



**USDA Service Center  
Berrien County FSA**  
3334 Edgewood  
Berrien Springs, MI  
49103

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(269) 471-3773 (fax)  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/)

**Hours**  
Monday – Friday  
8:00 am – 4:30 pm

**County Committee**  
Calvin Gnodtke  
Mary Wagner  
Neal Kreitner

**Farm  
Program Technicians**  
Barb Dumke, PT  
Sue Kraklau, PT  
Nova Little, PT  
Marquita Sommer, PT  
Kathryn Warmbein, PT

**Farm Loan  
Program Technician**  
Delores Whitson, PT

**Farm Loan Officer**  
Paul Wagner

**Farm Loan Manager**  
William Hogan

**County Executive  
Director**  
Lloyd B. Beebe



May 2008

## **BERRIEN COUNTY FSA NEWSLETTER**

### ***SAFE***

#### **State Acres For wildlife Enhancement**

There are two new Continuous Conservation Reserve Program projects planned for Michigan. Both of these projects are designed to address high priority state and regional wildlife objectives. These projects target environmentally sensitive land and establish high value conservation practices. “Michigan Diverse Grassland SAFE” and “Michigan Native Pollinators SAFE” are the two practices. Farm land in Berrien County may be eligible for the “Michigan Native Pollinators SAFE”. This project involves practices which provide diverse sources of nectar and pollen along with bare soil for ground nesting pollinators. Bees, butterflies, and moths will benefit from these practices.

Signups for this project should be available in ***JULY***.

Anyone interested in this practice please contact the office in **JULY 2008**.

### ***County Committee Nominations & Election***

Nominations for candidates to run for the FSA County Committee election will be accepted from June 15, 2008 - August 1, 2008. This committee represents producers in the local Administrative Area. To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign nomination form FSA-669A. This form is available at USDA Service Centers and online at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

The current County Committee position up for election is in Local Administrative Area 3. This includes the following Townships; Chikaming, Weesaw, Buchanan, New Buffalo, Three Oaks, Galien & Bertrand Townships.

**Any questions please contact  
the FSA Berrien Service Center**

### **2007 COMMITTEE ELECTION RESULTS**

Neal Kreitner was elected as a new member of the FSA County Office Committee. Neal is looking forward to serving Berrien County and its producers. Neal has over 22 years of government service. He has lived in Bainbridge for 41 years and produces fruits and vegetables; on farmland that has been in his family since 1859. ***Welcome aboard Neal !!***

## **CROP CERTIFICATION**

Reporting the crop acreage to FSA is an annual requirement. Filing an accurate and timely report for all crop acreage and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of FSA programs. All cropland must be reported to receive benefits from Direct and Counter-cyclical Programs, Marketing assistance loans and Loan Deficiency Payments.

Crop reports (form-FSA-578) must account for all cropland on a farm whether cropped or idle. Producers are required to file reports by the following dates.

June 30<sup>th</sup> ---- fall seeded small grains

July 15<sup>th</sup> ----- All other crops.

**Appointments for all crop sign-ups are necessary for the efficient use of the producer and staff time.**



## **PREVENTED PLANTINGS**

Prevented plantings must be reported no later than 15 days after the final plant date.

## **FAILED ACREAGE**

All failed acreage must be reported before disposition of the crop. The producer must be able to establish to the satisfaction of the county committee that the crop failed and was prevented from replanting due to natural disaster conditions.

## **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 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 Paul Wagner, Farm Loan Officer, as well as questions concerning maximum loan amounts, rates, term and use of proceeds.



## **Grain Disposal**

In order to dispose of grain that is under loan, FSA county office approval is required before any type of disposal is allowed.

If the grain is to be sold the buyer and date of the delivery must be approved first. If grain is disposed of without these approvals, it is considered an unauthorized disposition. This is a violation that can result in financial penalties and the producer's name being placed on loan violation list for a period of at least 2 years. **ALWAYS CONTACT THE OFFICE BEFORE GRAIN IS SOLD OR DISPOSED OF IN ANY MANNER!**

## **Farm Record Changes**

**If you have purchased or sold land, leased additional land or changed tenants, please notify the FSA office so farm records may be updated.**

**FOR LAND PURCHASED-**

- A copy of the deed is required
- All landowners must furnish their tax ID # if they are enrolling in a program.

## Special Accommodations

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities or handicaps. If accommodations are required please contact the FSA office.



## SIGNATURE AUTHORITY REQUIREMENT

Signature authority must be on file with the county office before anyone can sign any program or related documents for another person. Producers can present original documents which gave them signature authority; corporate charters, bylaws, court orders of appointments, trust agreement, last will and testament or articles of partnership.

To grant signature authority to another individual or entity, FSA-211 Power of Attorney may also be completed.

Spouses may sign on behalf of each other for many FSA and CCC programs in which either have an interest; unless written notification denying spouse this right has been provided to county FSA office.

Commodity loans, Farm loan programs, and Loan Deficiency Program do not apply to this procedure. Spouses must have a FSA-211 on file to sign commodity loan documents or loan deficiency applications 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.

Producers need to contact the county office for specific signature authority needs.



## ***CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES***

*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, growing or harvesting of prohibited plants. Plants include marijuana, opium poppies, and other drug producing plants.*

## **LOANS AVAILABLE FOR BEGINNING FARMERS, AND SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS**

FSA is authorized to assist beginning farmers and or 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 then 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 median size.

Each member of an entity must meet the eligibility requirements. Loan approval is not guaranteed. Socially disadvantaged groups are Women, Hispanics, American Indians, African Americans, Asians, and Pacific Islanders.

## **\$ BANKING ACCOUNT \$ \$ \$ CHANGES \$ \$**

All FSA payments are required to be electronically submitted into the producer's bank account. In order for payments to be made current banking institution information must be accurate. Payments can be delayed if there have been changes in account or routing numbers. **Please notify the FSA office of any changes in your banking institution information.**

Berrien Co. FSA Office  
3334 Edgewood Ct.  
Berrien Springs, MI 49103



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## Thinking of Tiling or Clearing land?

Don't forget the Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Provisions. Bringing new land into production by **clearing trees, improving drainage by tiling or dredging are potential violations of the HEL/WC rules.** Before you begin any land conversion project, please come into the county office to file form AD-1026. Natural Resources Conservation Service will make an evaluation of your land to determine how to manage the wet areas of your land most efficiently. Checking ahead of time will help keep you eligible for USDA benefits.

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Berrien County has a new County Executive Director, Lloyd B. Beebe. Lloyd is a Michigan native from the town of Gladwin. Lloyd is married and has four children. His wife and children still reside in Gladwin. An MSU graduate in Crop & Soils; he currently has a small herd of registered Hereford cows. He sells breeding stock and freezer beef. He is looking forward to working with the Berrien County Committee, Producers and FSA Office Professionals. Please stop into the office and say Hi.



Office Closed: May 26, 2008

**Memorial Day**

Office Closed: July 4, 2008

**Independence Day**

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