



# 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

January, February and March 2009

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## **NEW DCP PROGRAM FOR 2009 – 2012**

After nearly three years of public debate and behind-the-scenes political wrangling, the 2008 Farm Bill finally became law. In that process, there were nine months of delay resulting in eight temporary extensions of the 2002 Farm Bill, two Presidential vetoes, two Congressional veto overrides, one missing section, and one complete bill. Needless to say, it has been one of the most interesting debates in recent farm bill history.

To better explain the program some informational meetings were/will be held. They are:

**Norway Town Hall – December 10, 2008 10:00 am to noon**

**County Building Hwy 45/50 Kenosha County January 14, 2009 10:00 am – noon.**

If you cannot attend the information meetings please call the office to make an appointment to go over the options available. Please consider your visit to the office as a learning experience and this will take well over 1 hour per appointment so plan your schedule accordingly. As a matter of fact there may be many visits to the office needed before you sign the final papers for the program.

## **DO YOU HAVE A FARM WITH LESS THAN 10 ACRES OF BASE?**

An amendment to the 2008 Farm Bill allowed owners and operators of farms with 10 or fewer base acres the opportunity to sign up by November 26, 2008 for the 2008 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment (DCP) Program

Prior to this amendment, direct and countercyclical payments (DCP) could not be made with respect to farms with crop acreage bases of 10 acres or less. However, the new law made that provision inapplicable for the 2008 crop year ONLY. This extension of the original September 30, 2008 deadline applied only to producers previously excluded because of the minimum acreage requirement.

For the 2009 Crop Year, the program will revert back to the original rule, and any farms with 10 acres or less of base will not be paid.

The amendment to the 2008 Farm Bill **authorized resuming reconstitutions for farms with 10 acres of base or less according to normal reconstitution rules** and policy for 2009. If you have any farms that you would like to combine, you must have permission from ALL OWNERS that will be involved in the reconstitution.

If you have any questions about reconstitutions for DCP signup for 2009, please contact Angie at the FSA office.

## **RECONSTITUTION REMINDER**

In addition to the above changes in farms with 10 acres or less any changes that require farm reconstitutions should be reported as soon as possible so that we can update your records prior to sign up.

Changes that would be included with this is land sold and purchased by another entity, changes in acreages due to lots sold for houses, etc. These changes do take some time to complete at the office here so any work that can be started now would save much time later when we get into full swing of signing for the programs.

## **New MILC Program**

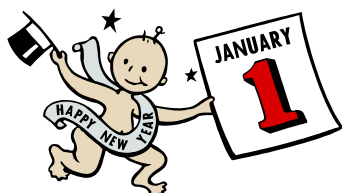
A revised program has been announced with a scheduled signup and starting date of December 1, 2008.

Any producers of milk should consider visiting the office to get their applications signed. Along with signing the application you will have to submit monthly milk sales to this office.



The change to the program is that the Boston Milk Rate of \$16.94 will be used with a feed cost adjustment added to establish a trigger price if the National feed adjustment rate exceeds \$7.34. Because of the change and the addition of using a feed cost adjustment this will delay payments that could and will be earned up to 60 days. Any questions contact Evelyn at the office.

## **SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM THE RACINE/KENOSHA/MILWAUKEE COUNTY FSA OFFICE COMMITTEE AND STAFF**



## **COMMODITY LOANS AND LDP'S**

When acreage reports were done in this office this summer we did not have producers sign the form which is used for the Loan Deficiency Program because the market prices of corn and soybeans were so much higher than the county loan rates. Since this summer the prices have fallen and we have sent out the forms for signature to all producers who reported grains on their farms. If you have not signed and return the form you received in the mail, please do so immediately so you are not in jeopardy concerning the eligibility rules for the LDP requiring signature of the initial form before disposition of any of the grain that could be covered under the LDP program.

Commodity loans and LDP's are 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 and LDP's, you must have filed a crop report, meet conservation compliance requirements, have beneficial interest in the commodity on the date the loan or LDP is requested and, in the case of a loan, 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 2.5%. 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 and LDP program may trigger administrative actions, such as assessing liquidated damages, calling the loan and denial of future farm-stored loans and LDP's. 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.



## **CHECKS NO LONGER AVAILABLE THOUGH UNION GROVE OFFICE**

The Financial Management Division (FMD) of FSA's Office of Budget and Finance plans to install the payment centralization software components the first part of December 2008. When payments are centralized, your local FSA office will no longer be able to issue paper checks, as all checks will be issued by Treasury.

For most customers, this will not cause any changes to your payments, because you receive all of your payments by direct deposit. For some customers that receive payments that are made jointly or do not have direct deposit, this will cause a delay in receiving your money. Because all of the payments will be issued by the Treasury, there will be a 7 to 10 day delay in receiving the check.

The most common example of a disruption in receiving your money would be when you come in to pay on an outstanding commodity loan by using the check from the warehouse that was issued to you and CCC. When you come in to use that check, we will have to repay the portion of the loan that was sold, and issue you a refund check. The major change is that you will not walk out the door with that refund check; it will come in the mail 7-10 days later. In this instance, our recommendation is to have the warehouse call the FSA office to receive a payoff amount for the loan, and have the warehouse issue two checks - one check to CCC for the amount under loan plus interest, and the second check to you, for the portion of the sales that are not required to go to CCC.

If you have any questions regarding payment centralization please contact Linda at the FSA office.

## **PAYMENT LIMITATION - ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME (AGI) PROVISIONS**

Beginning with the 2009 crop year, a revised adjusted gross income (AGI) rule applies to both individuals and entities. For commodity and price support programs, the limit is non-farm AGI of \$500,000 or less to be eligible for DCP or price support benefits, and farm AGI of \$750,000 or less to be eligible for direct payments under the DCP. For conservation program benefits, the AGI limit is \$1 million unless two-thirds of AGI is derived from farming, ranching and forestry operations, and non farm AGI is \$1 million or less.

The 2008 Farm Bill maintains the current payment limit caps for direct payments and counter-cyclical payments at \$40,000 and \$65,000, respectively.

All limits on marketing loan benefits, including loan deficiency payments and marketing loan gains were removed.

If a producer enrolls in ACRE, payment limitations will be \$32,000 for direct payments and \$73,000 for ACRE payments.

SURE payments are limited to \$100,000 per year for eligible producers.

## **PLEASE SCHEDULE APPOINTMENTS**

Because of the new programs, continuing signup, information needed and decisions to be made we are requesting that you contact the office to set up an appointment when you want to come into the office. This will help us schedule you when the program technician that handles the program will be available to help you and also help in scheduling your day since if we would be busy you could have to wait before someone would be available to help you.

Our telephone number is 262-878-3353 the following lists the person and extension for the office:

Kim Iczkowski, County Executive Director #106  
Linda Feldkamp, Program Technician #100  
Evelyn Pizzala, Program Technician #104  
Angela Drews, Program Technician #103  
Jeanette Held, Program Technician #105

Our office hours are 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., but most of the staff is available at the office at 7:00 a.m. most days.

## **ELECTION RESULTS**

Ballots for the 2009 election of county committee were counted and Marvin Drissel from Paris Township was elected to the county committee for LAA4. Ray Renick from Somers was elected as alternate.

The LAA involved in the election was LAA4 which includes the townships of Bristol, Paris, Somers, and Pleasant Prairie in Kenosha County.



### **Coming to Racine County**

The Alice in Dairyland steering committee invites you to join the excitement as Wisconsin's next agricultural ambassador – Alice in Dairyland.

The 62<sup>nd</sup> Alice will be chosen  
Wednesday, May 13 through Friday, May 15, 2009  
at the Burlington High School

Please make sure to come join us in this special event. The last time the Alice in Dairyland Finals was hosted in Racine County was in conjunction with Kenosha County over 40 years ago.

### **History of Alice in Dairyland**

During Wisconsin's centennial year of 1948, state officials started a program to promote Wisconsin's dairy industry nationwide. Every year since, a young lady from Wisconsin has been chosen to be "Alice in Dairyland." "Alice" travels throughout the state and country to attend a variety of events promoting Wisconsin, dairy products, and Wisconsin's other diverse industries. Although Wisconsin markets its dairy industry in many ways, Alice in Dairyland is its most recognizable ambassador.



**To learn more, please visit Racine county website at  
[www.aliceindairyland.com/racinecounty.html](http://www.aliceindairyland.com/racinecounty.html)**





## Maintaining Conservation Practices

Once conservation practices are installed many of us tend to give little attention to maintaining the function of the practices we implemented. Routine inspection and maintenance is critical for their long-term success.

Grassed waterways should be inspected at least annually and, if possible, after each heavy rain. When problems develop, maintenance should be performed promptly to prevent additional, costly damage to the waterway. Abuse and neglect are the most common causes of waterway failure. Common maintenance problems include weeds and brush, eroded spots, sediment deposits, bare spots, and insufficient grass stands. Maintenance activities may be needed more frequently when the waterway handles a large volume of water or is on a steep slope.

Weeds and brush can be controlled by cutting, or herbicide use. Remove trees and other woody vegetation while they are small and easy to remove. Avoid herbicides with a high potential for runoff. Herbicides used on adjacent cropland may harm grass stands when transported in runoff water or attached to sediment.

Gully formation is the most serious problem in a waterway. It is usually caused by poor management, sediment deposits, using the waterway as a roadway or livestock trail, or by an unstable outlet. Eroded spots should be filled promptly, compacted, and reseeded or sodded to prevent further erosion. Slight overfilling allows settling. Reseeding perennial grasses with annuals such as wheat, oats, rye, or annual ryegrass will help ensure that good cover is quickly re-established.

Sediment accumulation often results from insufficient water velocity and is most common where water from terraces discharges into the waterway. Sediment deposits should be removed promptly, because they tend to increase with subsequent runoff events, eventually blocking the waterway. If sediment does settle into the center of the waterway, or if the bottom of the waterway becomes flat or humped in the middle, runoff is forced to the sides or even outside of the waterway. Use sound conservation strategies on the land above the waterway to keep soil on the crop field, and at the first sign of a filled-in waterway, reshape and reseed to restore waterway capacity.

Keep adequate grass cover to maintain optimum flow velocity. Waterways should carry water off the field at a slow speed--an adequate grass cover helps slow the flow of water. If the grass cover degenerates, small channels form inside the waterway. When spraying, shut the sprayer off before crossing the waterway to maintain good grass cover. If commercial applicators are used, emphasize to them that they must do so as well. If the grass cover is diminished, be sure these areas are reseeded and that grass is reestablished as quickly as possible.

If the grass stand is poor or difficult to establish, fertilize the grass periodically and evaluate the results. Don't "nibble" at the edges of a waterway--maintain proper width with every tillage pass. A waterway is not a thoroughfare--tire tracks and livestock hooves can start gully formation. Minimize machine travel within waterways, especially when the soil is wet or soft. Control burrowing animals such as badgers, groundhogs, and moles. Because running water tends to swirl around obstructions, keep the waterway free of rocks, tree stumps, or debris.



Maintenance requirements differ among programs especially relating to mowing and weed management. CRP and CREP participants must maintain practices according to their conservation plans. Activities such as mowing, burning, and spraying not specifically outlined in the maintenance agreement must be approved by the FSA County Committee and NRCS. If you look at your acres and determine you have a major weed problem that threatens to take over the cover that is supposed to be on your contract, and you determine action needs to be taken from May 15 to August 1, you **MUST** contact the FSA office before doing anything. Disturbing your cover during the primary nesting season greatly reduces the habitat benefit. Clipping or spraying for cosmetic purposes is never allowed.

Each of us bears part of the responsibility to maintain the conservation practices that we either installed or implemented on our land. As we all do our part to maintain the conservation practices, we insure that the dollars directed to our farm reach their ultimate goal of improving water quality. Maintaining them is good stewardship of our land and natural resources.



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

*Articles Submitted by: Jonathan Grove*

### **Racine County Tree Orders**

February 20, 2009 is the last day to order trees through the Racine County Land Conservation Division. Order early to ensure the trees you've selected will be available. Please make sure to include: the order form, tax in the total cost, a personal check payable to Racine County, and a daytime phone number if questions arise or if tree stock is unavailable. If you have any questions, contact our office at 262-886-8479.



Tree pick-up is anticipated for mid-April at the Racine County Fairgrounds in Union Grove. A notice will be sent with information about the exact dates and times of pick-up. **Tree order forms are available on-line** at [www.racineco.com](http://www.racineco.com) under the Land Conservation Link, or under "T" for Tree Order Blank.

### **Land and Water Resource Funds Available**

Are you considering any conservation practices for you land this year? Do not hesitate to apply for **your** cost-share funding today! The Racine County Land Conservation Division may cover 70% of the cost of your project. Our office has almost \$70,000 in grant monies to distribute to Racine County landowners with eligible conservation projects in 2009. Contact our office to apply for the program at 262-886-8479.



*Grassed Waterway*

*Stream bank Stabilization*

### **Emerald Ash Borer**

*(This article is excerpted from information developed by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.)*

The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) was first detected in Michigan in 2002 and has subsequently spread to Canada and a number of other states including Wisconsin. The pest kills all species of North American ash trees and has killed an estimated 30 million trees to date. In early August EAB was discovered in Ozaukee and Washington counties and most recently in Kenosha County where two infested trees were discovered on private, residential land. The trees were moved to Wisconsin from an Illinois nursery and planted in August, 2008. It's believed that they arrived in Kenosha County after adult emergence took place. The immediate area has been surveyed, and there were no other signs of infested ash trees. In fact, there were relatively few ash trees in the area. USDA APHIS is investigating the alleged movement of the nursery stock from Illinois to Wisconsin. Regulators expect that the infested trees will be dug out and returned to the nursery in Illinois.

### **What should you be doing?**

- Begin making public officials and the community aware of the impending EAB threat to local ash trees.
- Learn identification characteristics of ash trees and emerald ash borer, and be vigilant about inspecting trees and reporting concerns.
- Conduct and review a tree inventory on your property. Determine the extent of the ash population and begin projecting the impact of an EAB infestation on your land.
- Develop an EAB tree management response plan. How many trees would be lost? What is the cost of removal? How will the infested wood be handled? What species will be replanted?
- Report possible EAB sightings in Wisconsin to the toll-free EAB hotline, 1-800-462-2803, operated by WI-Dept of Agriculture.
- Three or more of the following symptoms should be observed before calling the hotline:
  1. Dying ash trees with sprouts on the trunk or at the base of the tree
  2. D-shaped exit holes in the bark
  3. Winding, S-shaped tunnels underneath the bark
  4. Bullet shaped, iridescent green beetles from June to August
  5. Increased woodpecker activity on ash trees.



Cooperative Extension  
University of Wisconsin-Extension  
Kenosha & Racine Counties

<b>Kenosha County</b>	<b>Racine County</b>
<b>PO Box 550</b>	<b>14200 Washington Avenue</b>
<b>Bristol, WI 53104</b>	<b>Sturtevant, WI 53177</b>
<b>262-857-1945</b>	<b>262-886-8460</b>

Article Submitted by: Rose Skora  
rose.skora@ces.uwex.edu

## HELP REQUESTED REGARDING TOPICS FOR CONFERENCE

Kenosha, Racine and Walworth Counties need your help! UW Extension, Land Conservation, Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency along with the Seno Center, Kenosha/Racine Land Trust and Caledonia Conservancy will offer a day-long workshop in November 2009 on small farm & rural landowner topics. As we develop the program, we're looking for feedback on what topics people would be interested in attending. The following link will take you to the survey, which should take 5 minutes to complete. <http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/?p=WEB228GCNHQ7NN> Deadline for filling out the survey is Monday, February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

If you don't have access to the internet, but would still like to give us feed back, please fill out the following survey and send it to:

Kenosha County UW Extension  
ATTN: Rural Landowner Conference  
PO Box 550, Bristol, WI 53104

1. Please circle any topic on **Farming as a Business** that you'd be interested in.

*Workshop A:* High Intensity Farming  
*Workshop B:* Benefits of Organic Farming  
*Workshop C:* The future of Agriculture in the US  
*Workshop D:* Selling at Farmers Markets: What you need to Know  
*Workshop E:* Urban Agriculture (Farming in the City)  
*Workshop F:* How to Start a Small Farm  
*Workshop G:* Basic Accounting for a Small Farm  
*Workshop H:* Legal Aspects to Small Scale Farming

2. Please list any other topics related to **Farming as a Business** that you'd be interested in learning about:

3. Please circle any topic on **Small Scale Farming/Rural Land Management** that you'd be interested in.

*Workshop A:* Hydroponics  
*Workshop B:* Growing Mushrooms  
*Workshop C:* Aquaculture  
*Workshop D:* Composting  
*Workshop E:* Permaculture  
*Workshop F:* Food Preservation Techniques  
*Workshop G:* Managing Trees on Your Property

4. Please list any other topics related to **Small Scale Farming/Rural Land Management** that you'd be interested in learning about:

5. Please circle any topic on **Livestock** that you'd be interested in attending.

*Workshop A:* Raising poultry  
*Workshop B:* Raising beef  
*Workshop C:* Raising sheep  
*Workshop D:* Raising goats  
*Workshop E:* Value added milk products (cheese, ice cream etc)

6. Please list any other topics related to **Livestock** that you'd be interested in learning about:

9. Please circle any topic on **Conservation/Energy alternatives** that you'd be interested in attending.

*Workshop A:* Energy conservation: an overview  
*Workshop B:* Wood as an alternative heat source  
*Workshop C:* Conserving rainwater  
*Workshop D:* Alternative Energy options (solar, geothermal etc)  
*Workshop E:* Producing bio-fuels  
*Workshop F:* Carbon Credits (landowners are compensated for practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions).

10. Please list any other topics related to **Conservation/Energy Alternatives** that you'd be interested in learning about:

11. Please list any other topics you'd be interested in learning about that were not listed above:

Thank you for your time.

## 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

**Wednesday and Thursday, December 31<sup>st</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup>:** *New Year's Eve and Day:*  
All offices closed

**Wednesday, January 21<sup>st</sup>:** *Pesticide Applicator Training*, Kenosha County Center, Bristol

**Wednesday, January 28<sup>th</sup>:** *Pesticide Applicator Training*, Walworth County Health and Human Services Auditorium, Elkhorn

**Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup>:** *Good Friday.* All County office buildings closed. FSA/NRCS office open.

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**