



Hancock FSA News

March 2010

County Committee Meeting Times For 2010 Calendar

Hancock County
USDA Service Center

Hancock County FSA
7868 County Rd. 140
Findlay, Ohio 45840
419-422-5438 (phone)
419-422-5105 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/OH

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

County Committee
Richard Cupples
Michael Conley
Karen Conine

Co. Committee meets
2nd Wednesday of each
month @ 9:00 a.m.
@ FSA Office.

Staff
Sue Doolittle
Sue Stahl
Casey Gunder
Diane Parke
Janis Wittenmyer
John Deeds, Field
Lynae Anspach, Temp
Steve Inbody

The Hancock County Farm Service Agency Committee meets once a month. The committee has established 9:00 a.m. on the second Wednesday of each month as its regular meeting time and the Hancock County FSA office as its meeting location.

NAP Application Deadline

The deadline to sign-up for Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program, or NAP coverage is **March 15, 2010** for producers to apply for Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage using form *CCC-471, Application for Coverage*, and pay the service fee at the county office. Producers are reminded about the need for insurance coverage on crops in order to remain eligible for the agency's Disaster Assistance Programs such as SURE, LFP, TAP, and ELAP. Producers must purchase at least catastrophic (CAT) level of insurance for all insurable crops and producers must apply for coverage before a disaster strikes.

NAP is a federally funded program that provides coverage to producers for non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory or prevented planting occurs due to natural disasters. Crops eligible for NAP coverage are those for which crop insurance is not available.

To download the electronic "*NAP Basic Provisions Document*", form *CCC-471 NAP BP*, go to: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/ccc_471_nap_bp.pdf. The application and service fee must be filed by **March 15th**, the deadline date for 2010 spring planted crops which include: forage sorghum, oats, potatoes, soybeans, sunflowers and all spring planted specialty crops grown for food. The service fee 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.

USDA Launches Trade Adjustment Assistance For Farmers Program

On Monday March 1st, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack launched USDA's Trade Adjustment Assistance for Farmers (TAAF) program to help American agricultural producers adjust to the current, challenging economic environment. "This will create new opportunities for producers hurt by import competition and eligible producers will receive much-needed technical assistance and cash benefits to help them adjust to the current economic environment," said Vilsack.

The USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) will administer the TAAF with assistance from the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, FSA, and the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). FAS has announced that it will accept a *FAS-930 "Petition for Certification" form*, for benefits under the TAAF program from **March 1, 2010, through April 14, 2010**. This initial petition period will allow petitioners to request benefits for either the 2008 or 2009 crop commodities. FAS-930's forms shall be submitted by any of the following options:

Mail to:

- Trade Adjustment Assistance for Farmers Staff
- Import Policies and Export Reporting Division, Office of Trade Programs
- Foreign Agricultural Service
- 1400 Independence Ave SW
- STOP 1021
- Washington DC 20250

Producers may also submit the FAS-930 form by:

- Email to tradeadjustment@fas.usda.gov,
- Telephone at 202-720-0638,
- FAX to 202-720-8461

Note: FSA offices will not accept FAS-930 forms.

The interim rule published in the Federal Register on March 1, immediately implements the TAAF program and provides for an additional 30-day public comment period and will continue **until March 31, 2010**. Comments should be received on or before March 31, 2010, to be assured consideration. A copy of the proposed interim rule is located at: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/info/fr/2010/030110TAAF.asp>

For more information or questions regarding the TAAF program, visit the FAS website at: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/itp/taa/> to read over the factsheet, news release, interim rule and download the *FAS-930 form "Petition for Certification"*.



Honey Loans

Marketing assistance loans and loan deficiency payments for 2009 crop year honey are available **until March 31, 2010**. The national loan rate for honey is \$0.60 per pound. Market prices currently exceed the loan rate, so LDPs are not available at this time.

To be eligible for a loan, the producer must have produced honey in the United States during the calendar year for which the loan is requested, and extracted the honey on or before Dec. 31 of the applicable crop year; have continuous beneficial interest in the honey through date of repayment of the loan; and been responsible for the financial risk of keeping. Producers are responsible for maintaining the quality of farm-stored honey during the term of the loan.

The honey must be produced in the United States by an eligible producer, from an approved floral source, and stored in approved containers.

The containers must be marked with the producer's name, type of honey, number of container and net weight. Pre-loan inspections are required before the loans can be disbursed.

Honey used as collateral may not be disposed of without approval of the county office staff.

DCP Sign-up Continues

Sign-up for the 2010 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment (DCP) Program continues **until June 1, 2010**. **FSA will not accept late-filed applications**. USDA urges producers to make use of the eDCP automated website to sign-up, or producers can visit their local FSA office to complete the 2010 DCP contract.

The electronic DCP (or eDCP) service saves producers time, reduces paperwork and speeds up contract processing at USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices. It is available to all producers who are eligible to participate in the DCP Program and can be accessed at: www.fsa.usda.gov/dcp and then click on the "Access eDCP Services" link, under the "I Want to Section". To access the service, producers must have an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires filling out an online registration form at: <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov> and then click on the "Create an Account Page" link, and lastly followed by a visit to the local FSA Service Center for identity verification.

FSA computes DCP Program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2010, you may request to receive advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment for each commodity associated with the farm. 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.

Beginning Farmers and Ranchers

FSA has funding to assist 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 farm size; and
- Also, the applicant must meet the loan eligibility requirements of the program to which he/she is applying.

Note: All applicants for direct farm ownership loans must have participated in business operation of a farm for at least three years.

To find out more about loans for Beginning Farmer and Ranchers and more basic qualifications required, contact your local FSA county office to setup an appointment with a loan approval official.

Selected Interest Rates for March 2010	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	3.000%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	5.125%
Farm Ownership Loans — Down Payment	1.500%
Emergency Loans	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility Loan -- 7 year	3.125%
Farm Storage Facility Loan -- 10 year	3.625%
Farm Storage Facility Loan -- 12 year	4.000%
Sugar Storage Facility Loans	4.250%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.375%

USDA Seeks Public Comment on BCAP Proposed Rule

On February 3, 2010 a proposed rule for the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) was made available for public display at the Office of the Federal Register and was published in the Federal Register on Feb. 8, 2010 with a 60-calendar-day comment period. The comment period ends April 9, 2010.

The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) proposes regulations authorized by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008. Under the proposed rule, the BCAP is authorized to fund two main types of activities. First, it will provide funding for agriculture and forest land owners and operators to receive matching payments for eligible biomass materials sold to qualified biomass conversion facilities for the production of heat, power, bio-based products or advanced biofuels. The payment rate is intended to assist producers with the cost of collection, harvest, storage and transportation of the biomass to the facility, for up to two years.

Additionally, BCAP will provide funding for producers of eligible renewable crops within a select geographical area to receive payments up to 75% of the cost of establishing the crop and annual payments for up to 15 years of biomass crop production. This rule specifies the requirements for eligible participants, biomass conversion facilities and biomass crops and materials. It also provides notice of final termination of the existing Notice of Funds Available.

A copy of the proposed rule is available online at: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_Federal_Notices/bcap_prm_2_8_2010.pdf. Comments should include the volume, date and page number of the issue of the Federal Register. Comments on the proposed rule are invited and may be submitted by:

- Email: cepdmail@wdc.usda.gov
- Phone: 202-720-6221
- Fax: 202-720-4619
- Mail: Director, CEPD
USDA/FSA/CEPD/Stop 0513
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-0513

Comments are also accepted through the Federal e-rulemaking portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> and follow the online instructions for submitting comments. The public may continue to submit comments until April 9, 2010.

ACRE

The ACRE Program provides a safety net based on state revenue losses and acts in place of the price-based safety net of counter-cyclical payments under DCP. The June 1, 2010 deadline to sign-up is mandatory for all participants. FSA will not accept any late-filed applications.

A payment is based on a revenue guarantee calculated using a 5-year average state yield and the most recent 2-year national price for each eligible commodity. For 2010, the 2-year price average will be based on the 2008 and 2009 crop years.

An ACRE payment is issued when both the state and the farm have incurred a revenue loss. The payment is based on 83.3% (85% in 2012) of the farm's planted acres times the difference between the state ACRE guarantee and the state revenue times the ratio of the farm's yield divided by the state expected yield. The total number of planted acres for which a producer may receive ACRE payments may not exceed the total base on the farm. Participants in ACRE will forego counter-cyclical payments. Also a farm's direct payment is reduced by 20% and marketing assistance loan rates are reduced by 30%.

The decision to enroll in the ACRE Program is irrevocable. The owner of the farm and all producers on the farm must agree to enroll in ACRE. Once enrolled, the farm shall be enrolled for that initial crop year and will remain in ACRE through the 2012 crop year.

CRP Program Participant Reminder Letter

CRP participants are reminded to report to their local Farm Service Agency (FSA) when there are changes that occur due to transfer of ownership, death, incompetent or missing persons.

The following changes must be reported to the FSA office; changes to banking information for direct deposit payments, mailing address changes, land ownership changes--including land transfers to living trusts, irrevocable trusts, etc. Estates of CRP participants need to contact their local FSA Service Center while the Estate is open to obtain and submit documents needed to ensure earned CRP payments can be issued.

Representatives of deceased CRP participants must inform their local FSA Service Center by submitting one or more of the following applicable documents:

- Copy of death certificate;
- Copy of Court appointment for estate;
- Estate ID number if available; and/or
- Copy of deed transferring ownership to survivor.

Failure to report these changes may result in ineligibility for CRP annual rental payments or termination of CRP contracts, which requires the refund of all payments received under the CRP contract including annual rental payments, cost share and incentive payments plus interest and liquidated damages. It is extremely important that all Conservation Reserve Program contracts contain accurate information.

CRP Program participants are reminded to take action to report changes immediately to avoid unnecessary delays in program benefits or inaccurate payments. Lastly, contact your local FSA county office if you have any questions regarding the terms and conditions of your CRP contract, in-

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cluding proper cover maintenance.

NASS Statistical Survey

The USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service Ohio Field Office is in the process of conducting interviews for the Agricultural Resource Management Study (ARMS). The study is USDA’s primary source of information on the production practices, resource use and economic well-being of America’s farm operations and farm households. The survey targets selected commodities on a rotating basis to collect data on costs of production.

This year, NASS will collect information on operating expenditures and production costs from conventional and organic wheat growers, and hog and pig producers. Interviewers will be contacting over 610 Ohio farmers by mail and/or personal interview. They will contact local farmers between early February and late March.

If you would like more information about the survey or have questions, please call the USDA NASS Ohio Field office at (614) 728-2100.

Dates to Remember	
Mar. 15	Deadline to obtain 2010 NAP coverage on spring planted crops.
Mar. 31	Final Availability for 2009 crop wheat, barley, oats, honey loans and LDPs.
May 31	Memorial Day Holiday. FSA Offices Closed.
June 1	Deadline to apply for 2009 commodity loans and LDP's on feed grains, soybeans, pulse crops.
June 1	Deadline to sign-up for 2010 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program. USDA will not accept any late-filed applications.
June 15	County Committee Nomination period begins.
June 15	Deadline to submit the CCC-927 and CCC-928 consent forms to the IRS.
June 30	Final certification date for small grains.
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loan Program.
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve program.

Visit our website at: www.fsa.usda.gov/oh

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