



October 2006

Russell County News



**Russell County
USDA Service Center**

Russell County FSA
1640B North Main Street
Jamestown, KY 42629
www.fsa.usda.gov/ky

Hours
Monday – Friday
7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

County Committee
Cordell Garner
Arvin Wilson
Jared Foley
Maxine Bledsoe

County Committee meets
2nd Tuesday of each
month

Staff
Tony Corbin, CED
Sue Foley, PT
Amanda Robertson, PT

Conservative Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

Signup for the CREP program continues to be an excellent opportunity for some Russell County landowners. Farms located in the Northwest section of Russell County that drain into creeks or streams that eventually empty into Green River below the Green River Lake Reservoir and extending down stream to the Mammoth Cave National Park are eligible for enrollment in the CREP program. The program is an enhanced version of the original Conservation Reserve Program.

The objective of the program is to improve the quality of water on the upper Green River while improving wildlife habitat and reducing soil erosion. Installation of Best Management Practices (BMP's), basically, the planting of native grasses and/or trees, and retirement of this land from agricultural production during the length of the contracts, are the key requirements for enrollment into the CREP program. Eligible practices include but are not limited to the establishment of Riparian or stream side buffers, the planting of Native Warm Season grasses, legumes and trees. Riparian buffers may be installed on both pastureland and acreage that was cropped in four of the six years during the period from 1996 through 2001. Land along streams, including seasonal streams that flow during part of the year, may be enrolled in the Riparian buffers. Crop fields which are considered to be highly erodible and meet the four of six year cropping requirements are eligible regardless of the distance to an eligible stream.

Landowners are paid an annual rental payment based upon the soil type for each acre that is enrolled in the CREP program. These rental rates are from 50 to 100% higher than normal Conservation Reserve Program rental rates depending on the type practice being installed. CREP contracts range in length from 10 to 15 years. A one-time sign up incentive payment (SIP) of \$100 per acre is paid upon contract approval for acreage that is enrolled in Grass Waterways, Filter Strips or Riparian Buffers. Federal cost share assistance at the rate of 50 percent is available on nearly all practices with an additional state cost share of

25 percent applying to most eligible practices. In addition, a Practice Incentive Payment (PIP) is offered on selected practices. The PIP pays an additional 40 percent of the total eligible cost of installing conservation measures.

An optional easement is available to landowners that enroll their land in Riparian Buffers. These easements are done by The Nature Conservancy and can provide additional income to CREP participants.

The CREP program is a joint effort of nearly all State and Federal agencies that are involved with the protection and enhancement of our natural resources as well as private organizations that share the same goals.

Switching to Digital Computer Maps

The Russell County FSA Office is currently completing the process of switching from paper maps to computer generated digital imagery. As part of this process, landowners were mailed a photocopy of their farm and asked to review them for accuracy. Once converted to the new map system, producers who wish to do so, will some day be able to make acreage reports or complete program applications from their home on a personal computer. We at the local FSA office would like to thank you in advance for your patience with this change and sincerely hope it will result in better service to you in the future.

Dates to Remember

10/02/06	2007 DCP Signup begins
11/03/06	County Committee Ballots will be mailed
12/04/06	Last day to return County Committee Ballots
12/07/06	County Committee Ballots will be counted