

Agricultural News

By: Warden Alexander, FSA Director

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County Executive Director
Burley Tobacco

The Secretary has announced the national marketing quota and national reserve for the 2003 crop of burley tobacco as follows:

• Marketing quota is 287.8 million pounds.
• Reserve for New Farms is 24,300 pounds • Correcting and adjusting inequities is 100,000 pounds.

The national factors are as follows:

• Quota is 0.8890
• Current year equivalent is 0.8890
The notice of burley tobacco quotas are scheduled to be mailed to producers on April 18, 2003 with letters to begin Monday, April 21. Leasing will end July 1, 2003.

Tobacco Payment Program (TOPP) Ends May 16th Did you own a farm for which tobacco quota was established in 2002? Did you own land on which tobacco was planted in 2002? Were you the grower of tobacco planted in 2002? If so, then the Tobacco Payment Program (TOPP) is for you.

The Tobacco Payment Program (TOPP) will provide \$35 million to eligible applicants to help enhance the economic stability of tobacco producers. On Feb. 20, 2003, the President signed the Agricultural Assistance Act of 2003, which included provisions to provide direct payments to all acreage allotment/marketing quota holders and tobacco growers.

Applications for direct payment sign-up for TOPP begins March 17 and ends May 16, 2003. Late filed applications will not be accepted. Funds will be dispersed according to allocation formulas tied to the various types of tobacco with payments being issued between mid-May and June 1, 2003.

Eligible persons are one who owns, controls or produces eligible tobacco on a farm for which an acreage allotment/marketing quota was established for the 2002 marketing

year.

Eligible types of tobacco include blue-cured (types 11-14), burley (type 21), blue-cured (types 21-23), Dark Air-cured (types 35-36), Virginia sun-cured (type 37), Cigar

filler/binder (types 42-44 and 54-55). Payments shall be made by direct deposit unless a waiver is on file. Therefore, to expedite things, please bring a voided check for sign-up in direct deposit when applying for TOPP.

If you need more information about TOPP, please contact your local FSA office. Information is also available on FSA's Web site at: <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov>.

Livestock Compensation Program. The Agricultural Assistance Act of 2003 extended the Livestock Compensation Program (LCP), originally created in 2002, into 2003. The 2003 LCP is an emergency initiative administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA) that provides immediate assistance to eligible owners and cash lessees of certain types of livestock for damages and losses due to any natural disaster.

Producers who did not receive assistance under the 2002 LCP and who are in counties that were approved as a disaster area are eligible for the LCP.

To be eligible, a producer's livestock operation headquarters must be physically located in a county with a qualifying disaster designation. Eligible livestock are livestock owned or cash leased on or before June 1, 2002 and have been owned or cash leased for a minimum of 90 calendar days and include cattle, sheep, goats and buffalo as well as cash.

Tobacco

Producers who are leasing the 2003 burley tobacco quota are reminded all producers transferring and receiving must sign by the deadline of July 1, 2003.

2003 DCO Contracts

Warden Alexander, CED with the Farm Service Agency in Rockcastle

County, would like to take this time and opportunity to remind farmers they need to contact their FSA County Office to complete their 2003 Direct and Counter Cyclical Programs as soon as possible.

To date, approximately 85 percent of the farmers in Rockcastle County have completed the necessary program selections and signed contracts.

Program participation is voluntary and producers are responsible for meeting deadlines and complying with rules and regulations concerning information on this and other FSA programs is available at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/farmbill>.

Conservation Reserve Program. USDA Farm Service (FSA) is a voluntary program available to agricultural producers to help them safeguard environmentally sensitive land.

Producers enrolled in CRP plant long-term, resource-conserving cover to improve the quality of water, control soil erosion, and enhance wildlife habitat. In return, FSA provides participants with rental payments and cost share assistance. Contract duration is between 10 and 15 years.

FSA will hold CRP sign-up 26 for a four-week period ending May 30, 2003.

CRP sign-up 26 is the first general sign-up to benefit from personal computer-based computing environment (CCE) technology. Through CCE, FSA local offices can, for the first time, enroll producers and calculate eligible acres and rental rates in an automated environment.

To be eligible for CRP enrollment,

a producer must have owned or operated the land for at least 12 months prior to close of the CRP sign-up period, unless:

• The new owner acquired the land due to the previous owner's death
• Ownership change occurred due to, foreclosure where the owner exercised a timely right of redemption in accordance with state law; or
• The circumstances of the acquisition preclude adequate assurance to FSA that the owner did not acquire the land for the purpose of placing it in CRP.

Land must be either:
• Cropland that is planted or considered planted to an agricultural commodity 4 of the previous 6 crop years from 1996 to 2001, and which is physically and legally capable of being planted in a normal manner to an agricultural commodity; or
• Certain marginal pastureland that is enrolled in the Water Bank Program.

Important Program Dates
May 16, 2003 - Ending date to sign-up for TOPP.
May 31, 2003 - Deadline to report small grains (wheat)
June 2, 2003 - Sign-up for the 2002 and 2003 DCP ends
July 15th - Deadline to acreage report (corn, soybeans, tobacco, grass)

Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC)
Program sign-up continues.
Farm Storage Facility Loan Program sign-up continues.
Conservation Reserve Program sign-up continues.

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Rockcastle Community Bulletin Board

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Kiwanis Club Meeting
The Rockcastle Kiwanis Club will meet Thursday, May 15 (today) at Kastle Inn Restaurant at noon. Guest speaker will be Lynett Forney of the Rockcastle Co. Health Department.

MVVFD Portrait Fund Raiser
The Mt. Vernon Volunteer Fire Department is sponsoring a Portrait Fund Raiser. A \$10 contribution gets you an 8x10 family portrait. Pictures will be taken May 30 - June 2. Fifteen will be conducting door-to-door solicitations. Authorized to collect money are: Bonnie Mize, Woody Watkins and Matthew Parsley.

Car Wash Fundraiser
The County Homemakers will be holding a Car Wash fundraiser on Saturday, May 17 from 9:00 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Central Body Service parking lot on Richmond St. in Mt. Vernon. Homemakers bring your sponges and bucket and everyone else bring your vehicles and join us.

Bookmobile Schedule
Monday, May 19: Scaffold, Cape Disputants, Anglin Falls, Class Creek and Wildlife.
Tuesday, May 20: Buffalo, stops along old 461 and Negro Creek.
Wednesday, May 21: Ottawa and Bee Lake.

Project Graduation 2003
There will be no a Project Graduation meeting on May 19 or 26. Meetings will be called by the committee chairs (if necessary) to organize for the BIG EVENT! There will be a final planning meeting Tuesday, May 27, 2003 at 7 p.m. in the RCHS cafeteria. All committee chairs and those signed up to work need to be present at this meeting. IGA (Broedhead/Berra) - you can donate your points to Project Graduation, which will be used to purchase food.

Baccalaureate Services
Baccalaureate Services will be Sunday, May 25th at 2:30 in the New Barn in Restro Valley. The speaker will be Ralph Baker.

Deadline for Project Graduation 2003
The deadline for seniors to register to attend Project Graduation 2003 is Friday, May 16th. Forms can be returned to the senior English teacher. No senior will be allowed to attend Project Graduation 2003 unless registered by this date.

CAP - Job Start
Are you looking for a job or just want to find a better job? At JobStart, we offer a 12-week job training program that combines classroom and computer instruction with group discussion and hands-on activities. Our program will help you develop new skills while building on your existing talents. For more information, please call 256-9612. Classes are free. All supplies are furnished.

GED Graduation
GED Graduation will be held Thursday, May 29th at RCHS at 7 p.m. Rockcastle County Attorney Jeffrey T. Baudette will be the speaker.

Free Screening
Free Mammare Breast Cancer Screening clinics for any ladies groups offered by the Rockcastle County Health Center. To schedule a class, call 606-256-2242 and ask for the class.

Couples Golf League
A Couples Golf League will begin Monday, May 19 at 6 p.m. Call 256-4112 or 256-3399. Beginners welcome.

Broedhead Rural Vol. Fire Dept. Fish Fry
The Broedhead Rural Volunteer Fire Department will hold their monthly fish fry on Saturday, May 17th at the Quail fire station on Hwy. 70. Carryouts will begin at 3 p.m. Dinner starts at 5:30 p.m. You can get carryouts after 5:30 but you may have to wait in line to get them. Menu for carryouts consists of three pieces of fish, three hushpuppies, cole slaw, french fries or baked potato and a Little Debbie Cake. Dinner is all you can eat fish. Come out and enjoy some good eatin' and lots of good fellowship. Your continued support is greatly appreciated. All proceeds go to the Broedhead Rural Fire Dept.