



March 2012

SANILAC FSA County Office News

FARM SERVICE AGENCY

USDA Service Center

Sanilac County FSA
50 E Miller Rd
Sandusky, MI 48471
810-648-2998 (phone)
810-648-4670 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/mi

Hours

Monday – Friday
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Website

www.fsa.usda.gov

County Committee

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Sharon Rockwell
Mark Stone

County Executive Director

Rosemarie Gallagher

Farm Loan Manager

Steve Craig

Office Staff Extension

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Kim Deming	110
Jamie Maier	109
Brenda Nichol	112
Sherri Sadro	100
Felicia Schulte	104
Kaylee Erickson	107

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New Reporting Deadlines

A change in acreage reporting deadlines is coming for the 2013 crop year. To be considered timely filed, all forage and fall-seeded small grains will be required to be reported by **November 15, 2012**. This change will align our deadlines with crop insurance reporting deadlines. You will no longer be able to delay certification of your wheat, alfalfa, oats, speltz, etc. until June 30th. Mark your calendars now so you don't miss the deadline.

FSA Moving to Electronic Newsletters – Tell Your Neighbors

The USDA Farm Service Agency offices are moving toward a paperless operation. Producers are asked to enroll in the new GovDelivery system which will provide notices, newsletters and electronic reminders instead of a hard copy through the mail. FSA, like many other organizations, is trying to work smarter and be more efficient. Moving to electronic notifications via email will help conserve resources and save taxpayer dollars. Please share newsletter information with your neighbors if you know someone without e-mail capability. County Committee ballots will continue to be mailed to all eligible producers. Interested producers may subscribe to receive e-mail updates by going to the USDA GovDelivery sign-up page found at the following web address:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe>

Check out Michigan's website at:
www.fsa.usda.gov/mi

2012 Crop Year DCP-ACRE Contract Signup

Contact the office today to schedule an appointment to sign up for your annual Direct and Counter Cyclical Program (DCP) and ACRE (Average Crop Revenue Election) contracts. Contracts are available as of **January 23rd** for the 2012 DCP and ACRE Contract enrollment period and it will run thru **June 1, 2012**.

The 2008 Farm Bill stipulated that no advance payments would be available for the 2012 crop year DCP or ACRE contracts. Final payments will be received in October 2012.



Refunds Not Included on 1099-G Forms

With income tax season in full swing please be aware that 1099-G forms list ALL payments made to your Taxpayer Identification Number and therefore do not reflect refunds of DCP Advance Payments you may have paid back due to reconstitutions on your farms. Pay close attention to your 1099-G to make sure it shows the correct amount you need to claim in 2011. You can also sign up for e-gov access to get a statement of your financial activity from our office.





Loans for the Socially Disadvantaged

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operating or to help purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided priority funding for socially disadvantaged applicants.

A socially disadvantaged applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of a group.

FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

March 12, 2012 – April 6, 2012 CRP General Signup 43

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is the USDA's largest private-lands voluntary conservation program. CRP helps agricultural producers convert environmentally sensitive agricultural land to achieve conservation benefits. Certain practices are available on a continuous basis. Producers can offer land for CRP general signup March 12, 2012 through April 6, 2012.

To be eligible for CRP, the producer must have owned or operated the land for at least 12 months prior to the close of the CRP signup, April 6, 2012. Land must be cropland which has been planted or considered planted to an agricultural commodity four of the six crop years from 2002- 2007, and which is physically and legally capable of being planted in a normal manner to an agricultural commodity. Alfalfa and other multiyear grasses and legumes grown in a rotation not to exceed 12 years may also be eligible.

Benefits to CRP include:

- improved and increased wildlife habitat
- improved water quality
- increased soil quality
- reduce soil erosion
- increase air quality

In return for planting long-term resource conserving covers, FSA provides CRP participants annual rental payments, maintenance payments, cost-share and technical assistance.

Don't miss this opportunity! Contact your local USDA Service Center for an appointment or more information.

Since this is a nationally competitive bid process, participants will have to decide what type of practice cover they will implement on the acreage bid for CRP.

Different practice covers have corresponding point values in the competitive bid process:

CP1: Permanent introduced grasses and legumes;

10 points for planting of 2 – 3 species of an introduced grass species,
40 points for planting a mixture (minimum of 4 species) of at least 3 introduced grasses and at least 1 forb or legume species best suited for wildlife in the area.

CP2: Establishment of permanent native grasses and legumes.

20 points for planting a mixed stand (minimum of 3 species) of at least 2 native grass species and at least 1 forb or legume species beneficial to wildlife,
50 points for planting a mixed stand (minimum of 5 species) of at least 3 native grasses and at least 1 shrub, forb, or legume species best suited for wildlife in the area.

CP3 Tree Planting (general)

- 10 points for planting northern conifers (softwoods) – solid stand with more than 850 pines/softwoods per acre.
- 50 points for planting northern conifers (softwoods) at a rate of 750 to 850 trees per acre with 10% – 20% openings managed to a CP4d wildlife cover.

CP3A – Hardwood tree planting

- 10 points for a solid stand of non-mast producing hardwood species
- 20 points for solid stand of single hard mast producing species
- 30 points for mixed stand of 2 hardwood species best suited for wildlife in the area
- 50 points for a mixed stand (3 or more species) of hardwood species best suited for wildlife in the area.



Beginning and Limited Resource Farmers

FSA assists beginning farmers and or members of socially disadvantaged groups to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's median size.

Additional program information, loan applications and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may visit www.fsa.usda.gov



CP4D Permanent wildlife habitat

- 40 points for a mixed stand (minimum of 4 species) of either grasses, trees, shrubs, forbs, or legumes planted in mixes, blocks, or strips best suited for various wildlife species in the area.
- 50 points for a mixed stand (minimum of 5 species) of either predominantly native species including grasses, forbs, legumes, shrubs, or trees planted in mixes, blocks, or strips best suited to providing wildlife habitat. Only native grasses are authorized

CP12 Wildlife food plot

- Food plots are small non cost shared plantings in a larger area
- 5 points is available
- Food plots will never be the predominant cover, and must be used in conjunction with another practice cover.

CP25 Rare and declining habitat restoration

- Seeding or planting will be best suited for wildlife in the area
- 50 points – plant species selections will be based upon Ecological Site Description data.

Participants can optimize their bid offer by offering an amount less than the Maximum Payment Rental Rate.

Only one landowner signature is needed to place a bid by the end date of April 6th. If your bid is accepted at the national level, then all landowners listed on the recorded deed will be required to sign the CRP-1 Contract.

If your bid is accepted at the National Level, and after the April 6th deadline you decide not to enroll your land in the CRP program, liquidated damages will apply at 25% of the rental rate x the number of acres bid.

Please contact the office at 810-648-2998, extension 2 for an appointment, if you are interested in placing a competitive bid.

Lease Requirements for DCP and ACRE

Contracts:

Leases must contain:

- The type of lease (cash, share, etc.)
- Landowner name, signature, and date
- Farm operator name, signature, and date
- Length of lease (list number of years or end date)

*Optional: a statement that allows the operator to combine the land with land he/she operates if he/she wishes

FARM STORAGE FACILITY LOANS (FSFL)

Low cost financing for storage facilities is available for qualifying producers to build or remodel farm storage facilities for a variety of commodities, including wheat, soybeans, corn, hay, renewable biomass, and cold storage for fruits and vegetables. The interest rate used for the loan is set when the loan is approved.

Loan terms of 7, 10 and 12 years are available for the purchase and installation of new, eligible storage facilities or permanently affixed drying and handling equipment or for new components used to remodel existing facilities. Eligible facilities include conventional type bins or cribs, new oxygen-limiting upright and bunker silos, new permanently affixed structures suitable for storing hay and renewable biomass, and new cold storage facilities suitable for storing the fruits and vegetables produced by the borrower.

Maximum Loan limit is \$500,000. A mortgage is required on all amounts over \$50,000.

Loan terms:

- \$100,000 or less – 7 years;
- \$100,000.01 - \$250,000 – 7 or 10 yrs;
- \$250,000.01 - \$500,000 – 7, 10 or 12 yrs

Sign-up is continuous, as long as CCC funds are available.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

Program participants convicted under federal or state law of any planting, cultivating, growing, producing, harvesting or storing a controlled substance are ineligible for program payments and benefits. If convicted of one of these offenses, the program participant shall be ineligible during that crop year and the four succeeding crop years.

More information is available at the Farm Service Agency office located at 50 E Miller Rd, Sandusky, MI 48471. If you have additional questions you may call the office at (810) 648-2998, ext. 2.

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 Office in person or by phone.



Attention Dairy Producers

Just a reminder to all producers that are signed up for the MILC program to **keep submitting those milk stubs!** The program continues through September, 2012.

Milk producers that are not already signed up may still do so at any time before the program end date. New producers that submit a MILC for benefits can select as their production start month for the dairy operation either:

- the month the MILC is submitted
- any month from the remaining months in the FY as long as it is on or before the 14th of the month **before** the month that you wish to start receiving payment

Any producer that is already signed up and wishes to change the start month must do so on or before the 14th of the month before the month that you currently have chosen as a start month. So if the selected start month is April, 2012 and you wish to change that start month to May, 2012, the change must be made on or before March 14, 2012.

FSA determines the per hundredweight payment rate for the applicable month by subtracting the Boston Class I price for that month from the \$16.94 baseline price, and multiplying the difference by:

- 45 percent during the period Oct. 1, 2008, through Aug. 31, 2012; or
- 34 percent during the period Oct. 1, 2007, through Sept. 30, 2008, and during Sept. 2012.

The baseline price of \$16.94/cwt is adjusted upward when the National Average Dairy Feed Ration Adjustment (NADFR) is greater than the following established levels:

- Jan. 1, 2008 - Aug. 31, 2012 \$7.35
- Sept. 1 - 30, 2012 \$9.50

The annual maximum eligible pound limit per dairy operation per fiscal year is as follows:
 Oct 1, 2008 - Aug 31, 2012 - 2,985,000 lbs
 Sept. 2012 – 2,400,000 lbs

Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve Program, CREP
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loan
April 6	General CRP Sign Up Ends
June 1	Crop Disaster Program (SURE) Signup for 2010 losses Ends
June 1	2012 DCP Sign Up Ends
June 30	2012 Wheat Certification Deadline
July 15	All-Other Crop Certification Deadline
Sept. 30	Lease Agreements due

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.