

March 2014



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St. Clair/Macomb County FSA Updates

St. Clair/Macomb County FSA Office Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP)

2830 Wadhams Rd
Kimball, MI 48074-1403
Phone: 810-984-3865 x2
Fax: 855-657-0711

County Executive Director:
Dean E Forrester

Farm Loan Manager:
David J Hemker
Phone: 810-664-0895 x2

Program Technicians:
Brenda Boyd
Ellen Wilson
Steve Simmons
Karla Frammolino

Farm Loan Program Technician:
Susan Swosinski

The noninsured crop disaster assistance program (NAP) is a program that helps producers reduce their risk when growing food and fiber crops, specialty crops and crops for livestock feed. These benefits are only available for crops for which the catastrophic level of crop insurance is not available.

To qualify, a producer must be a landowner, tenant or sharecropper who shares in the risk of producing an eligible crop. To remain eligible for NAP assistance, crop acreage must be reported annually. Failure to report acreage and production information may result in reduced or zero NAP assistance. Be aware that acreage reporting and final planting dates vary by crop and by region. Producers should contact the FSA office where their farm records are maintained for questions regarding local acreage reporting and final planting dates.

Application for Coverage

March 17, 2014 is the last day for producers to apply for coverage on 2014 Spring planted crops using Form CCC-471, Application for Coverage, and to pay the service fee at the FSA county office. The application and service fee must be filed by March 17, the deadline date for 2014 spring planted crops.

The service fee applied to the program is \$250 per crop per county, or \$750 per producer per county. The fee cannot exceed a total of \$1875 per producer with farming interest in multiple counties. Limited resource producers may request a waiver of service fees.

**St. Clair/Macomb County
Committee:**

Ronald Beier - Chairman
John Busemann - Member
James Koss - Member
Charles Lewis - Member
Ronald Parks - Member
Loretta Domagalski - Advisor

**Next County Committee
Meeting:**

March 26, 2014 at 9:00 am

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.

FARM STORAGE FACILITY LOAN PROGRAM

The Farm Storage Facility Loan Program (FSFLP) allows producers of eligible commodities to obtain low-interest financing to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities.

The new maximum principal amount of a loan through FSFL is \$500,000. Participants are now required to provide a down payment of 15 percent, with CCC providing a loan for the remaining 85 percent of the net cost of the eligible storage facility and permanent drying and handling equipment. Additional security is required for poured-cement open-bunker silos, renewable biomass facilities, cold storage facilities, hay barns and for all loans exceeding \$50,000. New 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 which CCC borrows from the Treasury Department.

Payments are available in the form of a partial disbursement and the remaining final disbursement. The partial disbursement will be available after a portion of the construction has been completed. The final fund disbursement will be made when all construction is completed. The maximum amount of the partial disbursement will be 50 percent of the projected and approved total loan amount.

The following commodities are eligible for farm storage facility loans:

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

For more information about FSFL please visit your FSA county office or www.fsa.usda.gov.

MICROLOAN PROGRAM

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) developed the Microloan (ML) program to better serve the unique financial operating needs of beginning, niche and small family farm operations.

FSA offers applicants a Microloan designed to help farmers with credit needs of \$35,000 or less. The loan features a streamlined application process built to fit the needs of new and smaller producers. This loan program will also be useful to specialty crop producers and operators of community supported agriculture (CSA).

Eligible applicants can apply for a maximum amount of \$35,000 to pay for initial start-up expenses such as hoop houses to extend the growing season, essential tools, irrigation and annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents, marketing, and distribution expenses. As financing needs increase, applicants can apply for a regular operating loan up to the maximum amount of \$300,000 or obtain financing from a commercial lender under FSA's Guaranteed Loan Program.

Individuals who are interested in applying for a microloan or would like to discuss other farm loan programs available should contact their local FSA office to set up an appointment with a loan official.

BANK ACCOUNT CHANGES

Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into a bank account. In order for timely payments to be made, producers need to notify the FSA county office when an account has been changed or if another financial institution purchases the bank where payments are sent. Payments can be delayed if the FSA office is not aware of updates to bank accounts and routing numbers.

ASKFSA

Are you looking for answers to your FSA questions? Then ASK FSA at askfsa.custhelp.com

AskFSA is an online resource that helps you easily find information and answers to your FSA questions no matter where you are or what device you use. It is for ALL customers, including underserved farmers and ranchers who wish to be enrolled in FSA loans, farm, and conservation programs.

Through AskFSA you can:

- Access our knowledge base 24/7
- Receive answers to your questions faster
- Submit a question and receive a timely response from an FSA expert
- Get notifications when answers important to you and your farming operation are updated
- Customize your account settings and view responses at any time

FSA's self-service assistance anytime, anywhere!

MARCH 2014 INTEREST RATES

90-Day Treasury Bill - .125%

Farm Operating Loans — Direct - 2.250%

Farm Ownership Loans — Direct - 4.250%

Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher - 1.500%

Emergency Loans - 3.250%

Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years) - 2.125% , (10 years) - 2.750%, (12 years) - 2.875%

Commodity Loans 1996-Present -1.125%

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), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).