



December 2006

# Sanilac News

Sanilac County  
USDA Service Center

Sanilac County FSA  
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www.fsa.usda.gov/

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

County Committee  
Mark Stone  
Mike Bender  
Mary Nichol

Staff  
Rosemarie Gallagher  
Sharon Rockwell  
Carol Nelson  
Brenda Nichol  
Dorann Miller  
Sherri Sadro  
Walter Bonczar  
Ken Janiowiak

Farm Loans  
Steve Craig  
Felicia Knoblock

## County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Mark Stone! Mark was re-elected to represent farmers from Lamotte, Moore, Custer, Bridgehampton, Marlette, Elmer, Watertown, Washington, and Sanilac Townships on the county committee. This is Mark's second term as a county committee member.

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

## Important Changes

**There is additional work required for all programs this year.** Please allow extra time for processing.

Measurement service rates have changed to a **minimum** of \$46.00 per request. This includes one hour of service. There is an additional charge of \$8.00 every 30 minutes after the first hour.

## Emergency Loans Available

Sanilac County has been designated a natural disaster area due to losses caused by storms containing excessive rain, flooding, hail, high winds and frost that occurred between April 25, 2006 through October 15, 2006. The designation makes qualified farm operators eligible for low interest rate loans provided eligibility requirements are met. FSA will consider each loan application on its own merit, taking into account the extent of the loss, ability to obtain other credit, security available and repayment ability. For further information please contact the local FSA office.

## 07' DCP Sign Up Underway

Update your DCP contract and put the advance payment to work for your farm today. Advance direct payments for 2007 have changed to 22% under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program. Farmers who want to update their contracts need to address land and business issues:

- Will you continue to rent the same property you rented last year? If not, notify the staff so we can update your farm records or perform a reconstitution to remove land from your farming operation.
- A cash-rent certification may be used if you rented the land last year; however, an advance payment cannot be issued for the farm until after June 30, 2007.

The deadline to sign contracts is June 1, 2007. Contracts signed after June 1, but no later than September 30, 2007 will require a \$100.00 late fee per farm. **Please call for an appointment.**

## MILK Program



Just a reminder to all producers that are signed up for the MILCX program to keep submitting those milk stubs! The program continues through September, 2007.

Milk producers that are not already signed up may still do so at any time before the program end date. When the BCI milk price is below \$16.94 per hundredweight (cwt), the payment rate is determined by subtracting the BCI milk price per cwt from \$16.94 and then multiplying the difference times 34% during the period beginning October 1, 2005 through August 31, 2007. The payment rate for September, 2007

is 0%. The maximum quantity of eligible production for which dairy operations are eligible for payment per Fiscal Year is 2.4 million pounds.

New producers that submit a MILCX application for benefits can select as their production start month for the dairy operation either:

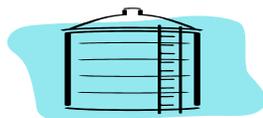
- The month the MILCX is submitted
- Any month from the remaining months in the FY as long as it is on or before the 14<sup>th</sup> of the month **before** the month that you wish to start receiving payment

Any producer that is already signed up and wishes to change the start month must do so on or before the 14<sup>th</sup> of the month before that month that you are changing to. So if the selected start month is February, 2007 and you wish to change that start month to January, 2007, the change must be made on or before December 14, 2006.

### ***Commodity Loan Program***

Commodity loans are available for wheat, barley, oats, soybeans and corn. These commodities can be either a farm stored loan or a warehouse loan. These loans are for a nine month period. To request a farm stored loan the producer needs to contact our office with the location of the grain. The quantity of grain can either be a measured or certified loan. Grain under loan is the **responsibility of the producer** to maintain the quantity and quality of the grain. A 30 day marketing authorization can be obtained when grain is being moved for sale. The marketing authorization can be requested either by phone or coming into the office. Any loan grain that is going to be fed needs to be paid prior to feeding. The repayment of the loan is the lesser of principal and interest or the posted county price. Any time the grain is moved from the original location the producer needs to notify our office of the new location.

Contact our office for loan rates and eligibility before applying for a commodity loan.



### ***CCRP and CREP***

Applications are still being taken for those 'environmentally sensitive' areas, i.e., filter strips, riparian buffers, wetland restorations, grass waterways, windbreaks, etc., under the Continuous CRP or CREP for those whose land is in the Saginaw Bay Watershed. The land must have been cropped in four out of the years 1996-2001. In return for entering into a 10 - 15 year contract, landowners receive annual rental payments, special financial incentives, and 50% cost-sharing to establish the practice.

Maintenance operations may be performed during times OUTSIDE of the August 1-20 window IF you have problem areas AND you submit a written request to the Sanilac FSA Committee detailing what specific operations you wish to perform and when you wish to perform them.

Annual Acreage reports for 2007 can be filed at any time now!! The deadline is July 15, 2007; it's closer than what you think. Contact this office or NRCS for further information.

### ***Payment Limitation/Eligibility***

Attention all Corporations, Partnerships, LLC's, and Trusts:

Our office will need documentation from you before issuing any 2007 crop year payments. Anyone who is using an employer ID number to receive payment will have:

- either a Certificate of Partnership or Assumed Name (filed at the Register of Deeds Office and good for a 5 year period)
- an annual statement filed at the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth (corporations, LLC)

Limited Liability partnerships and corporations:

- written agreement showing the members and the ownership shares
- a document to authorize a member to sign (this could be designated in partnership papers or by a power of attorney form signed by all members)

Corporations: a copy of your current

- By laws



- Articles of incorporation
- Organizational meeting minutes (showing officers)
- A document to authorize an officer or member to sign (this could be designated either in the corporate charter or by-laws or by resolution by the corporation's board of directors)
- Written documentation to show member shares

If you have acquired or transferred ownership of any agricultural land since you last updated your paperwork, we need to know that. This includes transferring ownership of your land to a trust. If this has occurred, bring your trust documents and quit claim deed in and we will correct your documents.



### *Signature Requirements*

We are required to verify that a signature authority is on file before accepting a signature on any program or related documents on behalf of another. Producers can present evidence of signature of authority such as presentation of the original document, corporate charter, bylaws, court orders of appointment, trust agreement, last will and testament, or articles of partnership. The FSA-211, Power of attorney form can be completed to grant signature authority to another individual or entity. 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. This procedure does not apply to the commodity loan or Loan Deficiency Program. Spouses may not sign FSA-211 on behalf of the other as an authorized signatory for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations or other similar entities.



### *Attention Producers, Landowners*

- Do you intend to clear timber areas to create or to expand existing crop areas?
- Are you converting a pasture field into a crop field?
- Are there any areas on your farm that you are considering cropping that have not been cropped in recent years?
- Is there a wet spot in a field that you want drain to make cropping easier?

- Are you disturbing a wildlife habitat area of any type?
- Are you doing anything different on your farm this year?

These are highly erodable and wetlands provision questions that need to be considered each year by producers to assure that they may remain eligible for USDA benefits. If you have any question or concern that something you plan to do on your farm could jeopardize your eligibility for benefits, please contact your Natural Resources Conservation Service representative before you begin work.

### *Customer Statement*

For most of us, Jan. 1 signals the beginning of a new year or new *tax year*. It's time to start gathering financial records and start thinking about filling out a 1040. This year, producers who have signed up for a **USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account** will have a little help in that they will be able to see their 1099 by the dates they chose.

The Customer Statement puts a range of USDA services and programs into a single report that's **at your fingertips and available online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week**. It allows USDA customers to view their participation, application and payment status in various commodity and conservation programs; information on farm loans; and conservation plan and land unit information. Coming sometime in the future will be digital maps!

To learn about the Customer Statement, visit <http://customerstatement.usda.gov/>. Or you're local FSA Office. The FSA Staff would encourage everyone to try this out. Remember you must get a level 2 account set up prior to having access to your information.

### *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.

### *Moved to GIS*

We have moved to *Geographic Information System (GIS)* which involves massive changes that have been in the works. GIS is a computer based tool for capturing, storing, mapping and analyzing geographic information. The software accurately calculates the size of a field. GIS will give us the tools to provide quicker, more accurate information to producers in the future. As an added bonus, producers will be able to review their farm's GIS files online from the comfort of their homes.

### **Bank Account Changes**

All FSA payments are to be electronically transferred into your bank account, unless you have a legitimate hardship reason for still receiving your payments by check. You need to notify the office if you close your account or if your bank is purchased by another financial institution. Payments will be delayed if we are not aware of changes to account and routing numbers.



Dates to Remember	
Dec.20, 2006	Final day to request a commodity loan dispersed in calendar year 06'
Dec.25, 2006	Christmas, FSA will be closed.
Jan. 1	New Year's Day, FSA will be closed.
Jan. 15	Martin Luther King Day, FSA will be closed
Feb. 19	Presidents Day, FSA will be closed.
March 15	Final application date for Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program.
March 31	Final loan/LDP availability date for wheat, barley and oats.
March 31	Final loan/LDP availability date for corn and soybeans.
May 31	Final loan/LDP availability date for corn and soybeans.
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loans
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve Program/ Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

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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.