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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Jackson FSA News Brief

Jackson County
USDA Service Center

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Hours
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8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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2008 Annual Direct & Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) Information

Sign up for the 2008 DCP began June 25, 2008, and will run through September 30, 2008. The 2008 Farm Bill provides a continuation of the DCP program for 2008. The base acres that were in effect in 2007 will be in effect for 2008 and payments will be computed on 85% of the base acres.

The Direct payment rates are:

- Corn - \$.28/bu.
- Soybeans - \$.44/bu
- Wheat - \$.52/bu

One change is that the new Farm Bill prohibits direct payments to farms if the total of base acres is 10 acres or less, unless the farm is wholly owned by a socially disadvantaged farmer or limited resource farmer.

ALL CONTRACTS MUST BE SIGNED BY SEPTEMBER 30, 2008. PLEASE CALL TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT.

Prior to sign-up:

- Report any farm changes - report any farming operation changes so that we can keep your record current. This includes changes in land ownership or operators.
- If the land in your operation hasn't changed, do you have a signed lease from the landowner?
- A signed rental agreement or the landowner's signature on the DCP Contract is required.
- All farmers who produce a crop on the base acres are entitled to share in the DCP payment. Landowners who do not have an interest and risk in the crop are not eligible to receive a DCP payment.

- Plan to update your payment limitation documents and other program eligibility records if there have been any changes.
- Reconstitutions – changes that require farm reconstitutions should be reported as soon as possible so we can update your records. Farm divisions should be considered when you do not have a firm lease. We cannot enroll a farm with changes pending, so please let us know of your changes well before your appointment to sign up. Any reconstitutions filed after August 1, 2008, will be completed for the 2009 crop year.

Payment Limitation and Payment Eligibility

- For 2008 programs, all current rules and procedures are applicable
- In 2009 average Adjusted Gross Income, AGI limits have changed. Restrictions are as follows:
 - Non Farm AGI greater than \$500,000 – no eligibility for price support or DCP
 - Farm AGI greater than \$750,000 – no eligibility for direct payments for DCP
 - If AGI is greater than \$1 million - no eligibility for conservation programs unless 66.66% if derived from farming, ranching, or forestry operations
 - Non Farm AGI greater than \$1 million- no eligibility for conservation program benefits
- Payment Limitation Controls will be established in 2009 which will credit individuals and entities with both the amount of payments they receive directly and also the amount they are considered to have received indirectly by holding an interest in an entity receiving payment.



Appointments Recommended

We recommend you call to make an appointment before coming to the office to conduct business. This will enable us to prepare any necessary paperwork and research issues before your appointment. We realize how important your time is, and this will reduce the amount of time that you have to wait in the office.



Preventing Fraud

The Farm Service Agency supports the Risk Management Agency in the prevention of fraud, waste and abuse of the Federal Crop Insurance Program. FSA has been, and will continue to, assist RMA and insurance providers by monitoring crop conditions throughout the growing season. FSA will continue to refer all suspected cases of fraud, waste and abuse directly to RMA. Producers can report suspected cases to the county office staff, the RMA office, or the Office of the Inspector General.

Supplemental Disaster Assistance Programs for 2008

ALL PLEASE TAKE NOTE!!! The 2008 Farm Bill appropriated for Supplemental Disaster Programs

- SURE – Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments
- Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP)
- Tree Assistance Program (TAP)
- Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm Raised Fish (ELAP)
- Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)

For producers to be eligible they must purchase at least the CAT level of crop insurance for all insurable crops and/or NAP coverage for non-insurable crops on **all crops in all counties**. Sales closing dates have passed for 2008. However, **farmers** may obtain a waiver for 2008 only; by paying an administrative fee of \$100 per crop not to exceed \$300 for the county or \$900 total for all counties. This **BUY-IN** fee is non-refundable and must be paid no later than **September 16, 2008**.

Contact the office for more details. Please note all crops in all counties must be waived or covered to qualify for 2008 assistance.

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. **CONSERVATION COMPLIANCE**-Highly erodible land (HEL) compliance is still required to earn program benefits. This includes payments under the Direct & Counter-Cyclical Program, Conservation Reserve Program, Loan deficiency payments, farm loan program, crop insurance and many other USDA programs. Farms with HEL soils need to be aware of tillage, crop residue, and rotation requirements spelled out in conservation plans. Contact NRCS at 789-7716, ext. 3.

Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

Policy holders are reminded that they must report crop losses within 15 days of the date disaster occurs or the date crop damage becomes apparent by filing a "Notice of Loss" (FSA 576) with FSA office. Crops adversely affected due to weather extremes need to be documented with an in-field inspection and a report of harvest decision. Any portion of the crop plantings not taken to harvest requires an appraisal prior to destruction or abandonment. All NAP policy holders are required to file crop acreage report for all covered crops.

Producers must meet all program requirements in order to take advantage of NAP assistance in the event of a disaster. Specifically policy holders also must request payments by application closing date for the covered crop following the year in which the loss occurred, accurately report the acreage and shares for all crops potentially eligible for NAP certify crop production history, and report current crop year production before required deadline.

Remember, crop yields from previous years need to be submitted in order to establish actual production history (APH).

New 2009 NAP rates will increase to \$250.00 per crop, \$750.00 per county, and \$1,875.00 per producer for all counties.

Late application provisions are in place to help accommodate NAP sales closing deadline dates for 2009 crops with 2008 sales closing dates. NAP application closing dates for fall seeded crops, grass, apples, asparagus, cherries, grapes, honey, plums, peaches, strawberries, etc. have been extended to December 1, 2008, for the 2009 crop year coverage. Please contact this office for additional information.

2008 WOOL/MOHAIR/UNSHORN PELTS

The final loan availability date to request a marketing assistance loan or LDP for wool, mohair and unshorn pelts is January 31, 2009, of the year following the year in which the commodity is sheared or the unshorn lamb is slaughtered.

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.



Bank Account Changes

All FSA payments are to be made by direct deposit unless there is a financial hardship to prevent it. Producers need to notify us when accounts change to prevent a delay in payments.

New Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Practice

The new practice is called **Diverse Grassland Planting** (CP38E). The practice is available in just 18 counties in Michigan. Eligible Jackson County landowners can sign up for this practice at any time, it does not require a specific sign-up period.

Diverse grasslands and oak savannas have been declining drastically in Michigan over the past 150 years. In fact, native grasslands such as savannas are now considered one of the most threatened plant communities in Michigan. Grasslands are important to a wide variety of wildlife species, including both game and non-game species. With the support of CRP, financial assistance is now available to landowners who wish to improve the wildlife diversity of their property by restoring these unique habitats. Diverse grasslands of short grass prairies and tall grass prairies provide a variety of wildlife habitat for birds, mammals and insects. Grasslands are important to a variety of wildlife species by providing food and cover such as winter/thermal cover, nesting habitat and protective cover for rearing of that year's young.

Eligibility- Landowners and/or producers who have cropland that is either coming out of an existing CRP contract, or ground planted to cash crops 4 out of 6 years from 1996 to 2001, are eligible (*note: the cropping history will be changed to 4 of 6 years between 2002 and 2007 as of October 1, 2008*). Also, applicants must prove ownership for at least 12 months prior to the application.



Payments available:

- Up to 100% cost share for preparation and establishment of the diverse grasslands.
- A one-time signing bonus of \$100 - \$150 per acre.
- Annual rental payments for enrolled acres (based on 3 predominant soil types)

Watch Your Mail for New Color Maps!

We are in the process of mailing new maps of the farms you own or operate. We are making a new set of computer-generated maps for farms containing cropland acres. We have reviewed all field boundary lines on aerial imagery taken in the 1990's and recorded this information in the computer. You will be receiving updated computer generated maps for the farms you reported to us as currently being farmed.

These maps will replace old paper maps used for all FSA business in the 2009 program year. Computer based mapping will help us provide higher quality imagery and more accurate acreage determinations. The potential changes to boundary lines and resulting acreage will affect your program participation. The process of converting to a Geographic Information System (GIS) based mapping system has taken your FSA staff years to complete.

Now we need your help to ensure that field boundaries are in the right locations. Please review all of your boundaries for accuracy. If you identify fields that are incorrect on the maps, or you did not get maps for land that you own or operate, please contact the office within thirty days of receipt and in all cases no later than September 30, 2008.

Although the letter enclosed with the map is not a current date, the mapping information is a reflection of FSA current file land classification and field boundaries of your farm. Jackson FSA will honor notification boundaries disputes through Sept. 30, 2008. If you have sold property, acquired new farmland, taken ground out of production for buildings, or no longer farm an area, please report this immediately. If the Jackson FSA Office does not hear from you, we will consider the field boundaries outlined in yellow as correct and use the information for USDA/FSA program purposes beginning in the program year 2009.

The FSA staff thanks you for your patience and cooperation throughout the process. Please review your maps and report corrections no later than September 30, 2008 to the FSA office.



SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact Tamela Smith at (517) 789-7716, ext. 201 by phone or in person.

Crop Disaster Program 2005-2007

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 the 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.

Note: Only crops covered by an insurance or NAP policy are eligible

September 1	Office Closed – Labor Day
September 16	Final date to purchase buy-in for FCIC or NAP crops
September 30	Must have 1 authorized signature on a 2008 DCP Contract
Oct. 14-16	Limited staff due to Farm Bill Training
October 15	Final date to submit landowner signatures or leases for DCP Program
Continues	CRP-SAFE
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve Program
Continues	Farm Storage/Facility Loan
October 13	Office Closed – Columbus Day

**PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE IF
YOU ARE UNSURE OF YOUR
PARTICIPATION STATUS IN ANY
PROGRAM! Phone: 789-7716, ext. 2**

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To file a complaint of Discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.