

February 2013



## Ionia County FSA Updates

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### Ionia County FSA Office

431 Swartz Ct, Ste 300  
Ionia, MI 48846

#### Hours:

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

#### County Executive Director Jennifer A. Taylor

#### Program Technicians

William Brandt  
Carolyn Lindberg  
Diana Graef

#### County Committee Members

Steve Buche  
Jeff Sandborn  
Amanda Powell

#### County Committee Advisor

Allison Badder

#### Farm Loan Manager

Paul E. Wagner

#### Farm Loan Officer

Sara Possehn

#### Program Technician

Vicki Carr, PT

## Dates to Remember

**March 15th** - Sales closing date for many NAP crops

**March 31st** - Final date to obtain loans on 2012 small grains

**May 31st** - Final date to obtain loans on 2012 feed grains and soybeans

**June 3rd** - Deadline for 2013 ACRE Sign-Up

**June 7th** - Deadline to submit 2011 SURE applications

**June 20th** - Final date to submit a prevented planting claim for corn

**June 30th** - Final date to submit a prevented planting claim for soybeans

**July 15th** - Final crop certification date for all crops (including CRP and GRP), except fall seeded small grains and perennial forage including pasture

**July 15th** - Deadline for reporting 2012 production for enrolled ACRE farms

**July 15th** - Deadline for reporting 2012 NAP crop production

**August 2nd** - Deadline for 2013 DCP Sign-Up

**November 15th** - Final crop certification date for all fall seeded small grains and perennial forage including pasture

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## DCP and ACRE Sign-up

Farm Service Agency (FSA) began sign-up for DCP and ACRE for 2013 crops on February 19, 2013. The DCP sign-up period will end on August 2, 2013, and the ACRE sign-up period will end on June 3, 2013.

The 2013 DCP and ACRE program provisions are unchanged from 2012, except that all eligible participants in 2013 may choose to enroll in either DCP or ACRE for the 2013 crop year. This means that eligible producers who were enrolled in ACRE in 2012 may elect to enroll in DCP in 2013 or may re-enroll in ACRE in 2013. Likewise producers who were enrolled in DCP may opt for ACRE enrollment.

[Read more about DCP and ACRE](#) or contact the FSA county office for more information. Please call (616) 527-2098 for an appointment to enroll.

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## New Microloan Program

FSA developed the Microloan (ML) program to better serve the unique financial operating needs of beginning, niche and the smallest of family farm operations.

The program will operate similar to the Operating Loan program but will include reduced requirements for managerial experience and loan security, as well as reduced paperwork. The microloan program can be used for such expenses as annual crop inputs, marketing and distribution expenses, purchase of livestock and equipment, and minor farm improvements such as wells and coolers. Eligible applicants may obtain a microloan for up to \$35,000. The repayment term may vary and will not exceed seven years. Annual operating loans are repaid within 12 months of when the agricultural commodities produced are sold. Interest rates will be the same as the regular Operating Loan rates.

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## MILC Contracts Automatically Extended

The American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 extended the 2008 Farm Bill through 2013 for many programs administered by FSA. The 2008 Farm Bill extension provides for a continuation of the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) program through September 30, 2013.

MILC payments are triggered when the Boston Class I milk price falls below \$16.94 per hundredweight, after adjustment for the cost of dairy feed rations. MILC payments are calculated each month using the latest milk price and feed cost. The payment rate for September 2012 is approximately \$0.59 per hundredweight. The payment rate for October 2012 is approximately \$0.02 per hundredweight. The payment rate for November 2012 is zero.

All dairy producers' MILC contracts are automatically extended to September 30, 2013. Eligible producers therefore do not need to re-enroll in MILC.

Dairy operations may select a production start month other than October 2012. Producers who want to select a production start month other than October 2012 must visit their local FSA office between **February 1 and February 28, 2013**, also known as a relief period.

After the relief period ends on February 28, 2013, changes to your production start month must be made **on or before** the 14th of the month before the month originally or newly selected by the dairy operation as their production start month.

Before the October MILC payment can be issued, dairy farmers must complete a new Average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) form for 2013. The new form, CCC-933: AGI Certification and Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information must be complete by producers before they can receive payments for a variety of programs administered by FSA. Producers may obtain CCC-933 at their local USDA Service Center or online at [www.fsa.usda.gov/cc933](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/cc933).

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## Farming Operation Changes

Producers who have bought or sold land, or added or dropped rented land from their operation, must report those changes to the FSA office as soon as possible. A copy of the deed or recorded land contract for purchase property is needed to maintain accurate records with FSA. Failure to do so can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. While making record updates, be sure to update signature authorizations. Making record changes now will save time in the spring.

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## Hispanic and Women Farmer and Rancher Claims

USDA has announced that Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who allege discrimination by the USDA in past decades can file claims between Sept. 24, 2012 and March 25, 2013.

The process offers a voluntary alternative to litigation for each Hispanic or female farmer and rancher who can prove that USDA denied their applications for loan or loan servicing assistance for discriminatory reasons for certain time periods between 1981 and 2000.

As announced in February 2011, the voluntary claims process will make available at least \$1.33 billion for cash awards and tax relief payments, plus up to \$160 million in farm debt relief, to eligible Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers. There are no filing fees to participate in the program.

The department will continue reaching out to potential Hispanic and female claimants, around the country to get the word out to individuals who may be eligible for this program so they have the opportunity to participate.

Call center representatives can be reached at 1-888-508-4429. Claimants must register for a claims package (by calling the number or visiting the website) and the claims package will be mailed to claimants. All those interested in learning more or receiving information about the claims process and claims packages are encouraged to attend meetings in their communities about the claims process and contact the website or claims telephone number.

**Website:** [www.farmerclaims.gov](http://www.farmerclaims.gov)

**Phone:** 1-888-508-4429

**Claims Period: Sept. 24, 2012 - March 25, 2013.**

Independent legal services companies will administer the claims process and adjudicate the claims. Although there are no filing fees to participate and a lawyer is not required to participate in the claims process, people seeking legal advice may contact a lawyer or other legal services provider.

To read Secretary Tom Vilsack's news release click on the following link:

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=2012/09/0309.xml&contentidonly=true>

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USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9450, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay).