



July 2008

Tuscola County News

Tuscola County
USDA Service Center

Tuscola County FSA
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989-673-8173 (phone)
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Hours
Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

County Committee
Matt Zimba
Bruce Findlay
Duane Weber
Karen Goodchild

Jonathan Link
County Executive Director

Bob Catherwood
Farm Loan Manager

2008 Crop Certifications

As soon as you are done planting your crops, we encourage you to call this office to schedule an appointment for crop certification. Even though there is not currently a farm bill signup, acreage reports are required to maintain history on your farm. Please remember that filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs.

The deadline to certify all crops including CRP and CREP acreage has been extended to August 15, 2008. Late filed acreage reports will be charged a \$25 per farm fee. Remember that we will need planting dates.

Farm Bill News -- The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 was enacted into law on 5/22/08.

The Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) is nearly identical to the 2007 program. Signup for 2008 crop year began on June 25 and will end on September 30, 2008.

2008 Changes:

- * New DCP contract form 6/20/08
- * Farms that have a total of base acres of 10 acres or less are not eligible unless the producer is a member of socially disadvantaged group or is a limited resource farmer.
- * The adjusted gross income provisions continue, however if changes have occurred in the farming operation that would affect the financial status of the producer, relative to the \$2.5 million AGI limitation, he or she must complete a new form CCC-526, which was revised on 6/12/08.

2008 Direct payments will be issued, if requested, as soon as practical after contract approval. Final will be in October.

Foreign Investment Disclosure

Any foreign person who acquires holds or transfers any interest (other than security) in agricultural land must submit a completed form FSA-153 to the Secretary of Agriculture no later than 90 days after the date of acquisition or transfer. Failure to report could result in civil penalties up to 25% of the property's fair market value. Form FSA-153 is available at the local FSA county office or at USDA's eForms website <http://www.sc.egov.usda.gov>.

Conservation and CREP

Enrollment into the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP) is ongoing. CREP contracts are for 15 years and include payments from the State of Michigan. CCRP contracts can be 10-15 years, but the incentive payments are less and there are no payments from the State of Michigan. A paid for measurement service is required for the acreage enrolled into these programs. Please contact the office if you are interested in enrolling into CREP and/or CCRP.

Maintaining CRP Cover

CRP cover maintenance is the participant's responsibility and must be done according to the conservation plan. All CRP maintenance activity, such as mowing, burning and spraying, must be conducted outside the primary nesting season for wildlife and in accordance with the conservation plan. Spot treatment of the acreage may be allowed during the primary nesting season if certain criteria are met. The ending date for the primary nesting season in Michigan is August 1.



Farm Loan Programs

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers loans for farmers and ranchers to purchase farmland and finance agricultural operations. FSA loan programs are designed to help producers who are temporarily unable to obtain private or commercial credit. In many cases, applicants are beginning farmers who have insufficient net worth to qualify for financing through a commercial lender. In other instances, borrowers might have suffered setbacks from natural disasters or might be persons with limited resources. Farm ownership loans or farm operating loans may be obtained as direct loans for a maximum of up to \$300,000. Guaranteed loans can reach a maximum indebtedness of \$949,000. Emergency loans are always direct loans for farmers who may have suffered physical or production losses in disaster areas designated by a Presidential or Secretarial disaster declaration. Rural Youth Loans, Loans to Beginning Farmers and loans for socially disadvantaged applicants are also available through FSA.

For detail information loan eligibility or the different available loan programs, just contact the county office staff for an appointment with a farm loan officer.

GIS Mapping System

We have completed the GIS process and now have new satellite based maps for you to certify on this spring. Some minor acreage changes will be noted due to the more accurate measurement system.

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 office staff directly or by phone.

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Direct Deposit Changes

If you change the financial institution or account in which you would like your payments deposited, please report these changes to this office right away. We rely on you to keep this information current in our office. We do not want your **payments delayed** by being sent to an account which is no longer valid.

REMINDER
CERTIFICATION DEADLINE
AUGUST 15, 2008.
All crops including CRP and CREP.

Commodity Loans

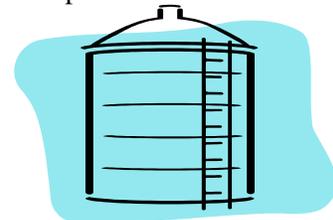
Remember to keep an eye on the grain you have in storage. With the warmer temperatures, grain could go out of condition quickly if not properly monitored. Don't forget to call this office if you are going to be moving or hauling grain still under loan from your farm.

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.

Preventing Fraud

The Farm Service Agency has joined with the Risk Management Agency to prevent fraud, waste and abuse in 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. In addition, FSA will refer all suspected cases of fraud, waste and abuse to RMA. Producers can report suspected cases to the county office staff, RMA office, or the Office of the Inspector General.



Farm Storage Facility Loans

The Farm Storage Facility Loan Program is available to interested producer's who need additional on farm storage or would like to modify existing structures. Basic details of the program are:

- Provide quotes of new structures and/or cost break down of new equipment requested.
- Covers farm storage, grain handling equipment, grain dryers, etc.
- Pay a \$45.00 application fee.
- Provide to FSA an Income Statement and Balance Sheet for review of financial capabilities.
- Purchase crop insurance on the crops grown in the county where the facility is constructed.
- Purchase all peril insurance on the structure listing FSA as the loss payee.
- Complete a title search on the parcel underlying the facility to ensure FSA security is not at risk.

NAP Production Records

Production records for individual crops need to be filed with our office to establish an approved NAP yield. If this is the first year you participated in NAP, you can provide production and acreage information from prior years to establish your yield. If you participated in NAP in previous years, you must report your production and acreage on a yearly basis to keep your yield up-to-date. Records submitted must be reliable and verifiable. Records need to show crop disposition. We recommend producers submit 2008 production records as soon as harvest is complete. All production records must be submitted by the subsequent crop year's final acreage reporting date.

Sign-up Deadline for LCP and LIP

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) has announced that livestock producers have until **July 18, 2008**, to enroll in the 2005 - 2007 Livestock Compensation Program (LCP) and Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP). Signup began on Sept. 10, 2007, for the two programs that provide aid to livestock producers who suffered eligible livestock or livestock feed losses between Jan. 1, 2005, and Dec. 30, 2007, because of a natural disaster.

DATES TO REMEMBER

July 4	Independence Day (office closed)
July 18	Final date to enroll in Livestock Compensation Program (LCP) or the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)
August 1	Final date to return COC Nomination form
August 15	Final date to report all crops
Continues	2005-2007 Crop Disaster Program
Continues	Continuous CRP and CREP
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loans



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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.