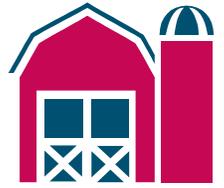




# FARM SERVICE AGENCY NEWSLETTER

January 2008



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Farm and Foreign  
Agricultural  
Services

Farm Service  
Agency

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Service Center  
50 E Miller Rd.  
Sandusky, MI  
48471-9412  
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FAX:  
810-648-4670

Hours:  
8:00 – 4:30

County Committee:  
Mary Nichol, Chair  
Mike Bender, Vice  
Chair  
Mark Stone, Member

Farm Programs:  
Rosemarie Gallagher  
Sharon Rockwell  
Carol Nelson  
Dorann Miller  
Brenda Nichol  
Sherri Sadro  
Laura Domagalski  
Walter Bonczar  
Ken Janowiak

Farm Loans:  
Steve Craig  
Wendy Honoway  
Felicia Schulte

www.usda.gov

## COMMITTEE MEMBER ELECTED

Congratulations to Mike Bender of Croswell! Mike was re-elected to represent farmers from Flynn, Elk, Buel, Lexington, Maple Valley, Speaker, Fremont & Worth Townships on the County Committee. This is Mike's second term as a County Committee member.



## RETIREMENT OPEN HOUSE ANNOUNCED

Please join us in wishing Sharon Rockwell good wishes in her upcoming retirement. An open house is planned for **Wednesday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>** from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm at our office. After 31 years of service with the Agency, Sharon has announced she will be retiring effective February 1, 2008. Refreshments to be served.



## eGOV TRAINING SESSION

eGOV is the ability to log on thru the internet and have access to your information with USDA 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. An eGOV training session is planned for **Friday, January 25<sup>th</sup> 10:00-11:30 am** at the Bean Seller coffee house located at 15 S. Elk St. in Sandusky. The Bean Seller coffee house provides wireless internet service at no charge and those interested participants are encouraged to bring their own lap tops for the training. We encourage you to have an eAuth Level 2 account with access to your information online prior to the meeting. You can visit the office to establish your Level 2 account, but please do so 4 days prior to the meeting. If you have a Level 2 account, be sure to bring your login and password for access during the session. Please contact the office if you are interested in attending this training session as space is limited.



## REPORT OF PAYMENTS TO PRODUCERS

A summary of all earned payments and/or refunds during the previous calendar year will be mailed to producers during the last week of January. Form CCC 1099-G will be mailed from Kansas City, MO (KCMO). Those participants with Level 2 access can obtain this information on-line thru the financial services function. Visit <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/> and click on the tab at the top for online services, then click on FSA producers Financial Inquiries in the column on the right.

## NEW FARM BILL

There still is no new farm bill for the 2008 crop year at this time. Until a Farm Bill is passed there is no signup for the Previous Farm Bill DCP Contracts, which also mean no advance payments. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008, signed into law on 12/26/07, provides a continuation of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) authority after 12/31/07, until 3/15/08. Based on that authority our office may continue to accept offers, and the County Committee may continue approving contracts, for all types of CRP contracts including Continuous CRP (CCRP), such as filter strips, grass waterways, shallow wildlife ponds.

## NEW INFO ON 2007 CROP YEAR DISASTER PROGRAM

The President signed into law on December 26, 2007 an extension to include all crop year 2007 losses. Participants must have had crop insurance and a quantity loss of 35% to qualify. You may have already been into the office and applied for your 2007 wheat losses, but now need to come back in for any corn, soybean, sugar beet or dry bean losses you may have suffered in crop year 2007!

## 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 the county FSA in person or by phone.



### **FOREIGN BUYERS NOTIFICATION**

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA. Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural 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. County government offices, realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

### **DAIRY DISASTER**

Eligible dairy producers can sign up for the Dairy Disaster Assistance Payment (DDAP-III) program beginning Monday, December 3, 2007. The DDAP-III program will provide benefits to eligible dairy producers who suffered dairy production losses as a result of natural disasters occurring between January 1, 2005, and December 31, 2007.

Production losses are eligible losses under the DDAP-III program. Production losses must be directly associated to the loss conditions identified in the declaration or designation during the eligible period, and be previously uncompensated by disaster payments from previous dairy disaster assistance payment programs.

The program provides \$16 million in benefits to dairy producers for production losses that resulted from lost herds, dumped milk when plants were closed or containment equipment damaged by a natural disaster. Additionally, power outages, fuel shortages, and infrastructure damage may have temporarily interrupted the flow of dairy products to markets.

USDA will calculate payments to eligible producers by multiplying the eligible pounds by the average price received for commercial milk production in the affected areas during the disaster for 2005, 2006 and 2007 calendar years. If the total amount of funding is insufficient to compensate eligible producers for losses, then USDA will pay losses at two levels in an effort to more equitably distribute the limited funds and maximize the effectiveness of the program. For more information, a fact sheet is posted online at <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov>.



### **DISASTER LOANS AVAILABLE DUE TO DROUGHT CONDITIONS**

As a result of the drought conditions experienced in Sanilac County in 2007, the Farm Service Agency has low interest rate loans available for qualified applicants. Several requirements must be met to qualify, including the inability to get credit at reasonable rates and terms from another lender and documentation that you suffered a 30% production loss due to the drought. The loans are at 3.75% and can have a term from 1 to 20 years depending on the uses of the loan and the security available. Deadline to apply is July 7, 2008 at the local FSA office.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information ( Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

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.