Agricultural News

By: Warden Alexander, FSA Director

Aid To Dairy Farmers

Agriculture Secretary, Dan Glickman, has announced that USDA is providing $125 million in direct cash payments to assist dairy farmers who have been hurt by low prices. An additional $200 million in aid was distributed last summer.

This assistance is sorely needed to help keep man small- and medium-size dairy producers in business until prices stabilize.

To distribute limited resources equitably among all dairy producers, The Dairy Market Loss Assistance program provides payments based on an operation's milk production in 1997 or 1998, up to the first 26,000 hundredweight of production. All dairy farmers who produced milk during the last quarter of the calendar year 1998 are eligible for the program.

Eligible dairy farmers who did not participate in the program last summer must sign up at their local FSA office from January 24-February 28, 2000. Farmers who participated in last summer's program will automatically receive payments and do not need to reapply for assistance. The dollar amount of payments will be calculated after sign-up is complete.

Applications For New Burley Tobacco Quota

Producers who own land and do not have a burley tobacco quota may be eligible for a new burley tobacco quota. Eligibility requirements include: own land which has tillable cropland with no tobacco quota, have two out of five years marketing history of burley tobacco, and 50% of all income derived from farming. Producers who wish to make an application should contact this office no later than February 15th.

Crop Disaster Program (CDP)

The Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2000, and the Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2000, included a total of $1.386 billion for the Crop Disaster Program (CDP). CDP assistance is for farmers who suffered losses to 1999 crops due to natural disasters. Farmers are eligible for compensation for 1999 crop losses directly attributed to adverse weather and related conditions.

Producers who suffered greater than a 35% loss on insured/noninsured crops such as tobacco and corn and the non insurable crops such as hay, soybeans and vegetables for commercial use are eligible to receive payment.

Payments to farmers will be prorated after all applications are reviewed in order to stay with the program's requirements and budget.

As a condition of receiving benefits under CDP, any producer who elected not to purchase crop insurance on the 1999 crop for which CDP benefits are requested MUST insure that crop for the 2000 and 2001 crop years.

For further information concerning this program, contact the FSA office prior to the deadline of February 25, 2000.

FSA Reminds Foreigners of AFIDA Requirement

"Foreigners who have bought or sold agricultural land in Rockcastle County are reminded to report the transaction to the local Farm Service Agency office," Warden Alexander, County Executive Director of the Rockcastle County Farm Service Agency (formerly ASCS), said.

To avoid Federal penalties and monetary fines, foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land must report their holdings, acquisitions, dispositions, leases of 10 years or more, and land use changes to FSA within 90 days.

"The report is required by the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act. (AFIDA) which is still in effect," Mr. Alexander said. Foreign investors are required to file a report if all or part of any agricultural land is sold, or the title is transferred to another person.

Failure to file the AFIDA report could result in a civil penalty of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the interest held in the agricultural land, he said.

For reporting purposes, agricultural land is any tract of more than 10 acres in the aggregate now in farming, ranching, forestry, or timber production. Land used for forestry production is land exceeding 10 acres in which 10 percent is stocked by trees of any size, including land that formerly had such tree cover and will be naturally or artificially regenerated. "This includes land in agricultural use when purchased, as land later converted to agricultural uses" the FSA official said.

County government offices, realtors, attorneys, lending institutions and others involved in real estate transactions are asked to notify the foreign investor of these reporting requirements.

Male Chow/Shepherd Mix
Approx. 3-4 months old.
Needs Home. Very good with kids. Very Smart
256-5183

Male Long Haired White Cat, Very affectionate. Needs loving home.
256-1098.

The Family Room

By Dr. Don Whitehead

Having children is a pleasure best left until later

Norm and Vera had many problems in their marriage. (All characters are fictitious.) They fought about money, sex, in-laws and how to raise the children. They never hit each other, but they yelled a lot. Just as there were many problems, there were many causes.

One cause was a handicap that came early in their marriage. Vera voiced it one day in counseling, "Our first baby was born ten months after we were married. Then two more came along quickly. I think it would have been better if we could have had some time without the children. It seems as if we have always been parents, first and a couple, second."

Vera was right. A newly married couple needs time to get to know each other. This takes years, not months. Developing the closeness that will keep a marriage strong through the tough times does not happen quickly.

Sam and Diane had a similar problem. "We were already engaged when Diane got pregnant," Sam told me, "so we just moved up the wedding date. We had our first child after being married only five months. I wish we had waited."

Sam and Diane present a strong argument for sexual abstinence before marriage. Luckily they were already in love and engaged, but in any case "having to get married" because of pregnancy is not a good way to begin a married life together. This means that the baby will arrive shortly and the couple will have precious little time to build their relationship. Cementing their bond as a couple takes a backseat to caring for a child.

Cliff and Myrtle illustrate a different scenario. "We talked about it before marriage and knew we didn't want to have children for a while," Myrtle explains. "We decided not to have sex before we got married, and, even afterward, we planned carefully to make sure that pregnancy would not happen."

"This gave us a chance to get to know each other," Cliff continued. "We are both in school, but we still had time to do things together. Weekends were our time to do whatever we wanted. One summer we drove clear across the country, just because we knew we would like that. We had a life together before we ever had children. I would recommend that to any young couple starting out."

After graduation from college and working for a few years, Cliff and Myrtle decided it was time to start a family. That took awhile, but finally their first child was born. "We had been married six years before we had children," Cliff said. "Those first six months of parenthood were hard on our relationship. The baby seemed to need constant attention, and both of us felt drained. I can't imagine going through that after being married only six months.

Cliff reported that they had to endure some pressure from family when they produced no children after the first three years of marriage. Both sets of in-laws were anxious to be grandparents and made some not so subtle hints about the matter. Friends would kid them about "not knowing what to do," and Myrtle's aunt even suggested they were being selfish. "It wasn't always fun," Cliff reported, "but we didn't let the pressure get to us. I am glad now we waited."

Children are an incredible blessing. They also create a considerable amount of stress in a relationship. Careful planning can give a couple time to build a strong marriage before the stress of child-rearing comes along.