

January 2014



Calhoun County FSA Updates

Topics for January

- Breaking New Ground
- 1099s Will Be Mailed by January 31st
- Congratulations to Beth Korn
- Thank You, Denice Raymond!
- Farming Operation Changes
- Foreign Buyers Notification
- Power of Attorney
- Diverse Grasslands Workshop

Calhoun County FSA Office

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County Executive

Director:

Elizabeth Lake

Farm Loan Manager:

Mack Francoeur, Jr.

Program Technicians:

Bonnie Baxter

Kim Odette

Dana Sherman, FLP

County Committee:

Beth Korn, Chairperson
Keith Lawrence, Vice-Chair
Sharon Williams, Member
Denice Raymond, Advisor

Next County Committee

Meeting: April 15, 2014,
8:30 AM

Breaking New Ground

Agricultural producers are reminded to consult with FSA and NRCS before breaking out new ground for production as doing so without prior authorization may put a producer's federal farm program benefits in jeopardy. This is especially true for land that must meet Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions.

Producers with HEL determined soils must apply tillage, crop residue and rotation requirements as specified in their conservation plan.

Producers should notify FSA prior to conducting land clearing or drainage projects to ensure compliance. If you intend to clear any trees to create new cropland, these areas will need to be reviewed to ensure any work will not risk your eligibility for benefits.

Landowners and operators can complete form AD-1026 Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification to determine whether a referral to Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is necessary.

1099s Will Be Mailed by January 31st

1099s will be mailed out in January to producers who received reportable payments. Please remember that 1099s will NOT be mailed to producers if the total of reportable payments for each Tax Identification Number is less than \$600.

Congratulations to Beth Korn

Beth Korn has been re-elected to serve a second, three-year-term on the Calhoun County FSA Committee. Beth with her husband Sam and their two children operate a cash crop farm in the Athens area. Congratulations Beth!

Thank You, Denice Raymond!

Denice Raymond, who operates a dairy farm in Fredonia Township with her husband Arnie, has spent six years as a dedicated Advisor to the Calhoun County FSA Committee. Denice has decided it's time to step down from that position. Denice's commitment to the County Committee and FSA employee's will certainly be missed.

Farming Operation Changes

Producers who have bought or sold land, or added or dropped rented land from their operation must report those changes to the FSA office as soon as possible. A copy of the deed or recorded land contract for purchase property is needed to maintain accurate records with FSA. Failure to do so can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. While making record updates, be sure to update signature authorizations. Making record changes now will save time in the spring.

Foreign Buyers 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.

All individuals who are not U.S. citizens, and have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form (FSA-153) could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, Realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

Power of Attorney

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office because of work schedules, distance, health, etc..., FSA has a power of attorney form available that allows producers to designate another person to conduct business at the office. If interested, contact our office or any Farm Service Agency office for more information.

Diverse Grasslands Workshop

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources will be conducting a workshop about the restoration and management of diverse grasslands. The meeting is being held February 24, 2014 from 6 pm to 8 pm at The Kalamazoo Nature Center. The workshop will cover why grassland ecosystems are important, how to restore fields and other areas to grasslands, how to manage your grasslands, and what programs are available to help pay for landowners to establish grasslands. For additional information, and to RSVP, call 517-243-8907.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), and (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).