

May 2014



NEWSLETTER



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Lenawee County FSA Updates

Lenawee County FSA Office

1100 Sutton RD
Adrian, MI 49221

Phone: 517-263-7400
Fax: 855-643-5267

County Executive Director:
Constance Reid Guffey

Program Technicians:

Debra Shiels	ext. 105
Jessica Mullins	125
Barbara Wagner	107
Beth Wagner	106
Jamie Wegner	104

County Committee Members:

Michael Feight - Chair
Dale Terry - Vice Chair
Genie Hillard - Member
Stephanie Thompson - Advisor

Farm Loan Manager:
Michael Jordon

Soybean Request For Referendum

FSA is accepting Soybean Request For Referendum documents through May 30th 2014. The United Soybean Board administers a coordinated promotion and research program designed to expand uses of soybeans and soy products. Eligible voters must have produced soybeans and paid an assessment in 2012 or 2013. Producers who desire a referendum shall participate. Form LS-51-1 can be obtained online or from your FSA office and should be accompanied by supporting documentation. Contact us for additional information.

Farm Bill Implementation Progress

Among the first major farm bill initiatives to be implemented were disaster relief programs for livestock producers. In the coming months, producers will be asked to consider and enroll in one of the new risk management programs. Web-based tools will be created to help provide producers with information on the Agricultural Risk Coverage Program and Price Loss Coverage Program, as well as the larger protection program for dairy and the non-insured crop disaster assistance program. To stay up-to-date on USDA's Farm Bill implementation progress, visit www.usda.gov/farmbill.

Tree Assistance Program (TAP) Sign-up

Program Technicians: Orchardists and nursery tree growers who experienced losses from natural disasters that occurred on or after October 1, 2011, can sign up for the Tree Assistance Program (TAP). TAP was authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014 as a permanent disaster program. TAP provides financial assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by natural disasters. Eligible tree types include trees, bushes or vines that produce an annual crop for commercial purposes. Nursery trees include ornamental, fruit, nut and Christmas trees that are produced for commercial sale. Trees used for pulp or timber are ineligible. A qualifying tree, bush or vine loss in excess of 15 percent of normal mortality is required for eligibility. The eligible trees, bushes or vines must have been owned when the natural disaster occurred; however, eligible growers are not required to own the land on which the eligible trees, bushes and vines were planted. If the TAP application is approved, the eligible trees, bushes and vines must be replaced within 12 months from the date the application is approved. The cumulative total quantity of acres planted to trees, bushes or vines, for which a producer can receive TAP payments, cannot exceed 500 acres annually.

Power of Attorney

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally and do not want to do business on-line, FSA has a power of attorney form available. Completing form FSA-211 will enable you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. If you are interested, please contact any Farm Service Agency office near you for more information.

2014 Acreage Reporting

Filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs. Failed acreage must be reported within 15 days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Failed acreage is acreage that was timely planted with the intent to harvest but because of disaster related conditions; the crop failed before it could be brought to harvest. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date. Both prevented and failed acreage requests are made on form CCC-576.

For crops enrolled in programs other than NAP (Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program), acreage reports are to be certified by:

- January 2nd - for honey (the number of colonies)
- January 15th – for apples, apricots, asparagus, blueberries, caneberries, cherries, chestnuts, currants, grapes, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums, rhubarb and strawberries
- February 1st - for maple sap (the number of eligible trees and taps)
- July 15th - for all other crops, including Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres and new forage seedings.
- Note: Cabbage planted between 6/1 and 7/20 may be certified until August 15th.

Acreage reports on crops covered by NAP are due the earlier of:

1. The crop reporting dates above;
2. 15 calendar days before the onset of harvest or grazing of the specific NAP crop acreage being reported; or

3. The established normal harvest date for the end of the NAP coverage period.

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.
- If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of "cover only," "green manure," "left standing," or "seed," then the acreage must be reported by July 15th.

The 2015 crop reporting date for fall-seeded small grains and perennial forage is November 15th, 2014.

FSA Supports Risk Management Agency (RMA)

To prevent fraud, waste, and abuse FSA supports the RMA in the Federal Crop Insurance Program. FSA has been, and will continue to, assist RMA and insurance providers by monitoring crop conditions throughout the growing season. FSA will continue to refer all suspected cases of fraud, waste and abuse directly to RMA. Producers can report suspected cases to the county office staff, the RMA office, or the Office of the Inspector General.

Changes to the Fruit, Vegetable and Wild Rice Planting Rules

Planting fruits, vegetables or wild rice on base acres on a farm can result in a payment reduction for program participants. Producers who intend to participate in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs are subject to an acre-for-acre payment reduction when fruits and nuts, vegetables or wild rice are planted on the payment acres of a farm. Payment reductions do not apply to mung beans, dry peas, lentils or chickpeas. Planting fruits, vegetables or wild rice on acres that are not considered payment acres will not result in a payment reduction. Farms that are eligible to participate in ARC/PLC but are not enrolled for a particular year may plant unlimited fruits, vegetables and wild rice for that year but will not receive ARC/PLC payments for that year. Eligibility for succeeding years is not affected.

Youth Loans

FSA makes loans to youth to establish and operate agricultural 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.

Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

- 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
- 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 youth loan applicant, along with providing adequate supervision.

Contact us with questions and for help preparing and processing the application forms.

GOVDELIVERY CUSTOMERS ARE NOT IMPACTED BY THE HEARTBLEED BUG

GovDelivery customer subscriptions are not affected by the Heartbleed bug.

This bug has caused major security concerns among users of cloud technology. The Heartbleed bug refers to a flaw in an encryption tool used on the Internet that can expose data that is meant to be hidden.

Your GovDelivery account and information is safe. **Nothing in the GovDelivery network architecture is affected by this bug.**

You can find out more about the Heartbleed bug at <http://heartbleed.com>.

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).