

Ties to the Land Newsletter

April-June 2012



**Racine/Kenosha/Milwaukee
FSA Office**
1012 Vine St.
Union Grove, WI 53182
262-878-3353



New for the e-mail newsletter! You can "Ctrl + click" on any [blue underlined](#) headline or topic in any FSA article to be directed to the national FSA page for more information.

2012 DCP/ACRE DEADLINE- JUNE1

The warm weather is here and planning preparations for crop season 2012 are well underway! Please remember that enrollment for the 2012 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) and the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) program signup continues through **June 1, 2012**. This is the final year of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Farm Bill).

USDA computes DCP and ACRE direct payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Payments will be issued in October to eligible producers at rates established by statute regardless of market prices.

It is important for producers to begin the enrollment process as annual contracts are required to be signed to receive program benefits. All producers are being sent an appointment postcard; if you are unable to keep your appointment or miss your date, please contact that office to set up another time to come in. All signatures must be obtained by the deadline for both the DCP and ACRE programs.

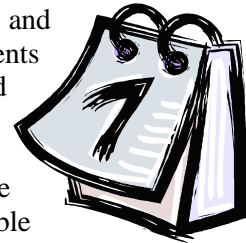


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In all cases, it is the responsibility of the operator and owners of a farm to obtain and submit all necessary signatures on election and enrollment forms by the June 1, 2012, deadline. To schedule an appointment to enroll in the DCP/ACRE programs, please contact Lori at 262-878-3353.

MILC PROGRAM UPDATES

At this time, prices are approaching a level to trigger a MILC payment. All dairy producers need to be aware of the program requirements should there be an opportunity for payments. For dairies currently enrolled in MILC, it is important to notify the local county office if there have been any changes to the dairy operation.

If a payment rate is announced, dairy producers enrolled in the MILC program will need to provide the local county office with documentation showing the eligible milk production and commercial milk marketing for the months with a MILC payment rate in effect. All dairy producers will also need to have a valid [CCC-931, Certification of Adjusted Gross Income \(AGI\) form on file for 2012](#). Please contact the office at 262-878-3353 with any questions.

LOANS FOR THE SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operating or help purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided priority funding for socially disadvantaged applicants.

A socially disadvantaged applicant 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 a group.

FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.



ACREAGE REPORTING

Producers are reminded to submit their annual acreage report to the FSA office by July 16th, 2012, to meet FSA program eligibility requirements.

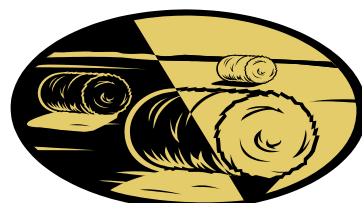
Producers must file their reports **accurately** and **timely** for **all crops and land uses, including prevented and failed acreage**, to ensure they receive the maximum FSA program benefits possible. Accurate acreage reports are necessary to determine and maintain eligibility for various programs. This also applies to the Federal Crop Insurance Program.

Acreage reports are considered timely filed when completed by the applicable final crop reporting deadline of July 16, 2012. Prevented acreage must be reported within 15 calendar days after the final planting date. Failed acreage must be reported before the disposition of the crop. NAP crops that are harvested prior to July 15 must report by the earlier of July 16th, 2012 or 15 calendar days before the onset of harvest or grazing. Producers should contact the FSA office if they are uncertain about reporting deadlines.

Late-filed provisions may be available to producers who are unable to meet the reporting deadline as required. Reports filed after the established deadline must meet certain requirements to be accepted and may be charged late fees.

REMEMBER HAY NET

This online service allows producers with hay and those who need hay to post ads so they can make connections. Hay Net is a popular site for farmers and ranchers who have an emergency need. Individual ads can be posted free of charge by producers who complete a simple online registration form the first time they use the site.



FSA Payment Record 1099-G

Producers who have received payments from FSA should have received a CCC-1099-G. A CCC-1099-G is a report to the Internal Revenue Service about FSA payments made to producers during the previous calendar year. The CCC-1099-G is a service to help participating producers report taxable income. It is not intended to replace the program participant's responsibility to report income to the IRS.

When the CCC-1099-G is received, it should be checked with your records to see that the amounts are correct. Refunds will no longer be reported on the 1099-G, but will be available online from the [Financial Inquiries for FSA Producers](#) web-based database. Program participants with an eAuthentication (eAuth) user ID and password may access their refund information at FSA-FI and select "Inquiry Type 1099/Refund Reports". Refund amounts are displayed on the Producer's Year-to-Date Activity web page. An eAuth user ID may be established by going to the [eAuthentication](#) website and following the instructions provided.

If you have a question concerning the 1099-G refund information, you may contact the FSA office for assistance locating the correct payment data.

COMMODITY LOANS AVAILABLE

Commodity loans, also called Marketing Assistance Loans (MAL) are available to producers who share in the risk of producing a crop. To be eligible, a producer must maintain continual beneficial interest in the crop from harvest through the earlier of the date the loan is repaid or CCC (Commodity Credit Corporation) takes title to the commodity.

Beneficial interest means retaining the ability to make decisions about the commodity; responsibility for loss or damage to the commodity; and title to the commodity. Once beneficial interest in a commodity is lost, the commodity is ineligible for loan - even if the producer regains beneficial interest.

Commodity loan eligibility also requires compliance with conservation and wetland protection requirements; beneficial interest

requirements, acreage reporting and ensuring that the commodity meets CCC minimum grade and quality standards. For commodities to be eligible, they must have been produced by an eligible producer, be in existence and in a storable condition and be merchantable for food, fed or other uses as determined by CCC. The quality of the commodity in farm storage must be maintained throughout the term of the loan.

Producers do not have to participate in the Direct and Counter-Cyclical and/or ACRE programs to be eligible for commodity loans.

Violating provisions of a marketing assistance loan may trigger administrative actions, such as assessing liquidated damages, calling the loan and denial of future farm-stored loans.

The deadline for obtaining a loan on your 2011 coarse grain crop is May 31st, 2012.

UNAUTHORIZED DISPOSITION OF GRAIN

If loan grain has been disposed of through feeding, selling or any other form of disposal without prior written authorization from the county office staff, it is considered unauthorized disposition. The financial penalties for unauthorized dispositions are severe and a producer's name will be placed on a loan violation list for a two-year period. Always call the county office before you haul any grain under loan.

FSA INTEREST RATES FOR APRIL 2012	
COMMODITY LOAN	1.125%
7-YEAR FACILITY LOAN	1.500%
10-YEAR FACILITY LOAN	2.125%
12-YEAR FACILITY LOAN	2.375%
FARM OPERATING-DIRECT	1.250%
FARM OWNERSHIP-DIRECT	3.375%
FARM OWNERSHIP-DOWN PAYMENT	1.500%
CONSERVATION LOAN	3.375%



Nutrient Management Planning

Nutrient management is using crop nutrients as efficiently as possible to improve productivity while protecting the environment. Nutrients that are not effectively utilized by crops have the potential to leach into groundwater or enter nearby surface waters via overland runoff or subsurface agricultural drainage systems. Too much nitrogen or phosphorus can impair water quality. Therefore, a major principle of crop nutrient management is to prevent the over-application of nutrients. This not only protects water quality but also benefits a farm's bottom line.

The keys to effective crop nutrient management are developing and following a yearly plan and conducting soil tests to determine the nutrient needs of crops. It is essential to keep good records on the rate, method and timing of all nutrient applications. It is also important to note the source of the nutrients, be they purchased fertilizers, manure, other bio-solids, or legumes. Residual nutrients in the soil must also be accounted for. Keeping good records help farmers compare expenses and returns from year to year. In short, good records provide solid information that helps farmers and crop consultants decide whether and how to adjust nutrient application rates, methods and timing.

For water quality purposes, nutrient management is especially important on slopes, on soils with high phosphorus levels and in environmentally sensitive areas. Sensitive areas include shoreland (land near rivers, stream, lakes and wetlands), areas around wells and surface drainage inlets, areas with sandy soil and wherever groundwater is close to the surface.



Why Practice Nutrient Management On Your Farm?

- ✓ Enhances profitability by significantly reducing purchased fertilizer costs
- ✓ Protects surface water quality by minimizing nutrients, organic matter and pathogens in agricultural runoff
- ✓ Protects groundwater in wellhead protection areas from nitrate contamination
- ✓ Aids compliance with Wisconsin NR151 Agricultural Performance Standards
- ✓ Improves soil quality and productivity by increasing nutrient retention and water holding capacity and enhancing soil structure
- ✓ May improve air quality by reducing ammonia emissions
- ✓ Helps protect public health when nutrient application occurs near municipal or domestic wells, residences, businesses, schools and public lands.



Current rules require all farmers who mechanically apply manure or commercial fertilizer to cropland (not just livestock operators) to have a nutrient management plan (NMP). Kenosha County Land & Water Conservation has a cost-sharing program for landowners interested in preparing a nutrient management plan. The program offers a flat-rate payment of \$7 per acre per year for a four year period (\$28/acre total), as available. The lump sum is paid up front. A certified NMP is a required to maintain eligibility in the State Farmland Preservation Tax Credit program.

For more information contact the Kenosha County Land & Water Conservation at (262) 857-1895. Managing nutrient applications to maximize profitability and minimize water degradation is a smart move and a nutrient management plan is a great way to do it.



Do you know your wetland compliance rules?

If you are in any USDA programs, it's important to know the compliance rules to ensure your eligibility is maintained.

For wetlands, this means that participants cannot produce agricultural commodities on wetlands converted after December 23rd, 1985.

What does this mean for you?

If you plan on doing any tiling, ditching, land leveling, clearing any woody vegetation, or diverting water we highly recommend that you call or visit our office. NRCS will review the site and complete a wetland determination to make sure that no wetlands will be affected by these activities. A wetland determination from NRCS shows where wetlands are located on your fields and what the associated restrictions are. Our determinations are based on several years of aerial photos, vegetation, and soils.

If you plan on repairing any existing drainage, it is still recommended to call our office to discuss your plans. Generally, existing drainage system may be maintained to their original extent that existed in 1985. By informing NRCS of your repair plans, we can ensure that you maintain your USDA eligibility.

Do you need a conservation plan for Highly Erodible Lands (HEL)?

If you are operating highly erodible lands (HEL), you should have a conservation plan developed with NRCS.

Federal law requires that all persons that produce agriculture commodities must protect all cropland classified as being highly erodible from excessive erosion. For compliance, conservation systems must result in a "substantial reduction" in cropland soil loss, defined as 2T or less, with T being the tolerable soil loss level.

By developing a conservation plan with your local NRCS office, you can be sure that your crop rotation and associated tillage is appropriate for each field that is operated. Each plan is customized to meet the needs of your farming operation by incorporating your current methods. As changes to your equipment or rotations occur, we can easily update the conservation plan at the NRCS office.

If you don't have a conservation plan or are unsure, please call our office to schedule an appointment to develop one with our staff.



For more information on Compliance visit:
<http://www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/comp.html>



Racine County Land Conservation
14200 Washington Ave.
Sturtevant, WI 53177
262-886-8440

<http://www.racineco.com/landconv/>

Staff Contributions by:
 Chad Sampson, Jon Grove, & Brian Sadler

Tree & Shrub Pick Up REMINDER

For those of you who ordered trees, shrubs, or seed mixes from the County tree sale; **the tree pick up dates are scheduled for Tuesday, April 17th 1 - 6 p.m. and Wednesday, April 19th 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. at the Racine County Fairgrounds.** Receipts and pick up instructions will be sent out in the beginning of April. Also, the County has two tree planters available for rental, starting at \$30 per planter. Contact us today to reserve one.

Gypsy Moth Caterpillars



With temperatures on the rise, bare ground in sight, and the signs of spring awakening ... it's time to be on the look out for Gypsy Moth caterpillars and egg masses. Caterpillars usually emerge May – July, while egg masses are present from August – May. If you notice any infestations please

contact the DNR (1-800-642-MOTH) or the Racine County Land Conservation Department and we will investigate the situation. If requirements are met you may be placed on the 2013 spray list. For additional information visit www.gypsymoth.wi.gov



The 2010 Racine County aerial photographs are now available online at
<http://maps.sewrpc.org/racinemapping/>

Grassed Waterways in 2013?

Our office is seeing high demand for grassed waterways the past few years. Those gullies that you have seen for years are getting fixed with some cost-share assistance. Planting winter wheat the fall before construction allows:

1. Our staff has time to view the site, survey elevations, note existing tile issues, and have a general sense of the best management practice to use.
2. Our staff can put together a construction plan over the winter months. You have an opportunity to sign all necessary contracts and related documents.
3. Once the construction has taken place, grass can establish before winter begins. This stabilizes the site.

New Staff with Racine County

Hello Racine County, my name is Brian Sadler and I am a new employee at Racine County Land Conservation in Ives Grove, hired as Conservation Consultant. I was



born and raised not too far from here in Somers and graduated from UW-Stevens Point with a degree in Wildlife Ecology with minors in Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and Biology. Previous conservation experience includes various positions in the private and public sectors working with farmers and ranchers on grassland bird and bat studies throughout Wisconsin and other Midwest and Central Plains states. My training in GIS and soils has been a great asset to my position here. I understand and appreciate the beauty, recreational, and economic value of the land and water right here in Racine County. I look forward to help conserve and enhance our extremely valuable land and water.

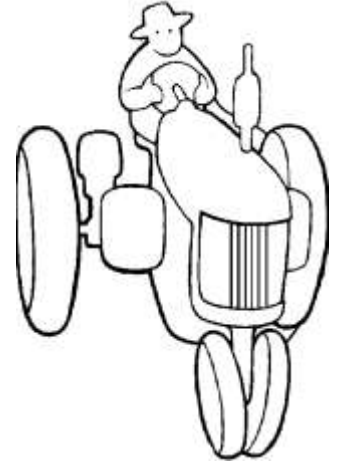
I currently reside in Caledonia with my wife of three years, also a southeast Wisconsin native. I enjoy hunting, fishing, and exploring the outdoors with my dog by my side. This passion is what led me to the career I have today.

I look forward to getting to know more of you in the future. To contact me call 262-886-8440 or email me at Brian.Sadler@goracine.org.

2012 Youth Tractor Certification Course

Offered by Kenosha, Racine and Walworth Counties UW Cooperative Extension

The Tractor Certification Course is a 24-hour program designed to teach safety as it relates to driving farm implements on **public roads**, offering both classroom and hands-on tractor driving experiences, for youth under the age of 16 and over the age of 12.



When: June 25 - 29 & July 2, 2012

Time: 8am - Noon

Where: Burlington High School

Cost: \$50/participant

This course meets the **Wisconsin Act 455, Section 10, Section 346.925 "Operation of agricultural machinery by youthful operators"** law that states...

...After April 30, 1996 no person may direct or permit a child under the age of 16 years to operate a farm tractor or self-propelled implement of husbandry on the highway unless the child has been certified as successfully completing a tractor and machinery operation safety-training course...

For More Information Contact:

Peg Reedy, Walworth County UW Extension: 262-741-4961, peg.reedy@ces.uwex.edu

OR

Rose Skora, Kenosha/Racine Counties UW Extension, 262-857-1945 (Kenosha) or 262-767-2929 (Racine), rose.skora@ces.uwex.edu

Please send registration form and payment to:

Walworth County UW Extension, Tractor Safety Program
100 W Walworth Street, PO Box 1001
Elkhorn, WI 53121-4362

Registration Deadline: **Monday, June 18, 2012**

2012 Tractor Safety Registration Form

Name of Youth: _____ Birth date: _____

Name of Youth: _____ Birth date: _____

Name of Parent(s)/Guardian(s): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

of Youth _____ x \$50 = _____ Total Enclosed

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