



April 2010



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

Farm Loan Manager

Rick Dean, FLM

Manistee County
Larry Cleary, FLM

County Committee

John Lapointe, Chairman
Chuck Schade, Vice-Chair
Curtiss Berndt
James Bush
Ed Kolbe Jr.

Advisor

Shirley Mackenzie

Website

www.fsa.usda.gov

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Ed Kolbe Jr.! Ed was elected to represent farmers from Crystal, Colfax, Elbridge, Leavitt, Ferry, Newfield, Otto and Greenwood Townships in Oceana County.

The election results for Local Administrative Area (LAA) #5 are:

Ed Kolbe Jr.	Elected To COC
John Hughes	1 st Alternate to COC

The Committee members held their organizational meeting on January 21, 2010 and determined that John LaPointe will serve as the County Committee Chairman and Chuck Schade will be the Vice-Chairman.

Thank You!

We would like to thank Eric Herrygers for his many years of service to the area farmers and the Farm Service Agency as a County Committee member and Chairperson. Due to term limits, Eric was unable to serve on the committee during this term. His vast knowledge of the farming industry was an asset that will be greatly missed.

DCP/ ACRE Signup Underway

The Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) and Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) sign-up period for fiscal year 2010 runs through **June 1, 2010**.

Producers renting land may provide a copy of their lease agreement, or obtain landowner signatures on the contract. The lease must include at a minimum: signature dates, the length of the lease, it must have the landowner and the operator names printed along with signatures and include information pertaining to the terms of the lease agreement.

*****IMPORTANT INFORMATION*****

AGI Verification

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will be working with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to identify program participants that have complied with statutory AGI requirements.

Producers receiving program payments from FSA and/or NRCS will need to complete a consent form (CCC-927 for Individuals and CCC-928 for legal entities) that allows the IRS to disclose information to USDA for 2009 and 2010 AGI compliance purposes. These forms may be obtained from local FSA and NRCS offices or online at:

<http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainservlet>

Producers must mail the consent form directly to the IRS; USDA Service Center employees will not accept any completed forms.

The deadline to submit the consent forms to the IRS is June 15, 2010. Producers who fail to comply will be determined non-compliant and will be required to refund all 2009 and 2010 program payments received from FSA and NRCS.

Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) limits are:

- For Non-farm AGI of more than \$500,000 there will be no eligibility for price support or DCP
- For farm AGI of more than \$750,000 there will be no eligibility for direct payments for DCP
- If AGI is more than \$1 million there will be no eligibility for conservation programs unless 66.66% is derived from farming, ranching, or forestry operations.
- If Non-farm AGI is more than \$1 million there will be no eligibility for conservation program benefits.





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.

Appointments

We recommend you call to make an appointment before coming to the office to conduct business. This will enable us to prepare any necessary paperwork and research issues before your appointment. We realize how important your time is, and this will reduce the amount of time that you have to wait in the office.



2010 NAP Deadlines

You must report NAP losses within 15 days after the loss occurs or is apparent. Losses are not considered reported until you have completed, signed and filed the CCC-576 "Notice of Loss" at the County Office. Failure to comply will result in denial of your 2010 NAP benefits.

The deadline to submit 2009 production records for NAP is **July 15, 2010**. This is also the deadline to report 2010 crops and changes to orchards such as block removals and/or new plantings. Failure to submit production records or report crops will result in zero yields being used to calculate Actual Production History (APH) approved yields. This will ultimately result in reduced payments during loss years. The deadline for fall planted small grains is June 30, 2010.



ACRE Production

Producers that elected to enter the ACRE program last year have until **June 30th for fall seeded small grains and July 15th for all other crops** to submit production records from 2004 through 2008 to create a Benchmark Farm Yield. Once the records are submitted you must sign an FSA-658, Record of Production and Yield. Those failing to submit these records can use the County Plug Yields. Contact the office for more information.

At this same time all producers that elected to enroll in ACRE in 2009 are also required to submit their 2009 production by the same deadline. **These records must be submitted by the deadline or you will not be eligible for 2009 Direct or ACRE payments on the applicable farms.** This means that Direct payments earned on the farms enrolled in ACRE that did not submit 2009 production records will be required to pay back their payments they received in October.

Please contact the office as soon as possible to make an appointment to submit these records or for additional information as to what is considered an acceptable record.

SURE

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disaster that incurred in the crop years 2008 through September 30, 2011. **To be eligible for SURE payments, a producer is required to obtain crop insurance on all crops in all counties or, if crop insurance is not available, to participate in the Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) except for grazed acreage.** However, crop insurance or NAP coverage is no longer required for crops that are not of economic significance or those where the administrative fee required to buy NAP coverage exceeds 10% of the value of the coverage.

Eligible farmers and ranchers who meet the definition of Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, or Beginning Farmer or Rancher are exempt from the risk management purchase requirement.

The following are the conditions that trigger SURE payments:

- at least one crop of economic significance must suffer a 10% production loss due to an eligible disaster condition (crop of economic significance is a crop that has contributed or would have contributed at least 5% or more of the total expected revenue from all crops on the farm)
- producers in counties declared disaster counties by the Secretary of Agriculture, or in contiguous counties, or those who show proof of an individual loss of at least 50% are eligible to receive SURE payments for crop production or quality losses. Losses are measured with consideration to the whole-farm revenue, which includes crop insurance indemnities and commodity program payments, so that producers are not paid more than once for the same loss.

A SURE calculator is available at: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/sure_calculator_2008.xls. The calculator is not official, but is intended for educational use. A fact sheet and backgrounder are also available online.

We are currently taking SURE applications for crop losses that were suffered during 2008. Please contact the office to set up an appointment.

Commodity Loans Available

2009 Crop Commodity Loans are available on wheat, oats, barley and honey until March 31, 2010, and corn and soybeans until May 31, 2010.

To be eligible for a loan a producer must have beneficial interest in the commodity, have a 2009 FSA-578, Report of Acreage on file, and comply with Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions.

Loans mature on the last day of the 9th month following the month in which the loan is approved.

The two types of commodity loans are farm-stored and warehouse stored. Farm-stored loan quantities can be certified or a measurement service can be performed at your cost. Warehouse stored loans require a warehouse certificate with storage paid.

The current interest rate is 1.375%. To access loan rates on the WEB visit:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=prsu&topic=landing>

Farm Storage Facility Loans

Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL) are available on the following types of new facilities and upgrades: conventional type cribs or bins, handling and drying equipment, flat type storage structures, oxygen-limiting and other upright silo type structures, and bunker-type, horizontal or open silo structures. Cold storage facilities for storing fruit and vegetables are now eligible as well.

A producer must demonstrate a storage need based on the producer's 3 year average acreage and production minus any current storage available.

A 15% cash down payment is required; therefore, the loan is limited to 85% of the net cost up to \$500,000. Loans exceeding \$50,000 require a real estate lien. The loan term is 7-12 years and is repaid in equal amortized installments. A loan is not disbursed until the facility has been built and inspected. FSFL are available year round.

The current March FSFL interest rates are 3.125% on a 7-year loan, 3.625% on a 10-year loan and 4.00% on a 12-year loan.

For more information on loans contact Debbie to set up an appointment.



Acreage Reporting Deadline

All acreage must be reported by **JUNE 30th for fall seeded small grains and JULY 15th for all other crops**. All producers participating in DCP/ACRE, CRP, Commodity Loans/LDP, NAP, SURE & other Disaster Programs are required to report their acres.

You **MUST** have an appointment to report you acres. Please call the office to set up your appointment as soon as you have completed your planting.

Reporting Changes

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

- Development – any new parcels of land removed for houses need to be reported.
- Owner/Operator Changes – report any changes in land ownership, tenants or crop share arrangements.
- Reconstitutions – changes that require 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 that may have an effect on “actively engaged” determinations

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.



Address Changes	Dates to Remember												
<p>FSA is now mailing county newsletters from a central site in Lansing.</p> <p>If you receive multiple newsletter at the same address – or are not interested in the material provided,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PLEASE</p> <p>Let FSA know so that the necessary corrections can be made to future mailings.</p> <p>If you know someone that would benefit from this newsletter, please have them contact FSA.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Rural Youth Loans</u></p> <p>The Farm Service Agency makes loans to rural youths to establish and operate income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5000.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Direct Deposit Updates</u></p> <p>FSA payments must be electronically transferred into your bank account. In order for timely payments to be made, producers need to notify the FSA county office if your account information has changed. Payments can be delayed if the FSA office is not aware of updates to your account.</p>												
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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.