



September 2009



Mason-Oceana-Lake-Manistee County News

USDA Service Center

Mason-Oceana-Lake-Manistee County FSA
655 N. Scottville Rd.
Scottville, MI 49454-9569
231-757-3707 (phone)
231-757-4133 (fax)

Hours

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

Office Staff

Kathi Lerg, CED
Debbie Schulz, PT
Beth Areklet, PT
Pat Fricke, PT

Farm Loan Manager

Rick Dean, FLM
Larry Sheridan, FLOT

Manistee

Larry Cleary, FLM

County Committee

Eric Herrygers, Chairman
John LaPointe, V. Chair
Curtiss Berndt
James Bush
Chuck Schade

Advisor

Shirley Mackenzie

Website

www.fsa.usda.gov



County Committee Elections

Currently Local Administrative Area (LAA) 5 is up for election. LAA 5 consists of Crystal, Colfax, Elbridge, Leavitt, Ferry, Newfield, Otto and Greenwood townships in Oceana County. The following are those running for county committee:

LAA 5: Eric Herrygers and Edward Kolbe Jr.

Ballots will be mailed on November 6, 2009 and are due back in the county office by close of business December 7, 2009. Your vote matters!

2010 NAP Sales Closing Dates

The final deadlines for 2010 Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage are as follows:

September 1, 2009 for all value loss crops such as Christmas trees, nurseries, fisheries and floriculture.

September 30, 2009 for all forage crops including alfalfa and mixed hay.

November 20, 2009 for coverage on all perennial crops such as asparagus, strawberries and ALL FRUIT.

December 1, 2009 for honey and maple sap.

Any changes to crop acreage, such as removal of orchards or new plantings should also be reported at this time.

Continuous coverage is available for all 2009 NAP Participants. If you were a NAP participant in 2009 and wish to cover the same crop(s) for 2010 it is possible to sign up without making a trip to the office. Just mail your payment in for the amount listed on your continuous coverage letter before the final application deadline and your crops will be covered for the 2010 crop year.

For those wishing to enroll in the program, or those wishing to make changes to their crop coverage, please contact the office in Scottville at (231) 757-3707 as soon as possible.

Farm Storage Facility Loans

The Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program helps to ensure producers have adequate capacity to store their harvested production until they sell it on the open market. The FSFL program provides low interest financing to build or upgrade farm storage or handling facilities. The maximum principle amount of a loan through FSFL is \$500,000. Participants must provide a down payment of 15%, with CCC providing a loan for the remaining 85% of the net cost of the eligible storage facility and permanent drying and handling equipment. Loan terms of 7, 10 or 12 years are available, depending on the amount of the loan. Interest rates for each term rate may be different and are based on the rate at which CCC borrows from the Treasury Department.

Applications for FSFL must be submitted to the FSA office where the farm's records are maintained.

An FSFL must be approved before any site preparation or construction can begin.

The following commodities are eligible for farm storage facility loans:

- * Corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley or minor oil-seeds harvested as whole grain
- * Corn, grain sorghum, wheat, oats or barley harvested as other-than-whole grain
- * Pulse crops – lentils, small chickpeas and dry peas
- * Hay
- * Renewable biomass
- * Fruits (including nuts) and vegetables – cold storage facilities



FARM RECORD CHANGES

If you have purchased or sold land, leased additional land or changed tenants, PLEASE notify the FSA office so farm records may be updated.

For Land Purchases:

- A copy of the deed is required
- All landowners must furnish their tax ID if they are enrolling in a program.



REPORTING CHANGES

It is important to remember to contact us with any record changes that may have occurred. These changes would include, but are not limited to:

- Address-any contact information
- Direct Deposit – to ensure payments are deposited correctly, it is imperative that any changes in bank account information is updated immediately.
- Development- any new parcels of land removed for non-ag uses needs to be reported.
- Owner/Operator Changes – report any changes in land ownership, tenants or crop share arrangements.
- Reconstitutions- changes that requires farm combinations or separations due to sale of land or change in operators should be reported as soon as possible.
- Farm Operating Plan- Any changes to the farming operation.

Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP)

BCAP provides financial assistance to producers or entities that deliver eligible biomass material to designated biomass conversion facilities for use as heat, power, biobased products or bio-fuels. Assistance will be for the collection, harvest, storage and transportation (CHST) costs associated with the delivery of eligible materials.

Biomass conversion facilities and material owners or producers can contact us for details on this program. Applications from biomass facilities interested in participating in BCAP are currently being accepted at the FSA State office.

Once an agreement is signed between FSA and an approved facility, producers who sell these materials can apply for matching payments.

Payments are made at a matching rate of \$1.00 per dry-ton equivalent not to exceed \$45.00 per dry ton equivalent. A biomass material owner or producer is eligible to receive payments for two years.

To obtain a detailed list of eligible materials log on to: www.fsa.usda.gov/bcap or contact our office.

MILC

MILC participants need to modify their existing contract to change the start month for fiscal year 2010 by September 14, 2009. If you want your start month to begin in October, then the change must be received by September 14. The same would apply for each month after that. If the contract is not modified, the existing designation on your contract will remain in effect for 2010. The program began in February of 2009 so most contracts should be modified if you want the months of October, November, December of 2009 and January of 2010 to count toward your total 2010 eligible pounds.



DCP/ACRE Signup

The Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) and Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) sign-up period for fiscal year 2010 will begin October 1, 2009, and run through **June 1, 2010**. All owners and operators who will share in the DCP/ACRE payments on the farm must sign the CCC-509, DCP/ACRE Program Contract. DCP/ACRE contracts with signatures that are obtained **after June 1, 2010**, but before Sept. 30, 2010, will be accepted with a **\$100 late-file fee** to be paid before the contract will be approved for payment. This will apply to each farm that you have enrolled in the program.



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. 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% 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.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

The Natural Resources Conservation Service will be accepting applications for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) until September 30th. The application consists of a completed 'Pre-Screening Tool', a Conservation Program Application, & maps of the offered acres. Eligible acres are cropland, grazing land & non-industrial private forestland. Cropland is considered any land that was planted or considered planted any 4 of the 6 years prior to June 18, 2008. Producers wishing to apply for their agricultural and forest land will have to submit two applications. Eligible producers are those that have established farm and eligibility records with the Farm Service Agency. The producer must also show control of the land for the 5 year contract period.

Producers must be currently meeting a stewardship threshold for one resource concern (soil, water, air, plants, or animals) and must already or agree to address another priority resource concern by the end of the contract. The stewardship threshold will be assessed by using our Conservation Measurement Tool (CMT) after the application has been submitted. This threshold value will be a score that will be used to evaluate your application against other applicants in Northern Michigan. A pre-approved application will lead to an on-site field investigation where NRCS will review your records and verify that your answers to the CMT were correct. If the site visit shows that your answers reflect what is on the land, we will move toward selecting the applicator for funding.

CSP offers payments up to \$40,000 per contract. A participant can be on more than one contract, but can not earn more than \$40,000 annually. Payments are made at the end of the year when NRCS conservationist can review the records of your yearly activities to ensure that you've maintained your past conservation efforts and that your implementing the new stewardship practices. Contact your local NRCS office for more information.

Mason County & W ½ of Lake County:

Kelly Bushong (231) 757-3707

E ½ of Lake County:

Greg White (231) 832-5341

Oceana County:

Mark Kelly (231) 861-5600

Manistee County:

Scott Hughey (231) 889-9666

Farm Tour in Mason County

The West Central Groundwater Stewardship Program and the Mason-Lake Conservation District is hosting a Field Day/Farm Tour on September 24, 2009. The tour will start at the Curtiss Berndt Farm 6.5 miles north of Scottville at the corner of US-31 and Fountain Road at 4:45 pm. This is an approved MAEAP (Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program) Phase 1 Educational Meeting, the first step to MAEAP Verification if you are interested!

At the Berndt Farm, representatives from MDA and Groundwater Technicians from the local conservation districts will talk about the MAEAP process. From this stop participants will car pool to the newly restored Papes wetland just 3 miles north of Berndt's, then across US-31 to Freeman Creek Equipment to look at an agri-chemical handling facility and then back 1 mile to Stakenas Farms to look at their plate cooler water recycling system. Brats and refreshments sponsored by Crop Production Services in Bear Lake will be served after the tour at Farm View Resort (across the highway from Stakenas Farms).

Please RSVP by calling the Mason-Lake Conservation District at 231-757-3708 Ext. 3.

2010 Disaster Program Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to participate in the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE) and/or the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) for 2010 producers must purchase crop insurance for all crops covered by federal crop insurance and NAP coverage on all non-insurable crops that will be grown on the farm. The deadline to purchase 2010 crop insurance on fall seeded small grains and NAP coverage on mixed hay and alfalfa is **September 30, 2009**. The deadline for fruit and asparagus is **November 20, 2009**.

The cost for NAP coverage is \$250 per crop up to the first three crops. The maximum per county is \$750 or \$1875 per producer for all counties in which crops are produced. To purchase NAP coverage, contact the office at (231) 757-3707 as soon as possible.

To purchase Federal Crop Insurance, producers must contact a private provider before the final deadline.

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 at (231) 757-3707 ext. 2.

2009 Commodity Loan Rates

	Mason	Oceana	Lake	Manis-tee
Corn	\$1.82	\$1.78	\$1.75	\$1.78
Red Wheat	\$1.86	\$1.88	\$1.83	\$1.81
White Wheat	\$2.02	\$2.06	\$2.03	\$1.96
Soy	\$4.91	\$4.91	\$4.89	\$4.87
Oats	\$1.32	\$1.32	\$1.32	\$1.32
Barley	\$1.67	\$1.67	\$1.67	\$1.67

Dates to Remember	
Sept. 30	NAP sales closing date for forage
Oct. 12	Office Closed-Federal Holiday
Nov. 11	Office Closed-Federal Holiday
Nov. 20	NAP sales closing date for perennial crops
Nov. 26	Office Closed-Thanksgiving
Dec. 1	NAP sales closing date for honey and maple sap
Dec. 6	COC election Ballots returned or post-marked
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loans



Visit our Web site at:
www.fsa.usda.gov/mi

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