



U.S. Department of Agriculture

Hunterdon Somerset County FSA
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Hours

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

IN THIS ISSUE:

- CDP
- LIP/ LCP
- Acreage Reporting
- County Committee Election
- Farm Record Changes
- Reconstitutions
- CREP
- Continuous CRP
- Emergency Loans
- Farm Loans for Socially Disadvantaged

IMPORTANT DATES:

- July 4th—last day to submit an emergency loan request
- July 15th—last day to report 2008 crops other than small grains; last day to submit 2007 production for NAP APH purposes
- July 18th—last day to sign up for LCP/ LIP
- Aug 1st—NAP sign-up for strawberries
- continuous—Farm Facility Loan (FSFL); CREP and continuous CRP sign up

Committee Meetings:

The Hunterdon Somerset County Committee meets on the third (3rd) Thursday of the month at 8:30 AM.

FSA NEWSLETTER

CROP DISASTER PROGRAM (CDP) SIGN-UP

The Crop Disaster Program (CDP) provides benefits to farmers who suffered quantity and quality losses to 2005, 2006, or 2007 crops. CDP sign-up for quantity losses began October 15, 2007. Sign-up for quality losses are being accepted.

Losses from natural disasters may qualify for financial assistance. Producers who incurred qualifying losses in 2005, 2006, or 2007 can apply for benefits for each year but will be paid for the most beneficial. Participants may apply for loss benefits on multiple commodities as long as the losses occurred in the same crop year.



Only producers who obtained crop insurance or coverage under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the year of loss will be eligible for CDP benefits. Producers must have suffered quantity losses in excess of thirty five (35) percent to be eligible for CDP.

Please contact the office for more information or to schedule an appointment to apply for benefits.

LIVESTOCK INCENTIVE PROGRAM (LIP) AND LIVESTOCK COMPENSATION PROGRAM (LCP)

Sign-up for the Livestock Incentive Program (LIP) and Livestock Compensation Program (LCP) will end on July 18, 2008.

LCP compensates livestock producers for feed losses, and LIP compensates for livestock losses occurring between January 1, 2005 and December 31, 2007 due to a natural disaster. Producers in primary counties declared secretarial disaster areas or certain counties declared presidential disaster areas between January 1, 2005 and December 31, 2007 are eligible. Producers located in counties contiguous to the secretarial or presidential disaster areas are eligible, also.

Eligible livestock include dairy cattle, beef cattle, buffalo, beefalo, equine, poultry, elk, reindeer, sheep, goats, swine, or deer.

Please contact the office for more information or to schedule an appointment to apply for benefits.

ACREAGE REPORTING

Filing an accurate timely acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acres and prevented planting, is helpful in avoiding a loss of benefits. **The deadline to report crops other than small grains (wheat, oats, rye, barley) is July 15, 2008.** To be considered timely filed, failed acreage must be reported before disposition of the crop and prevented planting must be reported no later than fifteen (15) calendar days after the final planting date for the applicable crop. **If you have NAP coverage, the final date to report a specific crop is the earlier of the established reporting date or fifteen (15) calendar days before the onset of harvest or grazing of the specific crop acreage being reported.** Please contact the office to schedule an appointment or for more information.



COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTIONS



For FSA purposes, counties are divided into local administrative areas (LAA's). Each LAA selects one (1) producer to serve a three (3) year term on the Farm Service Agency county Committee.

Each year, an election is held in an LAA to replace the committee member whose three (3) year term is expiring. This year, two (2) seats are up for election, **LAA 1 and LAA 2**. LAA 1 consists of Alexandria, Holland, and Kingwood Townships in Hunterdon County, while LAA 2 consists of Bethlehem, Clinton, Franklin, Lebanon, and Union Townships in Hunterdon County.

Nominations: Candidate nominations for the FSA County Committee election will be accepted from June 15, 2008 through August 1, 2008.

Producers who are residents in the LAA holding the election and who participate or cooperate in an FSA program and are of legal voting age may be nominated to serve on the county committee.

Individuals may nominate themselves or others as candidates. Also, organizations representing socially disadvantaged minorities and women farmers or ranchers may also nominate candidates.

The nomination form, FSA-669A, is available at the county office or may be downloaded from <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=newsroom&subject=landing&topic=cce>

To be valid, the nomination form must be signed by the person being nominated, indicating agreement to serve if elected. The completed nomination form must be returned to the county office by close of business on August 1, 2008 or postmarked August 1, 2008.

Voting: Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters beginning November 3, 2008 and must be returned to the office by close of business December 1, 2008 or postmarked December 1, 2008.

Agricultural producers of legal voting age can vote if they participate or cooperate in any FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting

age but supervises and conducts the farming operations on an entire farm can also vote.

No one can be denied the right to vote because of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status.

Candidate Eligibility: To hold office as a county committee member, a person must meet the basic eligibility criteria:

- Participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA
- Be eligible to vote in a county committee election
- Reside in the LAA in which the person is a candidate
- Not have been
 - Removed or disqualified from the office of county committee member, alternate, or employee
 - Removed for cause from any public office or have been convicted of fraud, larceny, embezzlement, or any other felony
 - Dishonorably discharged from any branch of the armed services

For additional clarification about county committee elects, contact the office.

FARM RECORD CHANGES

Are you thinking about acquiring new parcels for the 2008 crop year? Get your FSA records in order now. **Verification that proves you are the operator for 2008 may be needed for newly acquired parcels.** Documentation can include a written lease, rental agreement, or other document signed by the owner which identifies whether or not the owner shares in the risk of producing the crop and is entitled to share in the crop available for marketing from the farm or would share if the crop is produced; producer's name; owner's name and address; crop year; and farm and tract. **Reminder: Proof of ownership shall be provided when owners have changed.** Documentation can include a copy of the deed; unrecorded deed; land contract; real estate tax statement; or township, block and lot identification. If you are no longer farming a parcel, a reconstitution may need to be completed. Please notify the county office to update your records today.

FARM RECONSTITUTIONS

In program terminology, farms are constituted to group all tracts having the same owner and same operator under one (1) farm serial number (FSN). When changes in ownership or operation take place, a farm reconstitution is necessary. The reconstitution or recon is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation.

The following are different methods used when doing a farm recon. Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons may need to be requested by August 1st for participating farms.

Estate Method—the division of bases, allotments, and quotas for a parent farm among heirs in settling an estate

Designation of Landowner Method—may be used when: (a) part of a farm is sold or ownership is transferred; (b) an entire farm is sold to two (2) or more persons; (c) farm ownership is transferred to two (2) or more persons; (d) part of a tract is sold or ownership is transferred; (e) a tract is sold to two (2) or more persons; or (f) tract ownership is transferred to two (2) or more persons. In order to use this method, the land sold must have been owned for at least three (3) years, or a waiver granted, and the buyer and seller must sign a Memorandum of Understanding.

DCP Cropland Method—the division of bases in the same proportion that the Direct and Counter Cyclical Program (DCP) cropland for each resulting tract relates to the DCP cropland on the parent tract

Default Method—the division of bases for a parent farm with each tract maintaining the bases attributed to the tract level when the reconstitution is initiated in the system

CONSERVATION RESERVE

ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (CREP)

CREP is a voluntary program that pays participants to implement conservation practices on environmentally sensitive land. Eligible practices include installing and maintaining grass waterways, contour grass strips, filter strips, and riparian buffers. Program participants receive annual rental payments, cost share assistance, and other financial incentives (i.e. signing incentives) for contracts of ten (10) to fifteen (15) years.

Eligible cropland must have been cropped four (4) of the six (6) years between 1996 and 2001

and be physically and legally capable of being cropped in a normal manner. Marginal pastureland is also eligible, but only for riparian buffers, and if the land is adjacent or parallel to streams. Participants remove cropland or marginal pastureland from agricultural production and convert the land to native grasses, trees, or other vegetation. Please contact the office for more information or to begin your application.

CONTINUOUS CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP)

Continuous CRP allows enrollment of environmentally desirable land into certain conservation practices at any time. Certain eligibility requirements still apply, but offers are not subject to competitive bidding. Eligible practices include riparian buffers; wildlife habitat buffers; wetland restoration; filter strips; grass waterways; shelterbelts; contour grass strips; living snow fence. Program participants receive annual rental payments, cost share assistance, and other financial incentives (i.e. signing incentives) for contracts of ten (10) to fifteen (15) years.

Eligible cropland must have been cropped four (4) of the six (6) years between 1996 and 2001 and be physically and legally capable of being cropped in a normal manner. Marginal pastureland is also eligible, but only for riparian buffers, and if the land is adjacent or parallel to streams. Participants remove cropland or marginal pastureland from agricultural production and convert the land to native grasses, trees, or other vegetation. Please contact the office for more information or to begin your application.

EMERGENCY LOANS

FSA Emergency Loans are now available for losses caused by the hail & high winds that occurred on August 17, 2007. Hunterdon, Mercer, Morris, Somerset and Warren counties are included in the eligible area. Eligible farmers can use emergency loan funds to recover a portion of losses on growing crops that were destroyed or to repair or rebuild essential farm buildings, clean debris, or prepare land for replanting, and to replace livestock, supplies, and harvested crops on hand or in storage that were lost. Please call Ginny Brophy in the Hackettstown FSA office at (908)852-2576, ext. 110 for more information. **Applications will be accepted thru July, 4, 2008.**

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FARM LOANS FOR SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED

FSA makes direct and guaranteed loans to socially disadvantaged applicants, enabling them to buy and operate family size farms and ranches. Funds are reserved each year specifically for these loans, but regular loan funds can also be used.

Direct loans may be made to qualified applicants by FSA for both farm operating and farm ownership purposes. Guaranteed farm loans also may be made for ownership or operating purposes, and may be made by any lending institution subject to Federal or state supervision (banks, savings and loans, and units of the Farm Credit System) and guaranteed by FSA. FSA typically guarantees ninety (90) or ninety five (95) percent of a loan against any loss that might be incurred if the loan fails.

Persons who are primarily and directly engaged in farming and ranching on family size operations may apply. A family size farm is one that a family can operate and manage itself.

Socially disadvantaged loan applicants do not receive automatic approval. In addition, to being members of a socially disadvantaged group, individual applicants under this program must meet all program requirements for FSA's regular farm loan program assistance, including: have a satisfactory history of meeting credit obligations; have sufficient education, training, or at least one (1) year's experience in managing or operating a farm or ranch within the last five (5) years for a direct operating loan, or for a direct farm ownership loan, have participated in the business operation of a farm or ranch for three (3) out of the last ten (10) years; be a citizen of the United States (or a legal resident alien), including Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and certain former Pacific Island Trust Territories; be unable to obtain credit elsewhere at reasonable rates and terms to meet actual needs; and possess legal capacity to incur loan obligations

A socially disadvantaged person 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.

Please call Ginny Brophy in the Hackettstown FSA office at (908)852-2576, ext. 110 for more information.

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