



May 2008

Barry County News

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

County Committee
Ken Osborne
Tom Eckert
Darrell Newton
Nianne Jarrard, Advisor

Staff
Charlie Mater
Peggy Papoi
JoAnn Erway
Claude Smith, Field Asst.
Mark VanBuren, CED

Farm Loan Manager
John Anton
616-527-2098

Farm Loan Officer
Sara Possehn
616-527-2098

Dates To Remember

June 1
Crop reporting begins

July 1
Last day to report 2008 wheat

July 15
Last day to report all other
2008 crops



2008 Crop Reporting Requirements

Even though we do not have a Farm Bill at the time this newsletter is being written, it is certain that Program participation will require all crop acreage to be reported as in the past. That being all participants in USDA, FSA, or CCC Programs must report their 2008 crops by the following deadlines:

Fall seeded small grain crops (wheat, barley) June 30th

All other crops July 15th

A late filing fee of \$46 per farm will be assessed when crops are reported after the deadlines stated above.

Please call for an appointment. No doubt we will be enrolling producers in the 2008 Farm Program (when a Farm Bill is approved). Appointments allow us to be prepared for you when you come in, and reduces waiting time for you.

County Committee Elections



Administrative Area 1 made up of the Townships of Thornapple, Irving, Yankee Springs, Rutland, Orangeville, Hope, and Prairieville will be electing a representative to the County Committee this year. Nominating petitions are available from the FSA office or on line at www.fsa.usda.gov under News and Events/Committee elections. Nominations must be submitted by August 1.

FARM RECORD CHANGES

Please report all farm record changes to the FSA office as soon as possible. Many producers assume FSA automatically updates farm records with new owners. We can only update farm records when we are informed of the change by the farm's owner or operator.



Ongoing Programs

CONTINUOUS CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM

The continuous CRP sign-up offers an opportunity to receive cost share and incentive payments to implement the following high priority practices: riparian buffers, filter strips, grass waterways, shelter belts, field windbreaks, and living snow fences. Unlike a regular CRP sign-up, the continuous CRP is always open for enrollment and qualifying applications are automatically approved.

NONINSURED ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Noninsured Assistance Program (NAP) provides crop insurance like loss protection to producers of crops that are not insurable. These include crops grown for food, fiber, livestock consumption, floriculture, ornamental nursery, Christmas trees, turf grass sod, ginseng, seed crops, and industrial crops. Producers must submit an application and pay an administrative fee for coverage by the crop enrollment date. (Crop enrollment dates vary.) Crop acreage, loss, and production reports are required to be filed timely.

FARM STORAGE FACILITY LOANS

Loans are available for the construction of new commodity storage facilities and the expansion of existing facilities. Producers may borrow up to \$100,000 for a term of 7 years. Storage need, down payment requirements, repayment ability, and loan security requirements must be met for loan approval.

FARM LOAN PROGRAMS

FSA offers farm loans for operations that are unable to obtain commercial financing. The loans available include farm ownership loans, operating loans and youth loans. All loans have a fixed interest rate.

Farm ownership loans are available to purchase (not refinance) land. The maximum loan amount is \$200,000 with terms up to 40 years.

Operating loans can be either annual operating or term operating loans. Some examples of uses for annual operating loans include, crop inputs and feed. These have a maximum term of 18 months. Term operating loans can be used for purchasing machinery, equipment and livestock with a maximum term of 7 years. A total of \$200,000 is available for operating loans.

Youth loans are available to youth between the ages of 10 and 20. These loans are available to FFA, 4-H or other such organized agricultural participants. These loans can be used to purchase livestock, equipment, supplies, tools or operating expenses for the project. The loan cannot exceed \$5,000. Repayment of the loan is individually tailored to the specific project

For more information please contact Sara Possehn at the Ionia Farm Service Agency (616) 527-2098.

Important Reminders

FARM DIVISIONS-DESIGNATION OF BASES BY LANDOWNER

The designation by landowner method of dividing crop acreage bases is done by agreement between the parent farm owner and purchaser. When requested, this method allows all parties to agree to the division of the parent farm's crop acreage bases on the resulting farms.

SPOUSE SIGNATURE AUTHORITY

Spouses can sign documents on each other's behalf for FSA or CCC programs unless written notification denying this authority has been filed in the County office.

FOREIGN INVESTMENT DISCLOSURE ACT

Foreign persons who acquire, transfer, or hold interest in agricultural land are required to report these holdings and transactions to the Secretary of Agriculture. Reports are due within 90 days of a transaction. If you are an owner selling land to a foreign person please inform them of these requirements. Failure to report could result in penalties.

SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to participate in FSA and CCC programs should contact Mark VanBuren, County Executive Director at (517) 543-1512 or (269)948-8037 or e-mail at mark.vanburen@mi.usda.gov or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-887-8339.

FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE INTEGRITY

The Farm Service Agency will assist RMA and approved insurance providers in monitoring crop conditions throughout the growing season. FSA will refer all suspected cases of fraud, waste and abuse about the Federal Crop Insurance Program to RMA. Producers may report suspected cases of fraud waste and abuse to their local County office, RMA office, or OIG. FSA will provide producer information to RMA and approved insurance providers to assist in claim audits, inspections, and quality control reviews.

PROGRAM PAYMENT LIMITS

All programs subject to payment limitations require the participant to file a Farm Operating Plan for Payment Limitation Eligibility Review. Payments cannot be made until all payment limitation information is on file. In certain cases the County FSA Committee can initiate a payment limitation determination. Persons found not actively engaged in farming will be ineligible for program payments. For those farm operations that are entities the names, addressed, and taxpayer ID numbers of all members must be reported. In cases where producers are involved in more than one farming operation the producer must designate from which operations they wish to receive program payments. All payment limitation information is subject to verification through an end of year review.

Certain changes in a farming operation require the updating of payment limitation information. Changes that may affect a determination include, but are not limited to a change in:

- contract shares or lease arrangements
- size of operation by adding or deleting a farm
- structure of farming operation including changes in member's shares
- contributions of capitol, equipment, labor, or management
- acquisition of farming interests not previously disclosed

LOAN AND LDP PROVISIONS

To be eligible for Price Support Benefits (marketing assistance loans, loan deficiency payments) all crop acreage must be reported by the final certification date. Producer must have beneficial interest (title) in the commodity at the time benefits are requested. Estates, trusts, or heirs may be eligible for benefits in cases of succession from an eligible producer. The final date to request benefits on the proceeding year's commodities is January 31 for wool and mohair, March 31 for wheat and oats, and May 31 for corn and soybeans. Contact the FSA office for final availability dates on other commodities.

CONDUCTING BUSINESS ELECTRONICALLY WITH USDA eGOV

eGOV provides USDA Service Center Agencies (FSA, NRCS, RD) customers the option of electronically accessing, printing, filling out and submitting forms and program applications. To fully utilize eGOV capabilities producers set up their own account for electronic signature authority at www.eauth.egov.usda.gov. Once registered the producer visits the FSA office to activate his account and receive a password to conduct business electronically with USDA agencies. Current programs available through eGOV include loan deficiency payments, Direct and Counter Cyclical Payment Program contracts, and financial inquiries that allow producers to tract USDA payments and deposits.



Current Disaster Programs

Crop Disaster Program (CDP) has been expanded to provide benefits for losses suffered in 2005, 2006, or 2007. Producers must choose only one year to receive benefits. Only producers who purchased crop insurance or Non Insured Assistance Program coverage for the year of loss will be eligible for CDP benefits. Losses must have exceeded 35%. The payment rate is set at 42% of normal price. Producers who have already received benefits for 2005 or 2006 can file an application for 2007 losses. If losses were greater in 2007 additional benefits will be paid.

Livestock Compensation Program (LCP) The LCP will compensate producers for grazing losses due to the 2007 drought, or additional feed cost due to '07drought. Original receipts will be required to substantiate additional feed costs.

Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) The LIP will compensate producers for livestock that died as a direct result of an eligible disaster condition occurring between 1/1/05 and 12/31/07.

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.