

December 2013



## Topics for December

- Ionia County Committee Advisor
- Increased Guaranteed Loan Limit
- Farm Storage Facility Loan Program
- Microloan Program
- Beginning Farmer Loans
- Loans for the Socially Disadvantaged

---

## Ionia County FSA Updates

---

### Ionia County FSA Office

431 Swartz Ct, Ste 300  
Ionia, MI 48846

Phone: 616-527-2098  
**NEW Fax: 855-647-4850**

Hours: Monday - Friday  
8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

#### County Executive Director

Jenifer A. Taylor

#### Program Technicians

William Brandt  
Carolyn Lindberg  
Diana Graef

#### County Committee Members

Steve Buche  
Jeff Sandborn  
Amanda Powell

#### County Committee Advisor

Allison Badder

### Ionia County Committee Advisor

We are currently accepting nominations for County Committee (COC) Advisor for Ionia County. Advisors serve as a voice for socially disadvantaged farmers to ensure fair representation. Socially disadvantaged members include women, African Americans, American Indians, Hispanics, Asian and Pacific Islanders and Alaskan Natives. Persons interested in serving as an Advisor to the County Committee should be a member of a socially disadvantaged group.

The duties of the COC advisor include:

- Attending a quarterly meeting;
- Participating in all deliberations;
- Increasing awareness of and participation in Farm Service Agency activities;
- Helping to develop interest and incentives in underrepresented group members for considering FSA work as a career;
- Actively soliciting candidates from underrepresented groups for nomination during the election process.

Candidates for COC Advisor shall reside in Ionia County, be actively participating in farming in the COC jurisdiction, be willing and able to serve as an advisor, and indicate in writing their willingness and ability to serve.

**Please submit your nomination to the Ionia County FSA Office by January 15, 2014.**

**Farm Loan Manager**  
Paul E. Wagner

**Farm Loan Officer**  
Sara Possehn

**Next County Committee Meeting:** January 22, 2014  
at 8:00 AM

---

## Increased Guaranteed Loan Limit

The Farm Service Agency maximum loan limit for the Guaranteed Loan Program has increased to \$1,355,000 effective Oct. 1, 2013. The limit is adjusted annually based on data compiled by the National Agricultural Statistics Service and according to an inflation index. The maximum combined guaranteed and direct farm loan indebtedness will also increase to \$1,655,000.

As a reminder, the one-time loan origination fee charged on FSA guaranteed Farm Ownership and operating loans is 1.5 percent of the guaranteed portion of the loan. Producers should contact their local FSA Office with questions about farm loans.

---

## Farm Storage Facility Loan Program

The Farm Storage Facility Loan Program (FSFLP) allows producers of eligible commodities to obtain low-interest financing to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities.

The new maximum principal amount of a loan through FSFL is \$500,000. Participants are required to provide a down payment of 15 percent, with CCC providing a loan for the remaining 85 percent of the net cost of the eligible storage facility and permanent drying and handling equipment. Additional security is required for poured-cement open-bunker silos, renewable biomass facilities, cold storage facilities, hay barns and for all loans exceeding \$50,000. New loan terms of 7, 10 or 12 years are available depending on the amount of the loan. Interest rates for each term rate may be different and are based on the rate which CCC borrows from the Treasury Department.

Payments are available in the form of a partial disbursement and the remaining final disbursement. The partial disbursement will be available after a portion of the construction has been completed. The final fund disbursement will be made when all construction is completed. The maximum amount of the partial disbursement will be 50 percent of the projected and approved total loan amount.

The following commodities are eligible for farm storage facility loans:

- Corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley or minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain
- Corn, grain sorghum, wheat, oats or barley harvested as other-than-whole grain
- Pulse crops - lentils, small chickpeas, dry beans and dry peas
- Hay
- Renewable biomass
- Fruits (including nuts) and vegetables - cold storage facilities
- Honey

For more information about FSFL please visit your FSA county office or [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

---

## 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.

Individuals who are interested in applying for a microloan or would like to discuss other farm loan programs available should contact their local FSA office to set up an appointment with a loan official.

---

## Beginning Farmer Loans

FSA assists beginning farmers 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 size.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

---

## Loans for the Socially Disadvantaged

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operating type loans and/or purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided priority funding for members of socially disadvantaged applicants.

A socially disadvantaged applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities. For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

---

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).