



# Farmer's Digest

Tuscola County  
USDA Service Center

Tuscola County FSA  
1075 Cleaver Road  
Caro, Michigan 48723  
989-673-8173 (phone)  
989-673-1848 (fax)

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

County Committee  
Matt Zimba  
Gene Bickel  
Bruce Findlay  
Karen Goodchild

Jonathan Link  
County Executive Director

Bob Catherwood  
Farm Loan Manager

### County Committee Elections

Duane Weber, was elected the County Committee representative for LAA #2. Duane is a dairy and cash crop farmer from the Millington area. LAA # consists of Gilford, Denmark, Juinata, Tuscola, Vassar, Arbela and Millington townships. The County Committee plays a vital role in administering the USDA Programs.” Thank you!” to those people who participated in the election and sent in their votes.

### Commodity Loans

Commodity loans for commodities in storage continue to be available. The loan rates for 2007 crops are as follows:

Corn	\$ 1.93
Soybeans	\$ 4.94
Barley	\$ 1.69
Oats	\$ 1.34
Wheat	\$ 2.44 (Soft Red Wheat)
Wheat	\$ 2.38 (Soft White Wheat)

The final availability dates for 2007 crop loans are:  
March 31, 2008 for Wheat, Barley & Oats and  
May 31, 2008 Corn and Soybeans.

### 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, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium poppies and other drug producing plants.

### GIS Mapping System

This is preparing to convert these new acreages so they will be available for use in the 2008 crop year. Much work behind the scenes still needs to be completed, however we are still planning on having this newer and more accurate information available for you.



### 2005-2007 DISASTER PROGRAMS

The Crop Disaster Program (CDP) provides benefits to farmers who suffered 35% quantity and/or 25% quality losses to 2005, 2006 or 2007 crops from natural disasters and related conditions. **2007 losses were just recently added to this program.** Producers who incurred qualifying losses in 2005, 2006 or 2007 will receive payment for the one year in which the benefit is the highest. **Only producers who obtained crop insurance coverage or coverage under the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the year of loss will be eligible for CDP benefits.**

Signup for the 2005-2007 CDP quantity losses began October 15, 2007. No deadline date has been determined. Signup for CDP quality losses will be announced at a future date. A quality loss of 25% or greater is needed to qualify. Details on quality loss provisions will be announced at a later date.

In determining production, participants must supply verifiable and reliable production records to substantiate production to the FSA county committee. FSA uses RMA (crop insurance) loss records for insured crops where available and determined to be accurate. FSA includes all harvested production, non-harvested appraised production, and assigned production for the total planted acreage of the crop unit to determine production under CDP. The maximum CDP benefits a person may receive is \$80,000. CDP requires a 35 percent loss of expected production; therefore, you may be eligible for a payment even if it was determined that the loss was not great enough under NAP or RMA coverage.

### For More Information

For more information about FSA and its programs, visit your local USDA Service Center or online at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

## Payment Limitation



No program benefits subject to payment limitation may be provided to any producer until the necessary payment limitation forms are filed and determinations made. A producer will remain ineligible until all required forms are provided and acted upon. An individual or entity must:

Provide significant contributions of capital, land, or equipment to the farming operation

Provide significant contributions of active personnel labor and active personnel management.

Make contributions or inputs to the farming operation that are commensurate with the profits or losses of the farming operation.

Be at risk, commensurate with the claimed share of inputs. Capital cannot be acquired through a loan that was obtained by, or guaranteed by, or secured by any individual, joint operation or entity that has an interest in the farming operation. The status date for determinations is April 1 of the applicable program year.



## Changes In Your Operation

It is important that you contact the office as soon as practical with any changes that have occurred in your farming operation. Changes may include, but are not limited to:

- **Address** - Contact information, as well as any temporary address change.
- **Direct Deposit** - Changes in banking information to ensure timely payments.
- **Development** - New parcels of land removed for houses or other non-agricultural purposes.
- **Owner/Operator Changes** - Changes in land ownership, tenants or crop share arrangements.
- **Reconstitutions** - Farm combinations or separations due to sale of land or change in operators.
- **Farm Operating Plan** - April 1, 2008 is the deadline for filing new farm operating plans for entities and joint operations, such as Corporations, Limited Liability Corporations, Limited Liability Partnerships, Trusts, Estates, Sole Proprietorships, General Partnerships, and Joint Ventures.

## Dairy Disaster Program

Congress has recently enacted legislation that authorizes payments to Dairy Producers whose production is below NASS statistical levels for the state.



Dairy producers need to be collecting their monthly milk statements and the number of cows milked per month. As soon as more information is available we will let you know.

### 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 sign up 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.

## Spousal Signature Requirement

Spouses may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and CCC programs in which either has an interest, unless written notification denying a spouse this authority has been provided to the county office. This procedure does not apply to the commodity loan or Loan Deficiency Program. Spouses must have an 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 their local county office for specific signature authority documents needed



### 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.



## 2007 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

Michigan's farmers will soon have the opportunity to make their voices heard and help shape the future of agriculture for years to come. That opportunity will come to their mailboxes in the form of the 2007 Census of Agriculture.

Conducted every five years by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Census looks at land use and ownership, operator characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures and other topics. It provides the only source of uniform, comprehensive agricultural data for every country in the nation.

This information is used by everyone who provides services to farmers and rural communities – including federal, state and local governments, agribusinesses, and many others. Census data is used to make decisions about many things that directly impact farmers, including:

- community planning
- store/company locations
- availability of operational loans and other funding
- location and staffing of service centers
- farm programs and policies

NASS will mail out Census forms on December 28, 2007 to collect data for the 2007 calendar year. Completed forms are due by February 4, 2008. Producers can return their forms by mail or, for the first time, they have the convenient option of filling out the Census online via a secure web site.

Dates to Remember	
January 31	Final Loan/LDP availability date for wool and mohair.
February 18 <sup>th</sup>	George Washington's Birthday. FSA Office Closed.
March 15 <sup>th</sup>	Final application date for Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (contact your local office for crop specific deadlines).
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loans
Continues	Continuous CRP and CREP
Continues	MILC Program



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