



# USDA



## Farm Service Agency

May 2008

# Bertie County News

### **Bertie County USDA**

#### **Service Center**

**Bertie County FSA**  
P O Box 190  
Windsor, NC 27983  
252-794-5308 (phone)  
252-794-5097 (fax)

#### **Hours**

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

#### **County Committee**

David Brinkley  
Bobby Eubanks  
Henry Alston  
Rhodes Bond  
Dianne Cowand

#### **Staff**

Brad Gardner, CED  
Claudia Cob  
Anita Hoggard  
Betty Miller  
Brenda Mizelle  
Lovie White

### **COUNTY COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS**

The nomination and election of responsible agricultural producers to serve on the FSA county committees (COC) is important to **ALL** farmers. It is crucial that every eligible producer take part in this election because county committees are a direct link between the farm community and USDA. The nomination of eligible producers is the method used to obtain candidates for the county committee elections. Enclosed is a nomination form FSA-669A for individuals who wish to file for themselves or another eligible candidate. FSA committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws. Committee members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions. The Colerain I, Colerain II, Whites, and Merry Hill voting districts will be electing a committee person to serve their voting area, LAA 2.

### **CROP REPORTS & CROP SHARES**

Crop report appointments have been mailed. If you did not receive one please call and make one. If you are ready prior to your appointment please call for a rescheduling. Maps can be picked up or mailed to anyone needing them. **Again this year we will need your planting dates.** Crop shares are always important, but even more so with the land swapping and sub-leasing of fields and tracts. Loans, LDP's and disaster payments will all be paid according to the submitted shares on the crop report.

### **CRP SAFE HABITAT INITIATIVE CP38E**

USDA Farm Service Agency offers a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) to enhance wildlife habitat in 8 northeastern North Carolina counties. Bertie County is one of the eligible counties. The SAFE Habitat Initiative will assist to design, install and maintain up to 5600 acres of early succession habitat.

Sign-up began on May 1, 2008 and runs continuously until the acreage goal is met. Contract lengths are no less than 10 years, and not more than 15 years.

Eligible land is cropland that was planted or considered planted to an agricultural commodity in four out of six years between 1996 and 2001 and which is capable of being planted in a normal manner to an agricultural commodity.

Annual rental payments are based on three predominant soils on land offered for enrollment. FSA bases rental rates on the average value of dry-land cash rent for the past three years and adjusts rates to reflect the relative productivity of soils within the county.

Cost-share payments for establishing the practice will be based on 50 percent of the eligible cost of establishing a permanent cover. A one-time practice incentive payment (PIP) is available. This payment is equal to 40 percent of the eligible installation costs will be paid after the CRP practice is installed. A one-time up front signing incentive payment (SIP) of \$100 per acre for CRP contracts for 10 or more years will be paid by FSA after eligibility criteria are met and the CRP contract is approved.

### **e-AUTHENTICATION SYSTEM**

The USDA e-Authentication System will allow you to access USDA web based applications, forms and services via the internet. You must activate either a Level 1 or Level 2 account through you local FSA office to use this new technology. A level 2 account permits you to enroll your farms in DCP or do your LDP's. The National Finance Center (NFC) will be responsible for the LDP payments. You can view the payment history for your account. If you have additional questions or wish to sign up for this service please contact your local office. You can also check out the following website: [www.eauth.egov.usda.gov](http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov).

### **FARM TAX EXEMPT NUMBERS**

To receive a special sales tax rate on items such as farm machinery, seed, fertilizer and feed you should contact the NC Department of Revenue at 877-252-3052 and request form F-595FA



**IMPORTANT ELECTION DATES**

**JUNE 16, 2008**

Nomination period begins.

**AUGUST 1, 2008**

Last day to file nomination forms at the USDA Service Center.

**NOVEMBER 3, 2008**

Ballots mailed to eligible voters.

**DECEMBER 1, 2008**

Last day to return voted ballots to the USDA Service Center

**JANUARY 1, 2009**

Elected committee members and alternates take office.

**HOUSING NEEDS**

USDA Rural Development provides financial assistance to eligible low income families in rural areas. Loans can be for building new homes and repairing existing homes. Applicants must have ownership in the property, reasonable credit history, and be unable to obtain credit elsewhere. You may apply at the Bertie County Office Building, Room 213 (upstairs) on Tuesdays.

**CONSERVATION RESERVE  
ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM**

Starting in 1999 cropland and pastureland that drained to the Chowan River Basin was eligible for enrollment in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). The *Roanoke River Basin* was added this year and signup for enrollment began May 1, 2008. CREP will reimburse participants for cropland and pastureland surrounding streams, ponds, rivers and eligible ditches. Program participants will receive annual rental payments, cost share assistance and other financial incentives for a period of 10-15 years for installing and maintaining filter strips, riparian buffers, tree planting and wetland restoration practices. These conservation practices help protect streams, lakes, and rivers from sedimentation and agricultural runoff. CREP also helps landowners develop and restore wetlands through the planting of

appropriate groundcover. Eligible cropland is cropland that was planted to an agricultural commodity between 1996 and 2001 and must have been row-cropped 4 out of 6 years between 1996 and 2001. Marginal pastureland is also eligible, but only for riparian buffers, and only if the land is adjacent or parallel to streams. For the landowner, CREP is not just a cost-effective way to address rural environmental problems and meet regulatory requirements; it can provide a viable option to supplement farm income as well. Any CREP contracts more than 9.9 acres will have to enroll in a 30 year or permanent easement with the state of North Carolina. In return, the state will pay a one-time easement bonus and cost share assistance on some practices to be established. More information about this project can be found in the program fact sheet at: [http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FS\\_A\\_File/nccrep.pdf](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FS_A_File/nccrep.pdf).

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