



NEWSLETTER



Hancock County FSA Office

7868 County Rd 140
Findlay, Oh, 45840

419-422-5438 phone
419-422-5105 fax

Hours

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

February 2013

County Office Staff

Jim Greve,
County Executive
Director

Holly Gates,
Farm Loan Manager

Sue Stahl, PT
Casey Gunder, PT
Diane Parke, PT
Janis Wittenmyer, PT

Program Technicians

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

County Committee

Richard Cupples
Mike Conley
Karen Conine

DCP and ACRE Sign-up

The Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program (DCP) and the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program are being offered for the 2013 crop year under the 2008 Farm Bill Extension.

DCP and ACRE sign-up for 2013 crops will begin on **February 19, 2013**. The DCP sign-up period will end on August 2, 2013 and **ACRE sign-up will end on June 3, 2013**.

The only program change from 2012 to 2013 is that all eligible participants in 2013 may choose to enroll in either DCP or ACRE for the 2013 crop year. This means that eligible producers who were enrolled in ACRE in 2012 may elect to enroll in DCP in 2013 or may re-enroll in ACRE in 2013 (and vice versa).

The ACRE program Fact Sheet [can be found here](#). The DCP Fact Sheet [can be found here](#). Contact the Hancock county FSA office for more information, or to setup an appointment to enroll.

MILC Program Extended

The 2008 Farm Bill extension provides for a continuation of the MILC program through Sept. 30, 2013. As announced by FSA on Jan. 22, all dairy producers' MILC contracts are automatically extended to Sept. 30, 2013. Eligible producers therefore do not need to re-enroll in MILC. MILC operations with approved contracts will continue to receive monthly payments, if available. Payment rates are as follows:

- September- \$0.59/cwt
- October- \$0.02/cwt
- November- \$0.00/cwt
- December and January- TBA

Dairy operations may select a production start month other than October 2012. **Producers who want to select a production start month other than October 2012 must visit the office between Feb. 1 and Feb. 28, 2013**, also known as a relief period.

Before the October MILC payment can be issued, dairy farmers must complete a new Average

Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) form for 2013. Producers can stop by the office to complete this form or can download the form at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/cc933>. Specific detail about AGI [may be found here](#).

For more information on MILC, contact the Hancock County FSA office or visit the [FSA MILC webpage](#).

NAP Coverage Deadline

March 15th is the last day 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 FSA county office. The application and service fee must be filed **by March 15th**, the deadline date for 2013 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.

To qualify, a producer must be a landowner, tenant or sharecropper who shares in the risk of producing an eligible crop.

New 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.

In addition to microloans, FSA offers several farm loan programs that provide funding to purchase land, livestock, equipment, feed, seed, and supplies, or can be used to construct buildings or make farm improvements.

Individuals interested in applying for a microloan or would like to discuss other farm loan programs available, should contact the Hancock County FSA office at 419-422-5438 opt. 2 to setup an appointment with a Loan Approval Official. The Microloan program Fact Sheet can be [found here](#).

County Committee Meetings

The Three-member Hancock County Farm Service Agency committee meets once a month. The committee has established to meet quarterly at 8:30 a.m. on the second Wednesday of April, July and September as its regular meeting time and the Hancock County FSA office as its meeting place.

We will post a notice on the county office bulletin board if the committee must reschedule the time or place of its next meeting.

County committee members are:
Chairman Richard Cupples, representing LAA-3.
Mike Conley, representing LAA-1.
Karen Conine, representing LAA-2.

New AGI Form for 2013

Under the 2008 Farm Bill extension, all payment eligibility and payment limitation provisions were extended, including AGI limitations for the 2013 crop year, program year and fiscal year.

All rules and requirements effective for 2012 program payments and benefits are applicable to eligible recipients of 2013 program payment and benefits. This includes the requirements of actively engaged in farming, cash-rent tenant, substantive change, minor child, and spousal provisions. Payments will continue to be limited by direct attribution to person and legal entity. All average AGI limitations for commodity, price support, disaster assistance, and conservation programs are also continued for 2013 including the \$1 million average AGI limitation for 2013 direct payments.

The average AGI for 2013 payment eligibility purposes will be based on the average of AGI amounts for the 3-year period of 2009, 2010, and 2011. Producers will be required to complete a new AGI compliance certification and written consent for disclosure for 2013 using form CCC-933, which is a new form for 2013 only. The CCC-933 must be completed by the person or legal entity earning USDA benefits either directly or indirectly in the 2013 program. Producers who fail to provide the certification and consent must refund all applicable program payments received from FSA and NRCS.

Producers can stop by the office to complete this form or can download the form at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ccc933>. Specific detail about AGI [may be found here](#).

Selected Interest Rates for February 2013	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	1.250%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	3.125%
Limited Resource Loans	5.000%
Farm Ownership Loans — Down Payment	1.500%
Emergency Loans	2.250%
Farm Storage Facility Loan -- 7 year	1.250%
Farm Storage Facility Loan -- 10 year	1.875%
Farm Storage Facility Loan -- 12 year	2.125%
Sugar Storage Facility Loans	2.375%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.125%

Highly Erodible Land 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 is required. Farmers with HEL-determined soils are reminded to comply with tillage, crop residue, and rotation requirements specified in their conservation plan. Farmers 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 activities can result in the loss of eligibility for certain USDA program benefits.

Unauthorized Disposition of Grain

If loan grain has been disposed of through feeding, selling or any other form of disposal without prior written authorization from the county office staff, it is considered unauthorized disposition. The financial penalties for unauthorized dispositions are severe and a producer's name will be placed on a loan violation list for a two-year period. Always call the Hancock County office before you haul any grain under loan.

FSA Reminds Producers That All Counties in Ohio Were Designated as Primary or Contiguous Natural Disaster Areas

The Ohio Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds producers about the U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretarial designation on Sept. 5, 2012. All of Ohio's counties were designated as primary or contiguous agricultural natural disaster areas due to drought and excessive heat that occurred from February 1, 2012 and continuing.

This gives all qualified farm operators in the designated areas the opportunity to file an application for low interest emergency (EM) loans from USDA's FSA, provided eligibility requirements are met. Farmers in eligible counties have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for loans to help cover part of their actual losses. FSA will consider each loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability.

USDA FSA has a variety of programs, in addition to the emergency loan program, to help eligible farmers recover from adversity. Other programs available to assist farmers include the Emergency Conservation Program and the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program.

Interested farmers may contact the Hancock County FSA office for further information on eligibility requirements and application procedures for these and other programs.

Rural Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency makes loans to rural youths to establish and operate income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5000.

Applicants Must:

- Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) or a legal resident alien
- Be 10 years to 20 years of age
- Live in a rural area or in a town of 50,000 people or fewer
- Must obtain a written recommendation and consent from a parent or guardian if the applicant has not reached the age of majority under state law
- Comply with FSA's general eligibility requirements
- Be unable to get a loan from other sources
- Conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work as outlined above
- Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor. The project supervisor must recommend the project and the loan, along with providing adequate supervision.

To find out more about the FSA Rural Youth loan program, contact the Hancock County FSA office to setup an appointment with a Loan Approval Official.

Honey Loans Available

Marketing assistance loans and loan deficiency payments for 2012 crop year honey are available **until April 1, 2013**. The national loan rate for honey is \$.60 per pound. Market prices currently exceed the loan rate; so LDPs are not available right now.

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 the honey. 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.

Marketing Assistance Loans

A Marketing Assistance Loan (MAL) is available for producers who share in the risk of producing an eligible commodity. To be eligible, a producer must maintain continual beneficial interest in the eligible commodity.

Commodity loan eligibility also requires compliance with conservation and wetland protection requirements; beneficial interest requirements, acreage reporting, and ensuring that the commodity meets Commodity Credit Corporation minimum grade and quality standards.

FSA offers MALs on honey, wool & an assortment of grains, and other approved agricultural commodities.

Violating provisions of a marketing assistance loan may trigger administrative actions, such as assessing liquidated damages, calling the loan and denial of future farm-stored loans. The most common violations are removing or disposing of a commodity being used as loan collateral without prior authorization and providing an incorrect quantity certification.

For more details on marketing assistance loans contact the Hancock County FSA office.

Dates to Remember	
Feb. 18	President's Day Holiday. FSA Offices Closed.
Feb. 28	Final date to <u>select the Start production month</u> for the MILC program in the established relief period.
Mar. 15	Deadline to obtain 2013 NAP coverage on spring planted crops.
April. 1	Final availability for 2012 crop wheat, barley, oats, honey loans and LDPs.
June. 3	Final date to enroll farms into the ACRE Program.
July. 15	Final date to report 2012 ACRE production and to certify 2013 corn and soybeans crops.
August. 2	Final date to enroll into the 2013 DCP program.
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loan Program.

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Hispanic and Women Farmer and Rancher Claims Period

USDA has announced that Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who allege discrimination by the USDA in past decades can file claims until March 25, 2013.

The process offers a voluntary alternative to litigation for each Hispanic or female farmer and rancher who can prove that USDA denied their applications for loan or loan servicing assistance for discriminatory reasons for certain time periods between 1981 and 2000.

As announced in February 2011, the voluntary claims process will make available at least \$1.33 billion for cash awards and tax relief payments, plus up to \$160 million in farm debt relief, to eligible Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers. There are no filing fees to participate in the program.

The Department will continue reaching out to potential Hispanic and female claimants, around the country to get the word out to individuals who may be eligible for this program so they have the opportunity to participate.

Call center representatives can be reached at 1-888-508-4429. Claimants must register for a claims package (by calling the number or visiting the website) and the claims package will be mailed to claimants. All those interested in learning more or receiving information about the claims process and claims packages are encouraged to attend meetings in your communities about the claims process and contact the website or claims telephone number.

Website: www.farmerclaims.gov

Phone: 1-888-508-4429

Claims Period: Sept. 24, 2012 - March 25, 2013.

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all of its programs 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, political beliefs, genetic information, 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, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."