

Ties to the Land Newsletter

April-June 2013



Resources for landowners and operators of
Racine, Kenosha, and Milwaukee County

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TIES TO THE LAND” HAS A [FACEBOOK PAGE!](#)

As you are aware, due to budget restrictions we are able to print only one newsletter per year. As an additional way to get useful information to the landowners and operators of Racine, Kenosha, and Milwaukee Counties, the group has created a facebook page to share important information and deadlines. All cooperating agencies will update the page on a regular basis with information regarding programs available and signup deadlines. If you have a facebook page, “Like” us to get great information!”



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



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

GENERAL SIGNUP ANNOUNCED FOR THE CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP)

USDA will conduct a four-week general sign-up for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), beginning **May 20 and ending on June 14, 2013**. CRP protects the nation's natural resources through voluntary participation, while providing significant economic and environmental benefits to rural communities across the United States.

Currently, about 27 million acres are enrolled in CRP. Producers that are accepted during this sign-up can receive cost-share assistance to plant long-term, resource-conserving covers and receive an annual rental payment for the length of the contract (10-15 years).

Nationwide, contracts on 3.3 million acres of CRP are set to expire at the end of September. Producers with expiring contracts or producers with environmentally sensitive land are encouraged to evaluate their options under CRP. For more information on CRP, contact Jeanette at 262-878-3353 x 100 or visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

DCP AND ACRE SIGNUP GOING ON NOW

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DCP and ACRE signup for the 2013 crop year is on-going. The DCP sign-up period will end on **Aug. 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 for 2013. [Read more about DCP and ACRE](#) or contact Lori at 262-878-3353 x 105 for more information or an appointment to enroll.



HISPANIC AND WOMEN FARMERS AND RANCHERS CLAIMS MUST BE FILED BY MAY 1ST

The extension of the voluntary claims process for Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who allege discrimination by the USDA in past decades was announced on March 25th, 2013. All claims must now be filed by MAY 1, 2013.

Hispanic and women farmers who believe they have faced discriminatory practices in the past from the USDA have additional time to file a claim in order to have a chance to receive a cash payment or loan forgiveness urges potential claimants to contact the Claims Administrator for information and to file their claim packages on or before May 1, 2013. The process offers a voluntary alternative to litigation for each Hispanic or female farmer and rancher who can prove that USDA denied his or her application for loan or loan servicing assistance for discriminatory reasons for certain time periods between 1981 and 2000.

HISPANIC AND WOMEN CLAIMS, continued

Call center representatives can be reached at 1-888-508-4429. Claimants may register for a claims package (by calling the number or visiting the website) or may download the forms from the website. All those interested in learning more or receiving information about the claims process and claims packages are encouraged to visit the website at any time or to contact the call center telephone number Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Time.

Claim packages and other documentation may be mailed to Hispanic and Women Farmers and Ranchers Claims Administrator, PO Box 4540, Portland, OR 97208-4540. Claim packages and other documentation may also be emailed to claims@hwfr.org. Claimants may also fax claims packages and other documentation to (855) 626-8343. Completed forms and documentation must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. PDT on May 1, 2013.

Once a claim is submitted to the Claims Administrator, the Claims Administrator will determine if it is timely and complete. If it is, the claim will move to the Claims Adjudicator for a determination on the merits of the claim. USDA may submit evidence to the Claims Adjudicator regarding the claim. If a claim is deemed incomplete, a claimant will be notified by the Claims Administrator and given the opportunity to provide additional information within a certain timeframe. Claimants may check the status of their claims on the claims website.

Website: www.farmerclaims.gov

Phone: 1-888-508-4429

Fax: (855) 626-8343

Email: claims@hwfr.org

Claims Period: September 24, 2012 – May 1, 2013.

Independent 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, persons seeking legal advice may contact a lawyer or other legal services provider.

MICROLOANS NOW AVAILABLE!



The Farm Service Agency (FSA) developed the [Microloan \(ML\) program](#) to better serve the unique financial operating needs of beginning, niche, small family farm operations, specialty crop producers and operators of community supported agriculture (CSA).

FSA offers applicants a Microloan designed to help farmers with credit needs of \$35,000 or less. The loan features a streamlined application process built to fit the needs of new and smaller producers.

This loan program will also be useful to eligible applicants who can apply for a maximum amount of \$35,000 to pay for initial start-up expenses such as hoop houses to extend the growing season, essential tools, irrigation and annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents, marketing, and distribution expenses. As financing needs increase, applicants can apply for a regular operating loan up to the maximum amount of \$300,000 or obtain financing from a commercial lender under FSA's Guaranteed Loan Program. Interested parties should contact their local FSA office.

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FARM STORAGE FACILITY LOANS (FSFL)

The Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program allows producers of eligible commodities to obtain low-interest financing to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities.

The new maximum principal amount of a loan through FSFL is \$500,000. Participants are now required to provide a down payment of 15 percent, with CCC providing a loan for the remaining 85 percent of the net cost of the eligible storage facility and permanent drying and handling equipment. New loan terms of 7, 10 or 12 years are available depending on the amount of the loan.



FSFL, continued

The interest rate in effect at the time the loan is approved is locked in for the life of the loan. Loans for storage facilities are available on traditional commodities as well as hay, fruits and vegetables, biomass, and honey.

Payments are available in the form of a partial disbursement and the remaining final disbursement. The partial disbursement will be available after a portion of the construction has been completed. The final fund disbursement will be made when all construction is completed. The maximum amount of the partial disbursement will be 50 percent of the projected and approved total loan amount.

Applications for FSFL must be submitted to the FSA county office that maintains the farm's records. There is a \$100 non-refundable applicable fee to apply for a loan. An FSFL must be approved before any site preparation or construction can begin.

For more information about FSFL please visit your FSA county office or www.fsa.usda.gov.

FSA Interest Rates for April 2013	
COMMODITY LOAN	1.125%
7-YEAR FACILITY LOAN	1.375%
10-YEAR FACILITY LOAN	2.000%
12-YEAR FACILITY LOAN	2.250%
FARM OPERATING-DIRECT/MICROLOAN	1.375%
FARM OWNERSHIP-DIRECT/CONSERVATION LOAN	3.500%
FARM OWNERSHIP-DOWN PAYMENT	1.500%



ENTRENEUERSHIP (YOUTH) LOANS



Money management and responsibility are two very important lessons for youth to learn before beginning life on their own.

The [Farm Service Agency \(FSA\) Entrepreneurship Loans](#) are available to young men and women ages 10-21 that are participating in 4-H, FFA or similar organizations. Loan funds may be used to finance a modest, income producing, agriculture-related project. These loans provide an opportunity for rural youth to acquire experience and education in agriculture-related skills.

The project must be part of an organized and supervised program and must produce sufficient income to repay the loan. Youth may borrow up to \$5,000 to pay for livestock, equipment and supplies. Through the management of their project, they learn the value of working hard and the reward of realizing how they can profit from that work.

Please contact Kristin at Extension 104 for more information about Entrepreneurship Loans.

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Upcoming FSA Dates and Deadlines:

- May 20th to June 14th**- CRP General Sign-Up Period
- May 31st**- Deadline to apply for a commodity loan on 2012-crop corn and soybeans
- June 3rd**- Deadline to enroll in the 2013 ACRE program
- June 7th**- Deadline to apply for the 2011 SURE program
- July 15th**- Deadline to timely file 2013 acreage reports on spring planted crops
- August 2nd**- Deadline to enroll in the 2013 DCP program



DAN TRELOAR - COUNTY CONSERVATIONIST
 KENOSHA LAND & WATER CONSERVATION
 19600 - 75TH ST. BRISTOL, WI 53104
 (262) 857-1900 FAX (262) 857-1920
 Email: dan.treloar@kenoshacounty.org
 Website: <http://www.kenoshacounty.org/index.aspx?nid=676>



GROW NATIVE SHRUBS FOR WILDLIFE!



Interested in beautifying your property and helping wildlife, do you enjoy nature, hearing the call of a red-tailed hawk or the song of a chickadee, do you like watching hummingbirds gather nectar from flowers in your yard, seeing a tiger swallowtail butterfly perched on a flower, or the brilliant color of a cardinal or oriole? If you said yes to one or all of these questions you want to add shrubs to your property. When you plant shrubs, you will enhance your experience of nature by attracting birds and other wildlife to your property.

Wildlife doesn't just randomly occur on the landscape. They are present because of favorable habitat. The elements you need to provide are food, water, cover and a place to raise a family. To attract and benefit wildlife, you need native trees, shrubs, ground cover, vines and wildflowers. Adding native shrubs can add beauty to your landscape while attracting more watchable wildlife to your property. Native shrubs are perfectly adapted to the local soil, rainfall and temperature conditions. In most cases they will grow without the need for fertilizers and pesticides. Using native shrubs in your landscape helps preserve the natural balance and enhance scenic beauty.

Here's a few you might consider adding to your backyard.



Nannyberry - produces non-fragrant white flowers in spring. Flowers give way in autumn to blue-black, berry-like drupes which often persist into winter and are quite attractive to birds and wildlife. Variable fall color ranges from drab greenish-yellow to reddish-purple. Fall berries are eaten by thrushes, woodpeckers, bluebirds and other birds. Berries often stay on the shrub beyond fall, providing an excellent source of winter food.

Dogwoods; Grey, Pagoda or Red-osier - Clusters of berries appear in fall, eaten by more than 17 bird species, including downy woodpecker, brown thrasher, wood thrush, bluebird and cedar waxwing. Branches provide nesting sites for robins and finches. The dogwood is also useful as a low-growing hedge which provides summer food and cover for small animals.

Highbush Cranberry - Tart fruits are not palatable to most birds and so persist on the shrub throughout winter providing a late-winter food source for songbirds, pheasants, wild turkeys, white-tailed deer, rabbits and small mammals. Birds prefer the berries after freezing has sweetened them. Branches provide nesting sites for warblers.



Chokecherry - Clusters of red to dark purple tart berries are a source of summer fruit. Berries attract and sustain more than 43 different bird species including bluebirds and cardinals. Leaves are food for five butterfly species including the tiger swallowtail.

SHRUB AND TREE PLANTING STEPS

Keep bare-root stock moist and cool before planting. Plant bare-root stock as soon as it arrives. Keep roots moist by periodically sprinkling with water. Do not soak roots in water because this will deprive them of oxygen.

Dig the hole deeply enough so that the roots won't curl or bunch up. Trees and shrubs should be planted about one-half inch deeper than they were in the nursery. Paler colored bark and a slight swelling on the stem mark the old soil line.

Pack soil firmly around the roots. Air pockets left around the roots will dry them out. Pack soil firmly but gently around the roots with your foot.

Water regularly to keep soil moist but not saturated.

Mulch a two-foot diameter circle around each plant 2 to 3 inches deep with wood chips, straw, or leaves. This will reduce competition with other plants. Keep this area free of other growth by weed-whacking or hand-pulling weeds for the first couple of years.

Reprinted, in part, from *Share Your Shore* – Burnett County, WI.
http://www.bonelakewi.com/docs/Top10forWildlife_LR_08011

KENOSHA COUNTY TREE PICK-UP

If you ordered trees this year, a receipt will be sent to your home indicating your tree pick-up day. The tentative dates to pick up this year are Thursday or Friday, April 18th and 19th, based on your order number. If you have any questions about the program, please call our office at 262-857-1900.

NRCS STAFFING UPDATE

Meagan Duberstein, Soil Conservationist (SC), in Union Grove and Waukesha will be moving on to the Westfield, WI office this spring. Meagan’s position here will be filled by Nick Besasie, who is currently the Soil Conservationist in Manitowoc, WI. He is very excited to be coming to southeast Wisconsin with his family.

COMPLIANCE TO MAINTAIN USDA PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

With spring finally drawing near, it’s time to think about any maintenance activities that may affect your USDA program eligibility.

Wetlands:

If you drain, clear trees, fill, or otherwise manipulate a wetland so that it can be cropped, you will lose eligibility for USDA programs. Before you do any alteration to a wet area, including clearing trees or maintenance of existing drainage, contact NRCS or FSA to request a wetland determination. We recommend that requests are made at least a month ahead of anticipated alterations so that our staff has time to complete the determination. Since spring usually sees a higher rate of wetland determination requests, it could take longer for USDA participants to receive a completed determination.

To maintain eligibility, anyone participating in USDA farm programs, must self certify that they have not produced crops on wetlands converted after December 23, 1985, and did not convert a wetland after November 28, 1990, to make agricultural production possible.



Highly Erodible Lands:

On highly erodible cropland, farmers must follow an acceptable conservation system. A conservation system is needed for all highly erodible cropland, including any new land being brought into production. 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.

-Acceptable Conservation Systems specifically “plans” are required to maintain USDA program eligibility. Farmers self-certify that acceptable conservation systems are being used.

If you have any questions regarding Wetland and Highly Erodible Land Compliance, please call 262-878-3353, Ext. 3.



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

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

Staff Contributions by:
 Chad Sampson, Jonathan
 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 16th 1-6 p.m. and Wednesday, April 17th 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.



COST-SHARE FUNDING - WATCH FOR WASH-OUTS THIS SPRING

Do you have any wash-outs that appeared in your farmland or rural property from winter snow melt runoff? Both the snow melt runoff and occasional heavy winter rains make it clear, where grassed waterways should be installed.



Plan ahead, a waterway can be shaped and seeded before planting this spring if you act now. Contact our office at 262-886-8440, and we can find the best program for your current situation.

Depending on program eligibility, you can receive up to 110% cost-sharing for the installation of your waterway.

Do you rent cropland with wash-outs? In some cases, the owner may not be aware of the conditions of the fields. Although land management is ultimately the responsibility of the landowner, a farm renter may have more of an understanding of what can be done to correct erosion and drainage of the cropland. It is important to discuss these program opportunities with the landowner and your conservation office.

ROOT RIVER WATERSHED – RIPARIAN BUFFERS

Are you looking for \$200 per acre guaranteed on your cropland for the next 15 years? Is your existing cropland adjacent to a ditch, creek, stream, or river? Do you live in the Root River or Lake Michigan Watershed in Racine County?

If you answered “YES” to these questions then you may qualify for our great new riparian buffer program!

The primary purpose of planting riparian buffers is to...



Utilizing a grant, Racine County staff will be assisting with the implementation of 33 acres of riparian buffers over the next two years. If you feel you may qualify for this or one of our other buffer programs please give our office a call.



Cooperative Extension
University of Wisconsin-Extension
Kenosha & Racine Counties

Kenosha County
PO Box 550
Bristol, WI 53104
262-857-1945

Racine County
209 N Main Street
Burlington, WI 53105
262-767-2929

2013 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 24 – 28 & July 1, 2013

Time: 8am – Noon

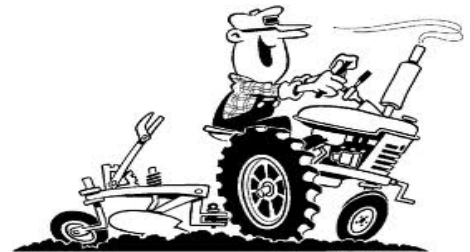
Where: Burlington High School

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, 2013**

2013 Tractor Safety Registration Form

Name of Youth: _____ Birth date: _____

Name of Youth: _____ Birth date: _____

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

Mailing Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

of Youth _____ x \$50 = _____ Total Enclosed

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