



September 2007

Washtenaw-Wayne County News

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

**Washtenaw-Wayne
County FSA**
7203 Jackson Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48103-9506
(734) 761-8789 (phone)
(734) 662-1686 (fax)

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

County Committee
Walter Rochowiak
Marilyn Gordon
Luther Schaible
Robert Breuninger

Staff
Ruth Barker
Lori Maulbetsch
Lori Terreault

**County Executive
Director**
Kathi Lerg

CRP Mid Contract Management

Mid-Contract Management of CRP are activities that must be performed on certain practices to ensure the original plant diversity, wildlife benefits, and protections of the soil and water resources are present for the life of the contract.

For CRP practices with grasses, legumes, & wildflowers, research has shown that typically 5-6 years after establishment the site becomes dominated by a thick growth of the grasses. To ensure wildlife habitat benefits in these sites, management is required to encourage legumes and wildflowers, and to ensure the grass is not too thick to limit small wildlife species from traveling through the cover to meet their needs.

This is your responsibility and must be followed according to your conservation plan. Variances can be approved on a case – by – case basis, if a variance is needed please contact the office in advance.

LDP Eligibility

Remember to file a CCC-633EZ **prior** to harvest in order to be eligible for any loan deficiency payments. You can sign page 1 of the form when you are in the office reporting your crops.

Wool and Mohair LDP's

The 2007 crop year for wool and mohair began the 1st of January. You must have a CCC-633EZ on file before you lose beneficial interest. Forms are available from our office or online.

Sodbuster Regulations

The term “sodbusting” is used to identify the plowing up of erosion-prone grasslands for use as cropland. Sodbuster violations are unauthorized tillage practices on highly erodible lands that converted native vegetation such as rangeland or woodland, to crop production after December 23, 1985.

Farmers and ranchers should be aware that if they use highly erodible land for crop production without proper conservation measures, they risk losing eligibility to participate in USDA programs. This applies to wetlands, as well.

Before producers clear, plow or otherwise prepare areas not presently under crop production for planting, they are required to file an AD-1026, indicating the area to be brought into production.

If Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) indicates on a CPA-026 that the area will be highly erodible land, the producer will be required to develop and implement a conservation plan or system on the affected acreage, before bringing land into production.

In addition, producers and the producer’s affiliates have to file an AD-1026 with the administrative or control county FSA office before any farm program payments can be made. The AD-1026 is the producer’s signed certification that HELC and wetland conservation provisions will not be violated.



MEASUREMENT SERVICE RATES

Measurement service rates for farm visits have changed to a minimum charge of \$46.00 per farm for the first hour and \$8.00 for every ½ hour thereafter. Travel time to and from the farm will be included when computing the total hours.

UNAUTHORIZED DISPOSITION

If loan grain has been disposed of through feeding, selling or any other form of disposal without county office approval, it is considered unauthorized disposition. The financial penalties are severe and producer's name will be placed on a loan violation list for a two year period. Always call the office before any loan grain is fed or sold.



2007 Compliance Process

Starting this year a new compliance and spot check selection process will be implemented for the 2007 crop year. Instead of locally selecting farms, contracts, deficiency loans, etc. for spot check and review, a nationwide selection of producers will be made using a statistical sampling method. Spot check selections are to be conducted based on a producer's participation in Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP), Loan Deficiency Program (LDP), etc.

Foreign Landowner Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA.

Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA within 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property.

DCP Signup?

Due to the fact that the Direct Counter Cyclical program expired with the Farm Bill, we do not have a commodity program for the 2008 year. We have heard rumors of extending the existing Farm Bill as well as an entirely new Farm Bill, but until congress acts we will continue to wait.

Preventing Fraud, Waste & Abuse

The Farm Service Agency has joined the Risk Management Agency (RMA) to prevent fraud, waste and abuse in the Federal Crop Insurance Program. FSA will 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, RMA office, or the Office of the Inspector General.

Crop Disaster Program

The USDA announced the Crop Disaster Program beginning October 15, 2007 for farmers who suffered quantity losses to 2005, 2006 or 2007 crops from natural disasters if the crop was planted *before* February 28, 2007, or, in the case of prevented plantings, for crops that would have been planted before February 28, 2007. Producers who incurred qualifying losses in 2005, 2006 or 2007 must choose only one year to apply for benefits. Producers may apply for benefits for losses on multiple commodities as long as the losses occurred in the same crop year. Note: Only producers who obtained crop insurance or coverage under the noninsured crop disaster program (NAP) for the year of loss will be eligible for CDP benefits. Producers must have suffered a quantity loss in excess of 35 percent to be eligible for CDP. USDA will announce and conduct a CDP signup for quantity losses for the years noted above as soon as possible.

DCP Final Payments

Producers who were enrolled in the Direct Counter-cyclical Program will receive their final payments in late October. The final payments will be 78 % of the stated amount on the contract if an advance payment was requested. All those who didn't request an advance payment will receive 100% of the amount listed on the contract, provided fruits and vegetables were not planted on contract acres.

Reasonable Accommodations

Special accommodation will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment. If special accommodations are required, please contact us at the phone numbers listed.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact their local FSA County Office.



Bank Account Changes

As of January 1, 1999, all FSA payments are supposed to be electronically transferred into your bank account. In order to make timely payments, you need to notify the office if you close your account or if another financial institution purchases your bank. Payments will be delayed if we are not aware of changes to your account and routing numbers.

Complaint Process

After an FSA official makes a decision on your request for USDA services or application, you will be sent a letter informing you of the decision and options you can pursue if you disagree.

Generally, program participants have four choices – an informal review with the original agency decision maker, and opportunity for mediation, appeal to State Committee and appeal to the USDA National Appeal Division (NAD).

e-GOV Help available

Producers wishing to conduct their USDA business online can now do so. We can help you gain access to those USDA e-services that require authentication of the producer's identity.

FSA for Kids

www.fsa.usda.gov/fsakids

www.fs4jk.org

Kathi's Lil Korner

Just a little note to let all of you know that this will be the last newsletter from me. I will be relocating to the Mason County Office in Scottville, Michigan. I will miss this office, the staff and all of you that I have met. Thank you all for making me feel welcome here.

In the words of a song sung by Rascal Flatts:

*I hope that days come easy and
moments pass slow,
And each road leads you where you
want to go,
And if you're faced with a choice, and
you have to choose,
I hope you choose the one that means the
most to you.
And if one door opens to another door
closed,
I hope you keep on walkin' till you find
the window,
If it's cold outside, show the world the
warmth of your smile.
My wish, for, is that this life becomes
all that you want it,
To your dreams stay big, and your
worries stay small,
You never need to carry more than you
can hold.*

*If you are ever in the Scottville Area,
please stop in and see me.*

Kathi

Now Open For
Fun and Games



FSA Kids

www.fsa.usda.gov/fsakids

PLEASE HELP US HELP YOU!!!

Have you bought, sold, picked up or dropped rented land from your operation, or moved land into another's entity's name (such a trust, corporation, etc...). If you have made these types of changes, it is your responsibility to make our office aware that these changes have been made. Please notify us if you have any questions or concerns. Failure to maintain accurate records with FSA on all land you have an interest in can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. Making the record changes now will save you time in the spring. Update signature authorization when changes in the operation occur. NOW is the time to notify our office of these changes.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- * Oct. 8 Columbus Day – Office Closed
- * Nov. 12 Veterans Day – Office Closed
- * Nov. 22 Thanksgiving Day – Office Closed
- * Dec. 3 Last day to return Election Ballots
- * Dec. 25 Christmas – Office Closed
- * Monthly COC meetings normally Scheduled for the first Wednesday of the month



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program 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 income is derived from any public assistance program. (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 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.