



November 2008

Washtenaw/Wayne County News

Address & Telephone

7203 Jackson Road. Ann Arbor, MI 48103 (734) 761-8789, Ext. 2 FAX: (734) 662-1686

County Committee

Walter Rochowiak Luther Schaible Robert Breuning Marilyn Gordon

Staff

Ruth Barker Lori Maulbetsch Lori Terreault

Farm Loan Manager

Michael Jordon, Adrian (517) 263-7400 x 110

County Executive Director

Linda Rector

Important Dates by COB

December 1 – Deadline to purchase 2009 NAP coverage for crops with sales closing dates in 2008

December 1 – Last day to return election ballots

Continuous

Farm Storage Facility Loans

CCRP - Continuous Conservation Reserve Program

CRP SAFE – State Acres For Wildlife Enhancement

Holidays- Office Closed

Thanksgiving – Nov. 27th Christmas – Dec. 25th New Years Day – Jan. 1st

2008 Farm Bill

The 2008 Farm Bill has 15 titles and significant impact to producers. Commodity crop producers have a choice to make whether to participate in the new ACRE program or to stay with the old DP (Direct Payment) and CCP (Counter Cyclical Payment) program.

There are new programs that will benefit fruit and vegetable farms including the new SURE program which is Supplemental REvenue Assistance Payments (SURE). SURE is targeted to all farm types and provides financial revenue in the triggering event of county declared disasters or if a farm operation has a yield loss greater than 50%. Payments for SURE can be as high as 90% of "expected revenue" depending on crop insurance coverage levels and other factors

Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program:

The 2008 Farm Bill authorizes ACRE program payments. Beginning with the 2009 crop year, producers will have the option to participate in a state-level revenue protection program instead of the counter-cyclical program. In crop years 2009 through 2012, producers who make an irrevocable election to receive ACRE Program payments will:

- 1. Not receive counter-cyclical payments on enrolled farms.
2. Be subject to a 20 percent reduction in direct payments for all covered commodities on enrolled farms.
3. Be subject to a 30 percent reduction in marketing assistance loan rates for all covered commodities on enrolled farms.

If actual state per acre revenue is less than the guarantee and if a producer suffers an actual revenue loss for the crop on the farm, then the producer will receive an ACRE payment equal to the difference between the state per-acre revenue guarantee and the state actual revenue calculation paid on 83.3 percent (85 percent for 2012) of the acres planted to the covered commodity on the farm.

Supplemental Disaster Assistance Program:

PLEASE TAKE NOTE!!!

The 2008 Farm Bill appropriated funds for the following 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 NAP coverage for non-insurable crops on all crops in all counties.



Deadlines to purchase 2009 NAP coverage on fall seeded or perennial crops have been extended to December 1, 2008.

*New rules allow crops of less than 10% of economic significance to waive the requirement to purchase insurance.

These crops will not be covered by SURE. There are also special provisions for producers that are beginning farmers, limited resource, or socially disadvantaged. Contact either office for more details as information on this program is still evolving. Please note ALL crops in ALL counties must be covered or waived to qualify for 2009 assistance.

For a SURE Calculator go to:

http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/fbapp?area=home&subject=landing&topic=landing under the Tools section.



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.



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 sales closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25% of the fair market value of the property.

Non Insured Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

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

Provisions are in place to help accommodate NAP sales closing deadline dates for 2009 crops with fall 2008 sales closing dates. NAP application closing dates for fall seeded crops include: grass, apples, asparagus, cherries, grapes, honey, plums, peaches, strawberries, etc. have been extended to December 1, 2008. Coverage attaches 30 days after purchase of NAP policy. Please contact this office for additional



Payment Limitation and Payment Eligibility

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% is derived from farming, ranching, or forestry operations

Payment Limitation Controls will be established in 2009 which will credit individuals and entities with both the amount of payment they receive directly and are considered to have received indirectly by holding an interest in an entity receiving payment.

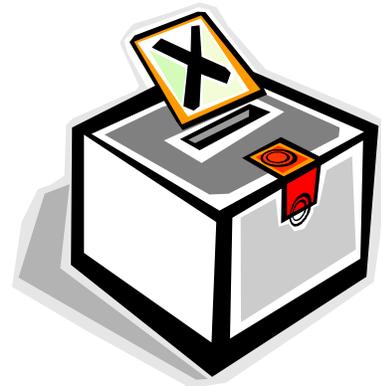
County Committee Election:

Since the committee system was first established in 1936, Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Committees have provided an important voice in Federal decisions affecting their local communities. The County Committee (COC) oversees local FSA operations and makes critical decisions on how FSA commodity, conservation, and disaster programs are administered in its communities.

This year we will be electing one new member to the COC. The nominees from LAA #1 (Townships of: Bridgewater, Dexter, Freedom, Lyndon, Manchester, Sharon, and Sylvan) are Luther Schaible and Michael DuRussel.

Owners and operators of farming operations along with the spouse of farm owners are eligible to vote as long as the spouse is listed on the deed. If you farm in any of the named townships and would like to participate in the election, please contact the office for a ballot. Ballots were mailed on November 3, 2008 and must be returned to the FSA office or postmarked by **December 1, 2008** in order to be counted. Please vote in this very important election, every vote counts!

If you have not received a ballot and you are an eligible voter in LAA 1 please contact the FSA office so that one is made available to you



Farm Combination Policy Change

The 10.0 acres or less base acreage reconstitution policy no longer applies and reconstitutions may be approved if all other procedural requirements are met.

Land under separate ownerships may be combined if:

- the resulting farm meets the definition of a Farm according to FSA procedure
- all owners agree in writing
- and the land is under a lease agreement of at least 1 year duration.

Please contact the Washtenaw/Wayne County FSA Office for more information



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 - SAFE

The new practice is called **Diverse Grassland Planting** (CP38E). The practice is available in just 18 counties in Michigan which included Washtenaw.

Eligible Washtenaw 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. 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 per acre.
- Annual rental payments for enrolled acres (based on 3 predominant soil types)

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.



Payment Centralization – All FSA Payments

The Financial Management Division (FMD) of FSA's Office of Budget and Finance plans to implement payment centralization the first part of December. When payments are centralized, FSA County Offices will no longer have the capability to issue paper Checks (CCC-184s), paper checks will be issued by the Treasury Department.



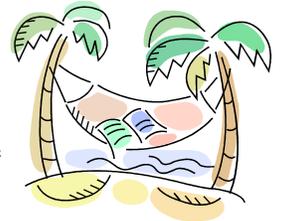
Checks issued by the Treasury Department may take 7 to 10 business days to reach the payee.

If a direct deposit is on file the payee should have the money in their account within 2 to 3 business days.

If you are receiving your payments by check please contact this office for more information.

Retirement:

Ruth Barker is retiring at the end of the year with 32 years of dedicated service to the farmers and ranchers of Washtenaw and Wayne Counties.



The County Committee and fellow employees would like to take this time to express their gratitude and to wish Ruth the Very Best in her future endeavors.

GOOD LUCK RUTH

Farm Bill Informational Meetings

The Lenawee and Jackson County FSA Offices have scheduled meetings on the 2008 Farm Bill and would like to extend the invitation to the Washtenaw/Wayne County Producers. The dates and locations are as follows:

Tuesday, December 2nd from 9-11 a.m. – Lenawee County

Spartan Room
Human Services Building – Spartan Room
1040S. Winter Street, Adrian, MI

Wednesday, December 3rd from 6-8 p.m. – Lenawee County

River Raisin Room
Human Services Building
1040S. Winter Street, Adrian, MI

Thursday, January 15th from 10a.m. – 3 p.m. – Jackson County Location to be announced at a later date. If you are interested in attending this meeting please call the Washtenaw County FSA Office and we will put you on a list to notify when a location is confirmed.

Washtenaw/Wayne meetings are being scheduled and will be announced at a later date sometime after the first of next year. Thank You.

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.



The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs 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 incomes derived from any public assistance programs. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write 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).

CONDUCTING BUSINESS ELECTRONICALLY WITH USDA eGOV

eGOV provides
USDA Service
Center
Agencies (FSA,
NRCS, RD)



customers the option of electronically accessing, printing, filling out and submitting forms and program applications. To fully utilize eGOV capabilities producers set up their own account for electronic signature authority at www.eauth.egov.usda.gov. Once registered the producer visits the FSA office to activate his/her account and receive a password to conduct business electronically with USDA agencies. Current programs available through eGOV include loan deficiency payments, Direct and Counter Cyclical Program contracts, and financial inquiries that allow producers to track USDA payments and deposits.