



November 2008

SANILAC FSA County Office News

FARM SERVICE AGENCY

USDA Service Center

Sanilac County FSA
50 E Miller Rd
Sandusky, MI 48471
810-648-2998 (phone)
810-648-4670 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/mi

Hours
Monday – Friday
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Website
www.fsa.usda.gov

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

County Executive Director
Rosemarie Gallagher

Farm Loan Manager
Steve Craig

Office Staff
Amy Brown
Laura Domagalski
Wendy Honoway
Dorann Miller
Carol Nelson
Brenda Nichol
Sherri Sadro
Felicia Schulte

Walter Bonczar
Ken Janowiak



Voting for County Committee Begins

Ballots for this year’s county committee election were mailed to eligible voters on November 3, 2008. This year’s election is for LAA 1 which includes the townships of Greenleaf; Austin; Minden; Forester; Evergreen; Argyle; Wheatland and Marion. Voters must complete their ballots and return them to the office by the close of business on **December 1, 2008**. If mailed, ballots must be post-marked by midnight December 1st. Eligible voters in LAA 1 who have not received a ballot should contact the FSA county office staff.

Voter Requirements Persons meeting requirements in **1 and 2, or 3**, below, is eligible to vote: *and*

1. Eligible to participate in any FSA program that is provided by law, regardless of the status of funding.
2. Not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations on an entire farm; *or*
3. Be of legal voting age and have an interest in a farm or ranch as either of the following: an owner, operator, tenant or sharecropper, *or* a partner in a general partnership or member of a joint venture that has an interest in a farm as an owner, operator, tenant or sharecropper;

Discrimination Prohibited No person shall be denied the right to vote because of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital or family status.

EXTENDING THE 2008 DCP SIGN-UP DEADLINE FOR FARMS WITH 10.0 OR LESS BASE ACRES

On October 13, 2008 H.R. 6849 was enacted and provides for an extension of the 2008 DCP enrollment deadline for farms with 10.0 base acres or less covered commodities not previously enrolled. Producers on farms with 10.0 base acres or less **have until November 26, 2008** to initiate and complete enrollment of a farm for 2008 DCP. H.R. 6849 **does not extend** the DCP sign-up deadline for farms **with greater than 10.0 base acres**.

With the extension of the 2008 DCP enrollment deadline for farms with 10.0 base acres or less to Nov. 26, 2008, late filed crop acreage report requirement and fees will be waived on farms with 10.0 base acres or less if filed **by COB, December 1, 2008**. This **does not waive** late filed crop acreage report requirements or fees for farms **with greater than 10.0 base acres**.

Visit your local FSA office, if you are interested in signing-up quickly.

Selling Land

If you’re planning to sell farmland, there may be some program consequences you should be aware of. For example, if you’re planning to sell land that’s enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program, the buyer must agree to continue the enrollment. If the buyer doesn’t want to continue the CRP contract, you might have to refund all of the payments you’ve received to date.

Reviewing program implications with your local Farm Service Agency staff before completing a sale of farmland is always a prudent precaution.



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.

SURE Online Calculator

The 2008 Farm Bill includes a new disaster program known as the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) Program. For your convenience, FSA has placed a SURE calculator on its Web site at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/fbapp?area=home&subject=landing&topic=landing>.

The calculator and instructions can be easily downloaded. Once the download is made, you will be able to calculate your estimated SURE Guarantee, estimated Expected Revenue, estimated Farm Revenue and estimated SURE payment.

The calculator is a tool to help with calculations for SURE, it is not the approved software to compute and does not provide actual payment information.

By using the calculator, producers and others may begin familiarizing themselves with SURE calculations which allows them to run various scenarios based on basic levels of insurance coverage versus buy up levels of insurance coverage. It is important to note that this calculator only addresses yield based crops and does not address value loss crops or those plans of insurance that are revenue based. It does not include calculations for situations such as prevented planting, first crop-second crop, or other scenarios.

Note, FSA reminds users that the calculator and instructions are for informational purposes only. This calculator in no way provides exact FSA payments under SURE.



NAP Coverage Closing Date is December 1st

NAP was designed to reduce financial losses that occur when natural disasters cause a catastrophic loss of production or prevented planting of an eligible crop by providing coverage equivalent to catastrophic (CAT) insurance. Statute limits NAP to each commercial crop or agricultural commodity, except livestock, for which CAT is not available.

The application deadline date for the 2009 NAP coverage for flawn on winter wheat, speltz, apples, forage for all alfalfa (6th year of production) & mixed hay, honey, Christmas trees, ornamental nursery, and turfgrass sod in **Michigan, is December 1, 2008**. For 2009-2012, the NAP Service Fees have increased from: \$100 to \$250 per crop; \$300 to \$750 per county; \$900 to \$1,875 per producer for all counties.

For more information on NAP coverage, please contact your local FSA office.



APPLY NOW FOR 2009 ANNUAL OPERATING LOANS

Farmers that plan to apply to the Farm Service Agency for annual operating loan assistance this year are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. The earlier an application for loan assistance is filed, the quicker the FSA staff can process your request. In addition, due to budget constraints, farmers that wait until later in the year to apply, often run the risk of finding out that our funding allocations have been utilized already. Farmers are encouraged to contact our office to set up an appointment for information as to what is required in order to have a complete loan application on file. Decisions cannot be made until a complete application is received.

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.

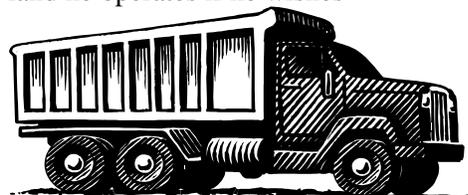
Farm Reconstitutions

In program terminology, farms are *constituted* to group all tracts having the same owner and the same operator under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation take place, a farm *reconstitution* is necessary. The reconstitution — or recon — is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. The following are the different methods used when doing a farm recon. Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by Aug. 1 for farms enrolled in the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program.

Designation of Landowner Method — may be used when (1) part of a farm is sold or ownership is transferred; (2) an entire farm is sold to two or more persons; (3) farm ownership is transferred to two or more persons; (4) part of a tract is sold or ownership is transferred; (5) a tract is sold to two or more persons; or (6) tract ownership is transferred to two or more persons. In order to use this method the land sold must have been owned for at least three years, or a waiver granted, and the buyer and seller must sign a Memorandum of Understanding;

IMPORTANT 2009 RECON INFO THOSE FARMS WITH 10.0 ACRES OR LESS OF BASE

Farms with less than 10.0 acres of base CAN NOW be combined, you will need the permission (signatures) of all landowners when requesting combinations. You can include a statement in your cash lease agreements such as “The operator has my permission to combine my land with other land he operates if he wishes”



SANILAC COUNTY 2008 COMMODITY LOAN RATES	
CROP	LOAN RATE
BARLEY	1.67
CORN	1.90
OATS	1.39
SOYBEANS	4.98
SRW WHEAT	2.21
SWW WHEAT	2.18

WATCH THOSE COMMODITY PRICES! Since acreage reports were filed, commodity prices have continually fallen. LDP's may become available. If so, and you still maintain ownership of the crop. You must complete the CCC-633EZ form FIRST before selling!

Unauthorized Disposition of Loaned Grain

If loan grain has been disposed of through feeding, selling or any other form of disposal without prior written authorization from the county office staff, it is considered unauthorized disposition. The financial penalties for unauthorized dispositions are severe. Additionally, producers could be subject to criminal prosecution under federal law. Always call the office before any grain under loan is fed or sold.

Removing CCC Loan Collateral

Producers are reminded, if you have grain under Commodity Credit Corporation loan it cannot be removed or disposed of without prior county office staff authorization or repayment. The loan violation is subject to monetary and administrative penalties, such as repaying the loan at principal plus interest, liquidated damages, calling the loan and denial of future farm-stored loans and loan deficiency payments. All commodity loans are subject to spot check. Locking in a market loan repayment rate is not a marketing authorization. If you are planning to move CCC loan grain, call the county office staff. before you HAUL!



FARM LOAN BORROWERS—BE PREPARED

Producers that have farm loans with FSA are reminded they must provide data for their Year-End Analysis (YEA) to their loan officer each year. Borrowers are urged to provide:

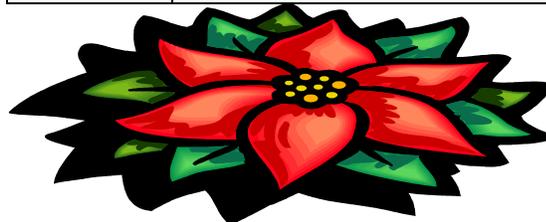
- balance sheets,
- projected cash flows
- and actual income and expense statements

timely so that their files can be maintained. The office will be contacting you for this data beginning in January of 2009. Please be prepared for your office appointment.

SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact this County Office in person or by phone.

Nov 26	Final date for 2008 DCP Contract on Base Acres of 10.0 or less
Nov 27	Office Closed – Thanksgiving
Dec 1	Final date to purchase NAP policy for 2009 crop year
Dec 1	Election Ballots must be returned and postmarked
Dec 10	Final date to count ballots for Committee Election
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve Program
Continues	Farm Storage/Facility Loan
Continues	Crop Disaster Program Signup for 2005, 2006 & 2007 for Quality and Quantify losses
Dec 25	Office Closed – Christmas
Jan 1	Office Closed – New Years



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.