

July 2014



- [Certify Your Crops](#)
- [COC Nomination Deadline](#)
- [2012 & 2013 ELAP Losses must be Filed by August 1, 2014 for Honeybee, Livestock and Farm-raised Fish Losses](#)
- [Youth Loans](#)
- [Land Contract \(LC\) Guarantees](#)
- [Tree Assistance Program \(TAP\) Sign-up](#)

---

## Benzie/Missaukee/Osceola/Wexford County FSA Updates

---

### Benzie/Missaukee/ Osceola/Wexford Counties FSA Office

7192 E. 34 Rd.  
Cadillac, MI 49603-9057

Phone: 231-775-7681  
Fax: 855-647-0819

**County Executive Director:**  
Travis Murray

**Farm Loan Manager:**  
Larry Cleary

**Program Technicians:**  
Benita Meekhof  
Angie Case

**County Committee:**  
Bruce Eisenga Chairperson  
Bob Morlock Vice Chairperson  
Larry Lathwell Member  
Eric Peterson Member  
Rick Tacoma Member  
Lorry Klingner Advisor

**Next County Committee  
Meeting:** August 21, 9:30 am

### Certify Your Crops

If you have not certified your crops with the FSA Office this year, please certify them as soon as possible. Programs will be coming out in the near future that may be dependent on your crop certifications for 2014. If you have questions or concerns, please call our office at (231) 775-7681 Ext.2.

---

### COC Nomination Deadline

You can nominate yourself or someone else to be the next FSA County Committee (COC) member to represent **Benzie County (LAA#1)** or **Osceola County Townships: Burdell, Sherman, Leroy, Rose Lake, Lincoln, Cedar, Osceola, Sylvan, Richmond, Hersey, Evart, and Orient (LAA #5)**. The election of agricultural producers to the county committee is important to farmers and ranchers. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

County committee members are a critical component of the operations of FSA. They help deliver FSA farm programs at the local level. Farmers and ranchers who serve on county committees help with the decisions necessary to administer the programs in their counties. They work to ensure FSA agricultural programs serve the needs of local producers.

FSA county committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws. County committee members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions.

The COC nomination period runs from June 17, 2014 through August 1, 2014. The nomination form is available at USDA Service Centers and [online](#). For more information contact your local FSA office.

---

## **2012 & 2013 ELAP Losses must be filed by August 1, 2014 for Honeybee, Livestock and Farm-raised Fish Losses**

Producers who suffered eligible livestock, honeybee or farm-raised fish losses have until August 1, 2014, to submit a notice of loss and application for payment under the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-raised Fish Program (ELAP).

ELAP provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish that have losses due to disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires. ELAP assistance is provided for losses not covered by the Livestock Forage Program (LFP) and Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP). Producers who suffered eligible livestock, honeybee or farm-raised fish losses during 2012 and 2013 program years must submit a notice of loss and application for payment to their local FSA office by August 1, 2014. For 2014 program year losses, the notice of loss and an application for payment must be submitted by November 1, 2014.

For more information, producers can review the ELAP Fact Sheet on the [Farm Bill webpage](#). Producers are encouraged to make an appointment with their local FSA office to apply for these programs.

---

## **Youth Loans**

The Farm Service Agency 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. Stop by the county office for help preparing and processing the application forms.

---

## Land Contract (LC) Guarantees

The Land Contract (LC) Guarantee Program is a valuable tool to transfer farm real estate to the next generation of farmers and ranchers. Guarantees will be offered to the owner of a farm who wishes to sell real estate through a land contract to a beginning or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher. The guarantee reduces the financial risk to the seller.

FSA offers two types of guarantees:

- Prompt Payment Guarantee - A guarantee up to the amount of three amortized annual installments plus the cost of any related real estate taxes and insurance.
- Standard Guarantee - A guarantee of 90 percent of the outstanding principal balance under the land contract.

The guarantee period is 10 years and the contract payments must be amortized for a minimum of 20 years. The purchase price of the farm cannot exceed the lesser of \$500,000 or the market value of the property.

For additional information you can read the [Land Contract Guarantee Program Fact Sheet](#).

---

## Tree Assistance Program (TAP) Sign-up

As of Tuesday, April 15, 2014, orchardists and nursery tree growers who experienced losses from natural disasters that occurred on or after Oct. 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.

To qualify for TAP, orchardists must suffer a qualifying tree, bush or vine loss in excess of 15 percent mortality from an eligible natural disaster. 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.

---

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).