



Washtenaw/Wayne County News

Ann Arbor
USDA Service Center

Washtenaw/Wayne
County FSA
7203 Jackson Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
734-761-8789 (phone)
734-662-1686 (fax)

www.fsa.usda.gov/mi

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

County Committee
Luther Schaible
Robert Breuninger
Joyce Bujak
G Pete Elliott
Beth McCalla - Advisor

County Committee meetings
Quarterly – Please call the office for date and time.

Staff
Program Technicians
Lori Maulbetsch
Lori Terreault
Laura Whitaker

Field Reporter
Mark Stapish

County Executive Director
Linda Rector

Office closed for the following Holidays:

January 2 - New Years Day
January 23-Martin Luther-King Day
February 20 – Presidents Day



Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE)

SURE provides financial assistance to producers who suffer qualifying losses due to natural disasters. To qualify for SURE requires that producers obtain either crop insurance or Non-Insured Crop Assistance Program (NAP) for all crops. SURE evaluates qualifying losses based on total farm revenue, not individual crop losses. **Signup for the SURE Program for 2010 crop losses began November 14, 2011 and continues through June 1, 2012.**

To be eligible for SURE a farm or ranch must have:

At least a 10 percent production loss on a crop of economic significance;

- A policy or plan of insurance under the Federal Crop Insurance Act or the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for all economically significant crops;
- Been physically located in a county that was declared a primary disaster county or contiguous county by the Agriculture Secretary under a Secretarial Disaster Designation. Without a Secretarial Disaster Designation, individual producers may be eligible if the actual production on the farm is less than 50 percent of the normal production on the farm due to a natural disaster.

Producers considered socially disadvantaged, a beginning farmer, or a limited resource farmer may be eligible for SURE without a policy or plan of insurance or NAP coverage.

Farmers interested in signing up must do so **before June 1, 2012.**

Direct & Counter-Cyclical Payment Program (DCP)/ Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program

2012 DCP/ACRE signup starts January 23, 2012 and continues through June 1, 2012.

Another change for 2012 is no advance payments, the total payment will be made in October 2012.

If you elected ACRE in any year throughout the 2008 Farm Bill you are committed to the ACRE provisions through 2012, and you must enroll each year you intend to participate and receive benefits no later than June 1.

DCP - FSA computes *Direct* payments using payment acres (85% of established base acres), payment yields established for each farm, and rates established by statute regardless of market prices. **Counter-cyclical** payment rates vary depending on market prices and are issued only when the effective price for a commodity is statutorily set below its target price.

ACRE - The Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) is a revenue-based commodity program authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill as an alternative to DCP. The ACRE alternative provides eligible producers a state level revenue guarantee, based on the 5-year state Olympic average yield and the 2-year national average price.

Producers who elect the ACRE program for a farm agree to:

- forgo counter-cyclical payments;
- accept a 20-percent reduction of the direct payments;
- accept a 30-percent reduction in loan rates for all commodities produced on the farm.

DCP/ACRE continued on page 2

DCP/ACRE continued

Commodities eligible for ACRE payments are wheat, corn, grain sorghum, barley, oats, soybeans, sunflower seed, canola, flaxseed, safflower, mustard seed, rapeseed, sesame seed, dry peas, lentils, small chickpeas and large chickpeas.

ACRE is paid on planted and considered planted acres, therefore in order to qualify for payments producers must:

- actually “grow” the crop or be prevented from planting a specific crop (not simply have a pre-determined “base”) and
- annually report their yields to the County Office.

The ACRE program was created to give producers an option in lieu of traditional counter-cyclical payments.

Farm Reconstitutions

For FSA program purposes, tracts having the same owner and the same operator are grouped under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation take place, a tract and/or farm reconstitution may be necessary. You will need to provide a copy of your deed or recorded land contract for purchased property.

If you no longer farm a tract of land in a multi-tracked farm a reconstitution will be needed.

The reconstitution—or recon—is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation.

Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by **June 1**.



NAP Coverage

The Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) was designed to reduce financial losses that occur when natural disasters cause a catastrophic loss of production or prevented planting of an eligible crop by providing coverage equivalent to catastrophic (CAT) insurance. Statute limits NAP to each commercial crop or agricultural commodity, except livestock, for which CAT is not available.

Producers who already have coverage on 2011 NAP crops may choose to continue coverage on the same crop or crops for 2012, if the applicable service fee is submitted by the application closing date. A new CCC-471, application for coverage is not required to be signed when applying for continuous coverage of the same crop or crops.

Producers who choose to add a new crop(s) or delete a crop(s) from previous year’s coverage or changing crop shares must file a new CCC-471 with signatures and pay the applicable service fee.

Spring seed crop deadline is March 15, 2012. Please contact the County Office for a complete listing of crops and deadlines.



Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation Compliance

Landowners and operators are reminded that in order to receive payments from USDA, compliance with Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions are required. Farmers with HEL determined soils are reminded of tillage, crop residue, and rotation requirements as specified per their conservation plan. Producers are to notify the USDA Farm Service Agency prior to conducting land clearing or drainage projects to insure compliance. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in the loss of eligibility and all Federal payments.

Changing Bank Accounts

All FSA payments are to be made by direct deposit unless there is a financial hardship to prevent it.



In order to make timely payments, you need to notify the office if you close your account or if your bank is purchased by another financial institution. Payments can be delayed if we are not aware of changes to account and routing numbers.

County Committee Election Results for LAA#1:

Congratulations to Luther Schaible! Luther was re-elected to represent farmers/ranchers from Lyndon, Dexter, Sylvan, Sharon, Freedom, Manchester, and Bridgewater Townships on the county committee. Gary Bross was a write-in candidate and has agreed to serve as the first alternate.

Luther Schaible – Member

Gary Bross – 1st alternate

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

Signature Policy

Using the correct signature when doing business with FSA can save time and prevent a delay in program benefits.

When signing on one's behalf the signature must agree with the name typed or printed on the form, or be a variation that does not cause the name and signature to be in disagreement.

Example - John W. Smith is on the form. The signature may be John W. Smith or J.W. Smith or J. Smith. Or Mary J. Smith may be signed as Mrs. Mary Joe Smith, M.J. Smith, Mary Smith, etc



FAXED signatures will be accepted for certain forms and other documents provided the acceptable program forms are approved for FAXED signatures. Producers are responsible for the successful transmission and receipt of FAXED information.



County Committee (COC) Advisors

FSA County Committee (COC) Advisors are a valued voice for underrepresented groups and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. County committee members and their county executive directors, actively reach out to producer groups who are underrepresented on county committees. The COC is required to submit the name of their nominee to the state committee for confirmation, no later than February 1 of each year. If you or someone you know meets the requirements below and would like to be a nominee please contact the Washtenaw-Wayne County FSA Office. **Note:** Advisors do **not** have authority to sign documents.

Eligibility requirements for COC advisor nominee include: be actively participating in farming or ranching in the COC's jurisdiction; be willing and able to serve as an advisor, if appointed; indicate in writing a willingness and ability to serve; and reside in the COC jurisdiction.

Duties and Responsibilities of COC Advisors include: attending each COC meeting, including executive sessions; participating in all deliberations; increasing awareness of and participation in FSA activities, including elections, by eligible voters to ensure that socially disadvantaged group problems and viewpoints are understood and considered in FSA actions; helping to develop interest and incentives in socially disadvantaged group members for considering FSA work as a career; actively soliciting candidates from socially disadvantaged groups for nomination during the election process; able to perform special duties at COC's request; and serve for a 12-month period not to exceed 9 consecutive years beginning March 1 each year.

News from Farm Loan Programs

As "The Lender of First Opportunity", the Farm Service Agency, through the Lenawee County Service Center's Farm Loan team, provides Direct and Guaranteed Farm Ownership loans, Direct and Guaranteed Operating loans, and Emergency loans to applicants throughout our service area. Farmers in Wayne, Washtenaw, Monroe, and Lenawee Counties who are interested in learning what FSA Loan Programs has to offer or to obtain

an application, should contact us by mail at 1100 Sutton Rd., Adrian, MI 49221 or by phone at (517) 263-7400. If you would like to stop by and pick up an application; we would gladly take some time to discuss your operation and intentions as well as which loan type(s) may work best in your operation. The availability of Emergency loans is dependent on being designated as a disaster area and we currently have designations for excessive rain, flooding, flash flooding, high winds, excessive heat and tornadoes for the 2011 growing season for Lenawee and Monroe Counties. Emergency loans are available for applicants who meet the eligibility criteria and submit a complete application by May 7, 2012. Please contact our office for additional details about our loan programs. The Farm Loan team would appreciate the opportunity to discuss how FSA can help you in your present situation. We continue to accept and process loan applications; loans are being funded as money is made available. Funding for Beginning Farmer and Socially Dis-Advantaged loans remains a priority.

Interest Rates: Please contact the FSA Office for interest rates for the following:

- Farm Operating and Ownership loans
- Limited Resource Loans
- Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down
- Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher
- Emergency Loans
- Farm Storage Facility Loans 7, 10, or 12 year
- Commodity Loans 1996-Present

Change in Farming Operation

If you have bought or sold land, or if you have picked up or dropped rented land from your operation, make sure you report the changes to the office as soon as possible.

Failure to maintain accurate records with FSA on all land you have an interest in can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties.

Making the record changes now will save you time in the spring.

Update signature authorization when changes in the operation occur.

Producers are reminded to contact the office of a change in operations on a farm so that records can be kept current and accurate.

State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (CRP - SAFE)

Enrollment in State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) continues and projects are currently authorized in 35 states, including Michigan. SAFE is a component of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), tailored to specific watershed areas. SAFE practices serve to restore wildlife habitat by establishing small blocks of grassland (10-40 acres) and enhancing existing habitats with the partnership of local agencies and organizations. Certain wildlife species are in decline, and SAFE habitats are designed to help revitalize these populations. In SAFE authorized areas, farmers and ranchers can offer eligible land for 10 to 15-year CRP contracts. These measures help prevent soil and nutrients from running into regional waterways and affecting water quality. The long-term vegetative cover also improves wildlife habitat and soil quality. In addition to the annual rental payment and cost-share, SAFE may offer participants an upfront one-time CRP Signing Incentive Payment (SIP) of \$100 per each SIP-eligible acre and a Practice Incentive Payment when cost share is made. For more information about potential SAFE projects in your area, contact your local FSA office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov and navigate to Conservation Programs.

Special Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment to attend or participate in meetings or events sponsored by the Farm Service Agency. If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in one of our events, please call the FSA county office and we will be happy to make any needed arrangements

Important Dates	
<i>January 31, 2012</i>	<i>Final day to apply for MAL/LDP wool/unshorn lambs</i>
<i>March 31, 2012</i>	<i>Final date to request 2011 small grain & honey loans</i>
<i>May 31, 2012</i>	<i>Final date to request 2011 Feed grain & oilseed loans</i>
<i>June 1, 2012</i>	<i>DCP/ACRE signup deadline</i>
<i>June 1, 2012</i>	<i>2010 SURE Application Deadline.</i>
<i>On going</i>	<i>Farm Storage Facility Loan</i>
<i>On going</i>	<i>CRP-State Acres for Wildlife (SAFE)</i>
<i>On going</i>	<i>Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)</i>
<i>On going</i>	<i>Continuous Conservation Reserve program</i>

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 low interest rate changes monthly and is based on the rate of interest charged on Treasury Securities of comparable term. 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 or remanufactured 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. Loan limits are up to \$500,000. Loan terms: \$100,000.00 or less – 7 years; \$100,000.01 - \$250,000.00 – 7 or 10 years; \$250,000.01 - \$500,000.00 – 7, 10 or 12 years. Sign-up is continuous as long as CCC funds are available.

Email Addresses Requested!

To cut costs, **FSA is increasing our communication with farmers through email.** If we do not have a current email address on file for you, please visit or call (734-761-8789, ext. 2) the Washtenaw/Wayne County FSA office with an address where you can receive information about FSA. This can be your own email, or **if you do not have an email account, you can provide us with a friend or family member's email** that would pass the information along to you. In the future, the Washtenaw/Wayne County FSA office will be sending information, such as newsletters and reminders, to your email.

In the mean time, to receive general notifications from FSA via email you can visit Michigan's FSA website and sign up for updates: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mi>. Follow the "Newsletters" link on the left column of the main page and enter your email in the "Sign up for updates" box under "Stay Connected" section on the right side of the page.



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.