



# Van Buren/Kalamazoo Farm Service Agency NEWSLETTER

July 2010

Issue No. 2

## Van Buren FSA

1035 E. Michigan Ave.  
Paw Paw, MI 49079  
269-657-7055  
269-657-4925 FAX

## County Committee

Timothy Hood  
Ryan Meachum  
Chester Ray

## Staff

Terry Ailes, PT  
Debi Gavrun, PT  
William Hogan, FLM  
Pamela Merwin, PT  
Carolyn Skeen, PT  
Ron Slaughter, PT  
James L. Vogt, CED

## Kalamazoo FSA

1911 W. Centre Ave.  
Portage, MI 49024  
269-327-0940  
269-327-2456 FAX

## County Committee

Ben Fritz  
Belden Smith  
Tim Vosburg

## Staff

Dan Brauer, PT  
Phillip DeYoung, FLM  
Marnie Plucienik, PT  
Matthew Skrzypek, FA  
James L. Vogt, CED

## HOURS

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

## FSA Website

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



## **CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM GENERAL SIGNUP ANNOUNCED!**

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack has announced that a general sign-up for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) will begin on August 2, 2010 and continue through August 27, 2010. During the sign-up period, farmers and ranchers may offer eligible land for CRP's competitive general sign-up at their county Farm Service Agency (FSA) office. The 2008 Farm Bill authorized USDA to maintain CRP enrollment up to 32 million acres.

To help ensure that interested farmers and ranchers are aware of the sign-up period, USDA has signed partnership agreements with several conservation and wildlife organizations, which will play an active role in USDA's 2010 CRP outreach efforts. Additionally, Secretary Vilsack has recorded two public service announcements, which are available to the press and public at [www.fsa.usda.gov/psa](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/psa).

CRP is a voluntary program that assists farmers, ranchers and other agricultural producers to use their environmentally sensitive land for conservation benefits. Producers enrolling in CRP plant long-term, resource-conserving covers in exchange for rental payments, cost-share, and technical assistance. CRP protects millions of acres of America's topsoil from erosion and is designed to improve the nation's natural resources base. Participants voluntarily remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production by entering into long-term contracts for 10 to 15 years.

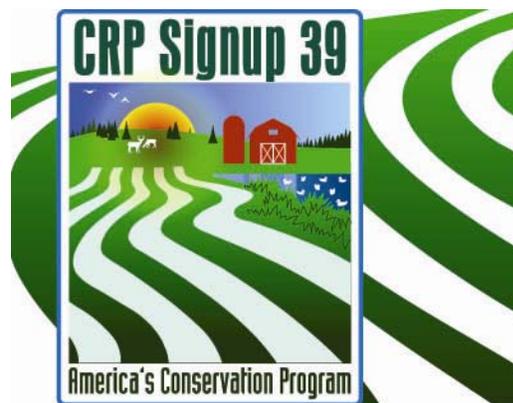
In exchange, participants receive annual rental payments and a payment of up to 50 percent of the cost of establishing conservation practices.

By reducing water runoff and sedimentation, CRP also protects groundwater and helps improve the condition of lakes, rivers, ponds and streams. Acreage enrolled in the CRP is planted to resource-conserving vegetative covers, making the program a major contributor to wildlife population increases in many parts of the country. As a result, CRP has provided significant opportunities for hunting and fishing on private lands.

Land currently not enrolled in CRP may be offered in this sign-up provided all eligibility requirements are met. Additionally, current CRP participants with contracts expiring this fall covering about 4.5 million acres may make new contract offers. Contracts awarded under this sign-up are scheduled to become effective Oct. 1, 2010.

FSA implements CRP on behalf of Commodity Credit Corporation. FSA will evaluate and rank eligible CRP offers using an Environmental Benefits Index (EBI) for environmental benefits to be gained from enrolling the land in CRP. The EBI consists of five environmental factors (wildlife, water, soil, air and enduring benefits) and cost. Decisions on the EBI cutoff will be made after the sign-up ends and after analyzing the EBI data of all the offers.

Those who would have met previous sign-up EBI thresholds are not guaranteed a contract under this sign-up. In addition to the general sign-up, CRP's continuous sign-up program will be ongoing. Continuous acres represent the most environmentally desirable and sensitive land. For more information, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/crp](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/crp).



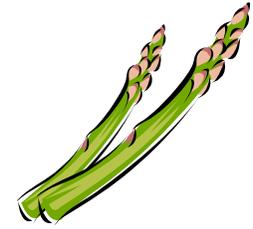
Interested producers should contact their local FSA County Office to schedule an appointment to apply.

Van Buren FSA 269-657-7055  
Kalamazoo FSA 269-327-0940

## **ATTENTION ASPARAGUS PRODUCERS: TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA) FOR FARMERS**

### *Available Benefits:*

- FREE technical training to develop business plans
- Up to \$4,000 to implement initial business plan
- Up to an additional \$8,000 for developing a long-term business plan



### *Basic Eligibility Requirements:*

- Produced and shared in the risk of producing asparagus in 2009
- Produced and shared in the risk of producing asparagus in 2006, 2007 or 2008
- Provide sale receipts of total production to show either lower production in 2009 or lower prices received in 2009
- Must meet FSA Average Adjusted Gross Income provisions

### *Where to Apply:*

- File Form FSA 229-1, sales receipts and other documents with your local FSA County Office by September 23, 2010

## **DISASTER SET-ASIDE PROGRAM**

The Disaster Set-Aside (DSA) program could be available to you if your operation has suffered losses as a result of a natural disaster and you cannot pay all of your expenses, debts to other creditors and FSA farm loan payments.

Under the DSA program, you may be eligible to delay any or all of your FSA farm loan payments due this year or next (but not both). This payment will be moved to the end of your loan to be paid on or before the final due date. Loans with less than 2 years remaining are not eligible. DSA will only be approved if all farm loan payments will be up-to-date after the payments are set aside.

To apply for DSA, you must provide this office with a letter, signed by all parties liable for the debt, requesting DSA and your actual production, income and expense records for the last three years. FSA might request additional information later if it is needed to make an eligibility decision. Complete applications must be submitted to FSA before your account becomes 90 days past due and prior to the end of the disaster designation. Please note: FSA will take a lien on all your assets (with few exceptions) if your account is past due when the DSA is closed.

Please refer to the chart below for eligible disasters and application dates. Kalamazoo County producers should contact Phillip DeYoung at 269-781-4263; Van Buren County producers should contact William Hogan at 269-657-7055.

## **EMERGENCY FARM LOANS AVAILABLE**

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides emergency loans to help producers recover from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding, other natural disasters, or quarantine.



Emergency loan funds may be used to:

- Restore or replace essential property;
- Pay all or part of production costs associated with the disaster year;
- Pay essential family living expenses;
- Reorganize the farming operation; and
- Refinance certain debts.

Please refer to the chart below for eligible disasters and application dates. Kalamazoo County producers should contact Phillip DeYoung at 269-781-4263; Van Buren County producers should contact William Hogan at 269-657-7055.

### **CURRENT DISASTER DESIGNATIONS FOR KALAMAZOO AND VAN BUREN COUNTIES**

<i>Date Declared</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Disaster Description</i>	<i>Final Date to Apply</i>
02/01/2010	S2972	Frost, freeze, excessive rainfall – 08/01/2009 and continuing	10/01/2010
02/01/2010	S2973	Freeze, frost, excessive snow, low temps, cold weather 01/01/2009 – 07/24/2009	10/01/2010
02/01/2010	S2974	Excessive rain, flooding, flash flooding, hail, lightning, tornadoes, high winds – 04/01/2009 – 09/01/2009	01/01/2010
02/01/2010	S2975	Drought 05/01/2009 and continuing	10/01/2010
06/24/2010	N-1021	Series of tornadoes that occurred 04/05/2010 through 06/06/2010	02/25/2011

## **REMINDER FOR ALL NAP POLICY HOLDERS**

NAP (Non-insured Assistance Program) policy holders are reminded that the deadline to report any weather-related crop losses (in writing at your local FSA Office) is 15 days from the date of disaster occurrence or the date damage is apparent, and BEFORE final harvest begins. If you have previously reported a crop loss, please contact your local office once harvest is completed for a post-harvest field visit. ALL NAP POLICY HOLDERS are required to report final production. Keep your Actual Production History (APH) current by reporting annual production in a timely manner! Please feel free to call your local FSA office with any questions or to schedule an appointment to report your production.

## **2010 TREE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP)**

FSA's Tree Assistance Program (TAP) provides financial assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by 2010 natural disasters. Final dates to apply for weather-related disaster event losses between May 8, 2010, to September 30, 2011, is within 90 calendar days from the later of the disaster event, or the date when the loss of trees, bushes or vines is apparent. Please call your local FSA office for an appointment to apply.

## **SUPPLEMENTAL REVENUE ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS (SURE) PROGRAM**

Insured producers are reminded that they may qualify for disaster assistance if you carried Federal crop insurance on all crops that exceeded 5% or more of your total crop revenue. Signup for the SURE program will continue until a deadline is announced and currently covers only the 2008 crop year. Contact your local FSA office to apply.

## **ACRE YIELD DATA DEADLINE EXTENDED**

The deadline for 2009 production certification to comply with ACRE was extended until September 1, 2010. The extension is for completing both the farm benchmark yield (2004 through 2008) and the actual farm yield (2009). Participants in the 2009 ACRE program must certify their yields by September 1, 2010, to remain eligible for ACRE benefits.

## **2010-CROP COMMODITY LOANS AVAILABLE**

Marketing assistance loans provide producers interim financing at harvest time to meet cash flow needs without having to sell their commodities when market prices are typically at harvest-time lows. Loans mature on the last day of the ninth calendar month following the month in which the loan is approved. The current interest rate is 1.375% and the loan rates are as follows:

<i>County</i>	<i>Hard Red Wheat</i>	<i>Soft Red Wheat</i>	<i>Soft White Wheat</i>	<i>Oats</i>	<i>Corn</i>	<i>Soybeans</i>	<i>Sunflower Seed</i>	<i>Canola</i>
Kalamazoo	N/A	\$1.82/bu	\$2.01/bu	\$1.38/bu	\$1.87/bu	\$4.92/bu	\$8.64/cwt	\$9.14/cwt
Van Buren	\$2.85/bu	\$1.91/bu	\$2.08/bu	\$1.38/bu	\$1.87/bu	\$4.93/bu	\$8.71/cwt	\$9.21/cwt

*Note: Loan rates will be reduced by 30% for commodities that are grown on farms enrolled in ACRE.*

## **THINKING OF CLEARING A FENCE ROW? REMOVING TREES? ADDING CROPLAND?**

Most USDA programs require compliance with sodbuster and swampbuster provisions. These provisions require producers to follow an approved conservation system on all highly erodible land planted to an annual crop (sodbuster), as determined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Further, USDA participants are prohibited from converting wetlands for agricultural production purposes (swampbuster) and planting an agricultural commodity on converted wetlands, as determined by NRCS. Be sure to have determinations made on any new land you plan to plant to annual crops.

Swampbuster provisions state that converting a wetland to make possible the planting of a crop will result in the loss of all USDA benefits. To avoid this possibility it is strongly recommended that producers come into the FSA office ahead of time to file an AD 1026 for referral to NRCS.

**It is necessary for NRCS to review any actions which could result in the modification of an area determined wet.** This includes any clearing of trees or brush (including fence rows), draining, dredging, filling, or plans to install, maintain or improve tile.

## **VISIT YOUR LOCAL FARMERS' MARKET THIS WEEK!**

<i>Location</i>	<i>Day(s)</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Contact</i>
Bangor	Thursday	2:00 pm – 7:00 pm	269-427-6660
Decatur	Saturday	8:30 am – 1:00 pm	269-423-8500
Lawrence	Saturday	9:00 am – 1:00 pm	269-674-8730
South Haven	Friday	7:00 am – 5:00 pm	269-637-2551
Kalamazoo	Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday	7:00 am – 2:00 pm	269-337-8191
Richland	Wednesday	3:30 pm – 6:30 pm	269-629-0001
Texas Township	Saturday	8:00 am – 12:00 noon	269-375-1591
Vicksburg	Friday	2:30 pm – 6:30 pm	269-649-2453



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
 VAN BUREN FARM SERVICE AGENCY  
 1035 EAST MICHIGAN AVENUE  
 PAW PAW, MICHIGAN 49079

PRESORTED STANDARD  
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
 LANSING, MI  
 PERMIT NO. 19

**IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER**

August 2	Last day to file nomination forms at the local FSA Office
September 1	Extended deadline to submit ACRE yield data
September 6	Labor Day Holiday – Offices Closed
September 30	Deadline to provide supporting documentation for 2010 DCP/ACRE
September 30	Application deadline for the 2011 NAP coverage for small grains, fall mint, fall speltz and forage crops
October 11	Columbus Day Holiday – Offices Closed
November 5	Ballots mailed to eligible voters
November 11	Veterans’ Day Holiday – Offices Closed
November 25	Thanksgiving Day Holiday – Offices Closed
December 6	Last day to return voted ballots to the local FSA Office
December 24	Christmas Day Holiday – Offices Closed
December 31	New Year’s Day Holiday – Offices Closed
January 1, 2011	Elected committee members and alternates take office
Ongoing	SURE Program Enrollment
Ongoing	SAFE Program Enrollment
Ongoing	CRP Continuous Signup
Ongoing	Farm Storage Facility Loans

**eGOV CUSTOMER REGISTRATION PROCESS**

1. Access your website of interest:
  - USDA Customer Statement <http://customerstatement.usda.gov>
  - Electronic LDP Signup [http://www.fsa.usda.gov/egov/eldp\\_default.htm](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/egov/eldp_default.htm)
  - Electronic DCP Signup [http://www.fsa.usda.gov/egov/edcp\\_default.htm](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/egov/edcp_default.htm)
2. Create an online user profile and apply for Level 2 access
3. Respond to the verification email within 7 days of receipt.
4. Visit the County Office in person and provide photo identification to the Local Registration Authority in order to receive Level 2 Activation.
5. Access Level 2 applications within 1 hour after profile has been activated.

**SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS**

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact their local County Office in person or by phone.

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.