



# Ties to the Land



## Your Resource Partners in Kenosha and Racine Counties:

Racine County Land Conservation Division  
University of Wisconsin Extension

Farm Service Agency Office

Kenosha County Land & Water Conservation  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

July, August, September, 2008

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## **NEW FARM BILL**

Details are now starting to trickle in on the recently passed farm bill. When the complete program rules and requirements are announced we will be contacting you to make arrangements to come into this office to sign any required contracts. **NOTE** - We are planning on announcing area informational meetings in different areas around the counties so please watch your mail for these announcements.

## **NEW EMPLOYEE**

Welcome to recently hired employee Jeanette Held, at the Racine/Kenosha/Milwaukee County FSA Office. Jeanette will be handling the Conservation Programs and assisting in other areas as needed.

Jeanette is a resident of Kenosha County and previously worked as an Administrative Assistant in the medical field. Prior to going into the medical field, she had farming experience and was part owner of LJ Smith Transport.

Jeanette is married to Tom and has twin sons Travis and Trent. She really enjoys spending time with family and friends and loves to travel when she can. Be sure to stop by her desk and introduce yourself when visiting the office.



**WELCOME JEANETTE**

## GROW FRUITS OR VEGGIES? TRY NAP



Do you grow any vegetables, fruits, or value-loss crops? If so, you may be interested in learning about a program that is offered through the Farm Service Agency. The Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) provides financial assistance to producers of noninsurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occurs due to natural disasters.

Eligible producers are landowners or operators that share in the risk of producing an eligible crop. The annual gross revenue of the eligible producer cannot exceed \$2 million.

To be eligible for NAP assistance, crops must be noninsurable crops and agricultural commodities for which the catastrophic risk protection level of crop insurance is not available. There are more details to crop eligibility, but basically, NAP is crop insurance for crops that can't be insured through a crop insurance company. Some eligible crops for NAP are:

### Examples of Crops Eligible for NAP

Strawberries	Pumpkins	Sweet Corn
Sod	Raspberries	Cabbage
Lettuce	Carrots	Green Beans
Squash	Apples	Pears

Eligible producers must apply for coverage of noninsurable crops and pay the applicable service fees at the Farm Service Agency office. The application and service fees must be filed by the application closing date, which is usually before the crop year officially begins. Please contact the office to find out the closing date for the crop you are interested in insuring. For 2009, the service fee is \$200 per crop per county up to \$600 maximum per county, not to exceed \$1200 for all counties.

To remain eligible for NAP assistance, you must annually file an acreage report. You must also provide quantity of all harvested production of the crop as well as documentation of any crop not sold or left in the field. This can be accomplished by providing verifiable or reliable crop production records or having the crop appraised before harvest.

Those producers who have signed up for NAP must remember that **notices of losses on crops covered by NAP** must be filed with the local FSA Office within 15 days of the date of the disaster. Notices of loss must be filed for each loss related weather event or condition that causes damage to the crop.

The disaster condition must have either reduced the expected unit production of the crop by more than 50% or prevented the producer from planting more than 35% of the intended crop acreage. The 50% or 35% rate is calculated using ALL of your reported acres for a crop. The loss calculation is based on your farming as a whole, not on a field by field basis.

A NAP payment is calculated by using the crop acreage, approved yield, and net production. The crop will receive a disaster payment on any loss above the 50% loss threshold, at a payment rate of 55% of an average market price as established by the FSA state committee.



**REMEMBER-** The NAP program is only available before the disaster happens, you are not able to purchase the insurance after the disaster event occurs. Please call the FSA office to find out more information on this program.



## 2008 Compliance and Spot Check Review

FSA is committed to delivering accurate program payments to America's agricultural producers. The accuracy of payments not only benefits farmers and ranchers, but also maximizes taxpayer dollars and government efficiency.

This year we are required to conduct compliance reviews and spot checks of certain producers selected by the national office through a statistical sampling method, which also includes FSA employees, County Committee (COC) and State Committee (STC) members.

FSA may review a producer's operations in multiple states and counties, depending on the scope of the producer's operations. FSA will review all participation as well as the producer's compliance with applicable program requirements. These checks are ongoing and will be conducted at various times throughout the year depending on participation.

FSA's goal is to ensure that program dollars are delivered effectively and efficiently so America's farmers and ranchers can provide safe and abundant food, fiber and fuel for consumers at home and abroad. FSA appreciates the cooperation of its customers as the agency continues to enhance its operations.

## RECONSTITUTION REMINDER

**ANY CHANGES** that require farm reconstitutions should be reported as soon as possible so that we can update your records prior to sign up.

## COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to ALL farmers and ranchers with large or small operations. 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).

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 committees help with the decisions necessary to administer the programs in their counties. They work to make FSA agricultural programs serve the needs of local producers.

Committees provide local input on:

- \*Commodity price support loans and payments;
- \*Conservation programs;
- \* Incentive, indemnity and disaster payments for some commodities; and
- \* Emergency programs.

**June 15, 2008 is the date the** nomination period began. You may stop by the office to pick up a nomination form or give us a call and we will mail one out to you. **August 1, 2008 is the last day** to file nomination forms at the FSA Office.

The Local Administrative Area that will be conducting the election for 2008/2009 is LAA3 which is in Kenosha County and consists of the townships; Bristol, Paris, Pleasant Prairie and Somers.

## COMMODITY LOANS

Commodity loans will again be available on a variety of crops including barley, corn, grain sorghum, mohair, oats, oilseeds, soybeans, wheat, unshorn pelts, and wool. **Corn silage is not eligible for a commodity loan.** For commodities to be eligible for loans or LDP's, they must have been produced by an eligible producer, be in existence and in a storable condition and be merchantable for food, feed or other uses as determined by CCC.

To be eligible for loans, you must file a crop report, meet conservation compliance requirements, have beneficial interest in the commodity on the date the loan is requested and retain beneficial interest while the loan is outstanding; and ensure that the commodity meets CCC minimum grade and quality standards.

Commodity loans are an excellent way to obtain operating funds while you wait for the market prices to peak. These loans mature nine months following the

month of issuance. Currently the interest rate is 2.25%. The producer is responsible for maintaining the quality of the commodity in farm storage throughout the term of the loan.

It is **very important** to make sure you do not remove or dispose of loan collateral without authorization. Violating provisions of the loan program may trigger administrative actions, such as assessing liquidated damages, calling the loan and denial of future farm-stored loans. Maintaining loan collateral is the borrower's responsibility. Liquidated damages assessed for violating these provisions can result in a fine amounting to several thousand dollars.

## ACREAGE REPORTING ENDED 7/15/08

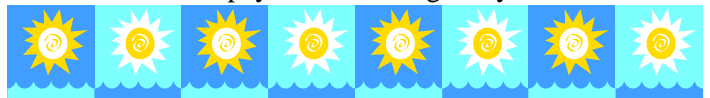
Timely filed acreages reports should have been completed by July 15, 2008. If you haven't reported your acres, and it is past 7/15/08, you may still do so, but a late filing fee will be charged. The charge is that we must assess a minimum fee of \$46 per FSA farm number. Since the late-fee now includes FSA travel time, along with the on-farm verification of each field, the resulting fees could be costly.

If there is any acreage on your farm(s) that has failed this should be reported to FSA before plowing up the failed crop.

## HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND AND WETLAND CONSERVATION COMPLIANCE

Have you taken a look at your conservation plan on your highly erodible land lately? Have you checked with the NRCS office before fixing or adding new tile on cropland? Please remember that all participants in USDA programs are required to have a conservation system in place on all the highly erodible land (HELC) that they operate and all participants are also required to follow wetland compliance (WC) rules for they land that they operate. Several areas where problems can arise when complying with HELC and WC provisions are; renting new cropland, purchasing new land, breaking out additional cropland, draining or tiling new land, not following a crop rotation, and changing, or removing existing conservation practices.

It is very important that you contact the FSA and/or NRCS office **before** doing any of the above or modifying - tiling, draining, dredging, filling, or leveling, any wetland or drainage ditch. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in loss of all Federal payments and eligibility.





**Racine County Land Conservation**  
**14200 Washington Ave.**  
**Sturtevant, WI 53177**  
**262-886-8479**

*Articles Submitted by: Chad Sampson*

**Farmland Preservation Program**  
**Participation & Tax Credits**

State law requires landowners who participate in the Farmland Preservation Program to contact the Land Conservation Division when applying for the tax credit. Our office mails the annual cropping maps to you along with the conservation plan certification letter and signature form. When you return this to our office, this qualifies as your certification for the tax credit. You can call our office at 262-886-8479 or stop by the Land Conservation Division at Ive's Grove if you have questions about your program participation.

If you are applying for the Farmland Preservation Program tax credit and do not have a certified conservation plan, you are in violation of the State law and program participation. If a violation is found, you may be liable to pay back 10 years of tax credits received by the State of Wisconsin.

In the past year, **all** Racine County Farmland Preservation Program participants **were contacted** by our office for conservation plan updates and compliance checks. All cropland on eligible farms must have soil loss rates at tolerable levels.

There are two goals associated with the Farmland Preservation Program. The first goal is to preserve Wisconsin farmland by means of local land use planning with exclusive agricultural zoning (EAZ) and conservation practices. The second goal is to provide property tax relief to farmland owners.

In the future, all program participants will need to come into compliance with the State Agricultural (NR 151) Standards and Prohibitions. This includes animal waste compliance, nutrient management, and the proper installation of all best management practices needed on the farm to meet the standard.

To find out if you are eligible for the program, or want to know if you currently are enrolled in the program, please feel free to call 262-886-8479 for more information.

**Nutrient Management**  
**Save \$\$\$\$ on your next fertilizer bill**

There are many reasons for the rising cost of fertilizer. Some of the reasons include: a greater demand for corn, a lot of land previously in the Conservation Reserve Program is coming out of CRP and back into crop production, increasing the need for inputs. Also, the rising cost of all energy including oil and natural gas on speculatively tighter supplies puts a strain on the prices. Combine this with a weak dollar relative to the world market, and sticker shock is the end result.

The State of Wisconsin is providing cost-sharing for nutrient management planning on all farms. You can receive up to \$28 per acre to test your soil and follow a 4-year nutrient management plan for your farm. The \$28 covers the cost of the soil testing and the nutrient management plan development. The remaining money is the incentive you need to follow the plan every year on the cropland entered into the program. The goal is for all farmers to follow a nutrient management plan. The agronomical and financial benefits will outweigh the cost of not continuing nutrient management planning for the future. Also, if followed, nutrient management plans protect the environment due to less over application and runoff.

Depending upon interest and participation, each farmer may be eligible to receive \$28/acre of cost-share assistance for up to 500 acres per farmer in 2009.

Apply for your 2009 nutrient management planning today. Soil tests will be completed this fall, plans written and followed in spring.

**Flood update – June 2008**

Racine County was not spared during the heavy rains in early June. The Root River reached record levels, as the integrity of all dams, bridges, homes, and structures along all waterways within the County were tested.

Not only were structures impacted, but our cropland took a beating as well. While most farmers look at potential crop damage and loss due to flooding, our office focuses on the integrity of recent installations of conservation practices. Fortunately, most of the conservation structures put in over the past few years survived, although a few did not, and will need revisiting for engineering and construction. If you have a project that failed, please contact our office at 262-886-8479.



*Waterford Dam*





Jerry Hebard, District Conservationist  
phone: (262) 878-1243 ext. 108  
e-mail: jerry.hebard@wi.usda.gov

Approximately 1/3 of the producers in our counties will observe new wetland symbols now attached to the maps being sent out to the Farm Service Agency producers. These symbols are being added in 2008 to raise awareness of USDA wetland determinations and compliance requirements. FSA wetland spot symbols only will be shown where a previous wetland determination had been sent out a number of years ago to producers.

The NRCS office maintains official records of the location, type, and size of wetlands on wetland determination maps. Review of the wetland maps is recommended by all producers whether they have wetland symbols on their new FSA maps or the map does not show any symbols. It's a safe bet that when all wetlands are officially determined, you will see one or more wetland symbols on land you farm.

USDA customers remain responsible for self-certifying compliance with wetland provisions. Before any drainage activities are done, producers should contact your local NRCS office in Union Grove. Both the FSA and NRCS maps showing wetland symbols may NOT identify all regulated wetlands on your land. Producers should also contact local county planning agencies, the WI DNR, and the Army Corp of Engineers to determine if other wetland regulations apply to their situation to avoid having a wetland issue with one or more of these agencies.

On the FSA map that shows wetland symbols, there will show possible up to 3 colored symbols. One symbol indicating some type of restricted use will show up as a red octagonal (shape of a stop sign). A yellow upside down triangle (shape of a yield sign) indicates limited restrictions are present in that field. The last symbol, a green square indicates that field area has no identified USDA wetland restrictions.

(Remember the state, county or another government agency may have their own restrictions that you need to deal with before you drain or fill in a wetland.)

Typically a red symbol shows a wetland area that may be farmed under natural dry conditions, but does not have existing drainage via ditch or tile. Placing new tile or ditching these areas would be considered swamp busting and remove producer eligibility for any USDA programs.

The yellow symbol more generally shows an area that has existing drainage from the past, but this area can only be farmed about 50% of the time due to inadequate drainage. These areas can have tile and ditch repair but only to the same extent that originally took place. Drainage improvements beyond what existed are not allowed. Lowering a tile or ditch outlet, installing larger size tile or extra tile lines would be considered swamp busting.

The green symbol will be the most common on your wetland map. These areas are considered "Prior Converted" that means there is an existing drainage system in place and agricultural production is seldom hindered by water (this year being an exception due to the year rainfall event). Nearly 60 % of our croplands are blessed with tile due to our heavy clay soils. Those areas can have tile blowouts repaired, tile size increased or additional drainage installed and would be exempt from USDA wetland compliance. It's very important to maintain these existing drainage systems. If they are not maintained and wetland conditions return, the area could possibly be reclassified and various restrictions may then exist.

Only your visit with NRCS can answer your specific situation. Please call and we'll take time to pull maps and discuss those areas you currently farm. A quick check with us before you tile or ditch could save us all a headache down the road.

# **Southeast Wisconsin Rural Landowner Workshop & Expo**

**Saturday September 6, 2008, 8 am - 3 pm**  
**Burlington High School, Burlington, WI**

A day-long program designed for rural landowners, horse owners, existing small farmers and/or individuals who are thinking about getting involved in a farm/agricultural enterprise.

## **Southeast Wisconsin Rural Landowner Workshop & Expo Agenda**

### **8 am - 9 am Registration/Trade Show**

**9 am - 9:40 am Opening Remarks/Keynote:** *The Farmer's Almanac:* A WISN Channel 12 Meteorologist will discuss historical weather patterns and the effects of weather on growing plants.

### **9:45 - 10:45 Workshops A**

1. *Identifying Edible Wild Mushrooms*
2. *Operating A Successful Farm Business & Funding Options for Farmers: A Farm Service Agency Farm:* Loan Specialist and Local Farmer will present
3. *Growing Flowers for Sale:* Susie Cerny, Frontier Flowers & Roy Diblik, Northwinds Perennial Farm
4. *Manure Management Options:* Ellen Phillips, University of Illinois Extension

### **10:50 - 11:50 Workshops B**

1. *Natural Landscaping Options:* Nan Calvert, Wild Ones (invited)
2. *Starting a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture):* Renae and John Mitchell (invited)
3. *Heirloom Vegetable Production:* Sonja Berg, Peach Tree Farm
4. *Pasture Management for Horses:* Peg Reedy, Walworth County UW Extension

### **11:50 - 12:50 Lunch (provided) and Trade Show**

### **12:50 - 1:50 Workshops C**

1. *Land Preservation Programs Public and Private:* Panel discussion with the Kenosha/Racine Land Trust and state and local agencies
2. *Beginning Beekeeping:* Tim Fulton, Old Corbett Road Apiary and Kenosha/Racine Beekeepers
3. *Organic Certification 101:* Janet Gamble, Michael Fields Agricultural Institute & Beth and Bob Van De Boom, VDB Organic Farms
4. *Keeping Your Horses Healthy: When to Call the Vet:* Kevin Nelson, DVM, Bristol Vet Service

### **1:55 - 2:55 Workshops D**

1. *Invasive Plants: Seek and Destroy!* Jerry Doll, Emeritus Professor, UW Extension
2. *Options for Developing an Agri-tourism Business*
3. *Carbon Credits: An Overview:* Sue Beitlich, Wisconsin Farmers Union
4. *Horse Nutrition:* Liv Sandberg, UW Cooperative Extension Horse Specialist

## ***Thank you to the Sponsors and Organizers of the Rural Landowner Workshop and Expo:***

Farm Service Agency  
Kenosha County Land Conservation  
The Seno Center  
University of Illinois Extension

Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Racine County Land Conservation  
Kenosha/Racine Land Trust  
University of Wisconsin Extension

# SE Wisconsin Rural Landowner Workshop & Expo Registration Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Indicate 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th choice for each session/workshop.**

## 9:45 - 10:45 Workshops A

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Identifying Edible Wild Mushrooms
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Operating A Successful Farm Business
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Growing Flowers for Sale
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Manure Management Options

## 10:50 - 11:50 Workshops B

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Natural Landscaping Options
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Starting A Community Supported  
Agriculture Business
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Heirloom Vegetable Production
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Pasture Management for Horses

## 12:50 - 1:50 Workshops C

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Land Preservation Programs
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Beginning Beekeeping
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Organic Certification 101
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Keeping Your Horses Healthy

## 12:50 - 1:50 Workshops C

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Invasive Plants
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Developing An Ag Tourism Business
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Carbon Credits: An Overview
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Horse Nutrition

## Workshop Fees: (Lunch included)

- \_\_\_\_\_ \$20 per person
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$35 for two people
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$10 for youth 18 and under

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL ENCLOSED**

Complete the Registration Form, enclose your check payable to Kenosha County UW-Extension & mail both to: **Kenosha County UW-Extension, P O Box 550, Bristol, WI 53104**

**For more information about the Workshop/Expo or to request Trade Show materials, contact:**

Rose Skora, 262-857-1945  
or [rose.skora@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:rose.skora@ces.uwex.edu)

## Location:

Burlington High School  
400 McCanna Parkway  
Burlington, WI 53105

Burlington High School is located just east of the City of Burlington. Take Hwy 11 to McCanna Parkway. Turn south on to McCanna Parkway and follow until you get to the school.

Map: <http://burlingtonhs.basd.k12.wi.us/>



## DIRECTORY OF AGENCIES

**Racine/Kenosha Farm Service Agency (FSA)**   
1012 Vine Street, Union Grove, WI 53182 1330  
Phone: 262-878-3353, Ext 2 Fax: 262-878-3283

**Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**  
1012 Vine Street, Union Grove, WI 53182 1330  
Phone: 262-878-1243, Ext 3 Fax: 262-878-3283

**Racine County Land Conservation Division**  
14200 Washington Avenue, Sturtevant, WI 53177  
Phone: 262-886-8479, Fax: 262-886-8488

**Kenosha County Land & Water Conservation**  
19600 75<sup>th</sup> St, PO Box 520, Bristol, WI 53104  
Phone: 262-857-1895, Fax: 262-857-6508

**Kenosha County UW-Extension**  
19600 75<sup>th</sup> St, PO Box 550, Bristol, WI 53104  
Phone: 262-857-1945, Fax: 262-857-1998



**Racine County UW-Extension**  
14200 Washington Avenue, Sturtevant, WI 53177  
Phone: 262-886-8460, Fax: 262-886-8489

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Friday, July 4<sup>th</sup>:** *Independence Day:* All  
Offices Closed

**Wednesday, July 23<sup>rd</sup> – Sunday, July 27<sup>th</sup>:**  
Racine County Fair

**Thursday, July 31<sup>st</sup> – Sunday, August 10<sup>th</sup>:**  
Wisconsin State Fair

**Wednesday, August 13<sup>th</sup> – Sunday, August 17<sup>th</sup>:** Kenosha County Fair

**Monday, September 1<sup>st</sup>:** Labor Day, All  
Offices Closed

**Saturday, September 6<sup>th</sup>:** *Rural Landowner  
Workshop/Expo*, Burlington High School

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (Voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**Ties to the Land Newsletter**

**Your Resource Partners:**  
Farm Service Agency  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Racine County Land Conservation  
Kenosha County Land and Water Conservation  
UW-Cooperative Extension

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Union Grove, WI 53182 1330