person must reside in the LAA to hold a position on the County Committee.

All eligible persons, especially persons of minority groups and females, are encouraged to check with the County Office to be sure your name is on the eligible voters list. Please consider submitting your name as a candidate by completing a nomination petition, if you are an eligible candidate of LAA # 5. Nomination petitions are available in the County Office and other COC election information is also available at the following website:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/publications/elections/>

Foreign Buyers Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holding to the Secretary of Agriculture. Foreign persons who have purchased or sold 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.

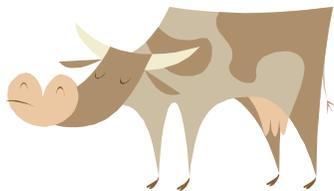
DCP SIGNUP BEGINS!!!

Signup is underway for the 2008 DCP program. Producer's can visit their local FSA office or sign-up online. They can choose payment options, assign crop shares and sign and submit their contracts from any computer with Internet access.

For 2008, eligible producers may request to receive an advance payment of 22 percent of the direct payment for each commodity associated with the farm. Advance payments will be issued as soon as practical after enrollment. Final direct payments will be issued after October 1, 2008.

Producers with base acreage 10 acres or less may not be eligible to participate in the DCP program. Please contact the local FSA office for details. Call the office today and make an appointment to sign-up. Final Date to Sign-up is September 30th, 2008.

LIVESTOCK COMPENSATION PROGRAM



The Livestock Compensation Program (LCP) has been authorized to provide assistance to livestock producers who suffered increased feed costs and pasture losses because of drought conditions in 2005, 2006, or 2007. The initial legislation covered pasture losses that occurred from January 1, 2005 to February 28, 2007. Recent legislation extended the pasture loss date to December 31, 2007. Producers in a county are eligible if the County had a Secretarial disaster designation for drought or contiguous to a county with a

designation. Producers in Alpena and Montmorency counties are eligible for LCP in 2005, 2006, or 2007. Producers in Alcona County are eligible for LCP in 2007. Producers must establish the type and acres of eligible pasture and the percent of pasture loss suffered in the year they wish to apply. Producers must also establish the number of eligible livestock owned on April 1, 2005 for 2005, June 1, 2006 for 2006, or April 1, 2007 for 2007. Eligible livestock are livestock maintained for commercial use as part of a farming operation and physically located in the disaster county on the beginning date of the disaster period as listed above. The eligible livestock must be going to graze the pasture acres where the loss occurred. Applications are being accepted from eligible livestock producers who suffered pasture loss or increased feed costs due to the drought conditions.

The deadline for signup is July 18, 2008.

PAYMENT LIMITATION AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Payment limitation and payment eligibility determinations are required to be made for most FSA programs before program benefits may be provided. The producer will remain ineligible until all required forms for the specific farming operation are provided to the FSA County office. Determinations are based on the facts as submitted by the producer. As a program participant, you are responsible for promptly notifying the FSA County office of any change in the farming operation that would affect a "person", "actively engaged in farming", cash rent tenant, or foreign person determination. Any unrevealed circumstances could require the application of a more restrictive rule. Producers who are determined as "NOT ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN FARMING" will be ineligible for any payment or benefit requiring a determination of "actively engaged in farming". Spouses may be considered a separate "person" if they request to be separate and meet the requirements to be considered separate "persons".



FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE PROGRAM INTEGRITY

Congress passed the Agricultural Risk Protection Act 2000 which requires the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Risk Management Agency (RMA) to coordinate a plan to identify, address, and reconcile discrepancies of all relevant producer-derived information, and to coordinate a monitoring program, which includes fact finding relative to allegations of program fraud, waste, and abuse.

To meet the requirements of the 2000 Act:

- FSA will be assisting RMA and insurance providers in monitoring crop conditions throughout the growing season.
- FSA will refer all suspected cases of fraud, waste and abuse about the Federal Crop Insurance Program to RMA.
- Producers may report suspected cases of fraud, waste and abuse to their local County Office, RMA, or OIG.
- FSA will assist RMA with auditing claims.

Producers with crop insurance should report the acreage of their crops to the FSA office **first**, and then provide this acreage information to their crop insurance agent in order to reduce acreage discrepancies.

Crop Disaster Program

CDP has been expanded to provide benefits for losses suffered in 2005, 2006, or 2007. Producers must choose only one year to receive benefits. Only producers who purchased crop insurance or Non Insured Assistance Program coverage for the year of loss will be eligible for CDP benefits. Losses must have exceeded 35%. The payment rate is set at 42% of normal price. Producers who have already received benefits for 2005 or 2006 can file an application for 2007 losses. If losses were greater in 2007 additional benefits will be paid.

The CDP now provides benefits to farmers who suffered *quality* losses (as well as quantity losses) from natural disaster and related conditions to 2005, 2006 or 2007 crops. Contact the office for further details.

HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND AND WETLAND CONSERVATION COMPLIANCE

Operators are reminded 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 you plowed the ground to find out you are out of compliance. Also, it is very important that you contact our office before modifying (tiling, draining, dredging, filling 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.

USDA ONLINE SERVICES

USDA Agencies (FSA, NRCS, RD) have available online service on the World Wide Web. The address of the web site is <http://www.sc.egov.usda.gov>. The web site features information such as forms (eForms), fact sheets, LDP rates, customer statements, and much more. Additional options are available to provide on-line service for applying for program benefits. To access these secured applications, a user id and password must be obtained. All producers with internet access are encouraged to obtain an eAuthentication Level 2 account. Contact the FSA office for further details. Also available is the FSA web site where more information about FSA programs can be obtained. The address is www.fsa.usda.gov.

