Brown Marmorated Stink Bug Management Addressed in New Tomato Webcast

Few crop pests have received as much attention as the brown marmorated stink bug and for good reason. Aside from heavily damaging various crops in the mid-Atlantic U.S., this economically important pest has also been spreading westward across the U.S.

The latest Focus on Tomato presentation, authored by Dr. Tom Kuhar, Associate Professor of Entomology at Virginia Tech, helps consultants, growers, applied researchers, and other practitioners better understand and manage the brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB), particularly in tomato crops.

The presentation includes:

- A short biological and ecological background of the BMSB
- Illustrations of the BMSB and the damage they cause
- Population data for tomato crops
- Insecticide efficacy data for managing the BMSB
- Best BMSB management practices

This presentation is open access through October 31, 2012 and can be viewed at http://www.plantmanagementnetwork.org/edcenter/seminars/tomato/BMSB/.

Users can view other recent webcasts in the Focus on Potato resource at http://www.plantmanagementnetwork.org/fot.

Focus on Tomato is a publication of the Plant Management Network (PMN), a nonprofit online publisher whose mission is to enhance the health, management, and production of agricultural and horticultural crops. It achieves this mission through applied, science-based resources. PMN is jointly managed by the American Society of Agronomy, American Phytopathological Society, and Crop Science Society of America.

To take advantage of PMN's full line of resources, please sign up for its free online newsletter at: http://www.plantmanagementnetwork.org/update/default.cfm.
USDA OFFERS PROGRAMS TO ASSIST LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS IMPACTED BY DROUGHT

New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture, Douglas H. Fisher, encouraged New Jersey agricultural producers to investigate whether they can benefit from new flexibility and assistance in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's major conservation programs designed to get much-needed help to livestock producers in light of the most widespread U.S. drought in seven decades.

Secretary Fisher added that the USDA has encouraged crop-insurance companies to voluntarily provide a grace period on unpaid insurance premiums until November 1, 2012, in order to give farmers hard hit by drought conditions a chance to catch up. Three conservation programs are affected by the temporary changes. They are:

**Conservation Reserve Program (CRP):**
USDA is allowing additional acres under CRP to be used for haying or grazing under emergency conditions. CRP is a voluntary program that provides producers annual rental payments on their land in exchange for planting resource conserving crops on cropland to help prevent erosion, provide wildlife habitat and improve the environment. CRP acres can already be used for emergency haying and grazing during natural disasters to provide much needed feed to livestock. Given the widespread nature of this drought, forage for livestock is already substantially reduced. The action will allow lands that are not yet classified as "under severe drought" but that are "abnormally dry" to be used for haying and grazing.

**Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP):**
This program allows farmers and ranchers to modify current EQIP contracts to allow for prescribed grazing, livestock watering facilities, water conservation and other conservation activities to address drought conditions. EQIP is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers on their land to address natural resource concerns on agricultural and forest land. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will work closely with producers to modify existing EQIP contracts to ensure successful implementation of planned conservation practices.

**Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP):**
Authorizes haying and grazing of WRP easement areas in drought-affected locations where such haying and grazing is consistent with conservation of wildlife habitat and wetlands. WRP is a voluntary conservation easement program that provides technical and financial assistance to agricultural producers to restore and protect valuable wetland resources on their property. For producers with land currently enrolled in WRP, NRCS has expedited its Compatible Use Authorization (CUA) process to allow for haying and grazing.

In addition, the following change is being encouraged by USDA for all crop-insurance companies: To help producers who may have cash flow problems due to natural disasters, USDA will encourage crop insurance companies to voluntarily forego charging interest on unpaid crop insurance premiums for an extra 30 days, to November 1, 2012, for spring crops. Policy holders who are unable to pay their premiums in a timely manner accrue an interest penalty of 1.25 percent per month until payment is made.

For more information, please call your regional NRCS or FSA office. Their phone numbers can be found at:

**NRCS**
[www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov)

**FSA**
Vegetable Twilight Meeting and Research Tour

Tuesday, August 21, 2012
5:30 p.m. (meet in parking lot)
Rutgers Agricultural Research & Extension Center
121 Northville Road, Bridgeton, NJ (Upper Deerfield)

Field tours:

- Basil Downy Mildew Trials
  - Variety tolerance trial
  - Fungicide trial

- Red and Yellow Bell Pepper Variety Trials
  Twenty six commercial varieties are in this year’s trial. These are all varieties available on the market.—Wes Kline, Cumberland County Agent

- Pepper Phytophthora Studies
  Andy Wyenandt continues to evaluate new breeding material and varieties for tolerance and chemical controls for Phytophthora. You will be able to view these plots.

- Fresh Market Tomato Breeding Studies
  Tom Orton continues to work on the project to develop tomato varieties for early production under New Jersey conditions. Some of the early results will be demonstrated.

- Pepper Anthracnose Studies
  This is becoming a serious disease in New Jersey. Andy Wyenandt will discuss the results from this year’s studies.

- Vegetable Herbicide Results from the 2011 trials and Recommendations for 2012
  - Brad Majek, RAREC

  Pesticide recertification credits have been requested. This is your opportunity to have plant, insect, disease or weed samples identified.

2012 Disease Control Recommendations
For Ornamental Crops

The 2012 Disease Control Recommendations for Ornamental Crops is now available electronically by visiting the Rutgers website: http://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/  Put in the bulletin number “E036” to view/print the recommendations.
Calendar of Important Events

August 2012

Farm Serv. Agency, Aug. 1 Last day to file County Committee election nomination forms (FSA-669A). NAP closing for strawberries.

August 3-4
Pennsylvania Organic Farm Fest, Centre County Grange Fair Grounds, Centre Hall, PA. For more information visit: www.paorganic.org/farmfest2012.

August 12-16
Potato Assoc. of America Annual Meeting, Crowne Plaza-Denver Airport Conference Center, Denver. For more info visit: www.potatoassociation.org

August 14-15
North American Strawberry Growers Assoc. Summer Tour, Halifax, Nova Scotia. For more info visit: www.nasga.org

August 14-16
Penn State Ag Progress Days, Russell E. Larson Agricultural Research Center, 2710 West Pine Grove Road, Pennsylvania Furnace, PA, located 9 miles SW of State College, PA. Free admission and parking. For more information call 814-865-2081 or email: agprogressdays@psu.edu.

August 17-20
NAFDMA Advanced Learning Retreat, Tanners Orchard, Speer, Ill. For more information call 413-244-5374 or visit: www.nafdma.com

August 21
Vegetable Twilight Meeting and Research Tour, Rutgers Agricultural Research & Extension Center, 121 Northville Road., Bridgeton; 5:30 p.m. For more information contact Dr. Wes Kline, 856-451-2800 x1.

August 29
Great Tomato Tasting, The Snyder Research and Extension Farm, 140 Locust Grove Road., Pittstown, NJ; 3 p.m.-dusk; $7 admission. R.S.V.P. online at: https://njaes.rutgers.edu/rsvp/tomato or call 908-713-8980.

September 2012

September 1
Farm Service Agency, NAP closing for Christmas trees, Fin Fish, Flowers and grass (SOD).
September 11-12
Food Use Workshop: Setting Priorities for 2013 Research, St. Louis. For more information contact Van Starner by email: starner@aesop.rutgers.edu or visit: www.ir4.rutgers.edu

September 18-20
Fresh-Cut Products: Maintaining Quality and Safety Workshop, University of California, Davis. For more information contact Penny Stockdale at 530-752-7672, email: pastockdale@ucdavis.edu or visit: http://postharvest.ucdavis.edu

September 20
7A Category Exam Training, Westfield, Union County, $140. For more information call 866-851-4389 or email: classes@njpma.com

September 30

October 2012

October 4-5
7B Category Exam Training, Westfield, Union County, $270. In lieu of 40 hours on-the-job-training. For more information call 866-851-4389 or email: classes@njpma.com

October 18
3A Category Exam Training, Westfield, Union County, $140. In lieu of 40 hours on-the-job-training. For more information call 866-851-4389 or email: classes@njpma.com

October 23
3B Category Exam Training, Freehold, Monmouth County, $140. In lieu of 40 hours on-the-job-training. For more information call 866-851-4389 or email: classes@njpma.com

October 28-31
Pack Expo, McCormick Place, Chicago. For more information visit: www.packexpo.com

November 2012

November 2-6
2012 Irrigation Show & Education Conference, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, FL. For more info visit: www.irrigation.org
November 4-6
International Pepper Conference, Naples, FL. For information visit: http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/Pepper2012/

November 5-6
UCGAPs Practical Skill-Building for On-Farm Assessments Workshop, University of California. For more information contact Penny Stockdale 530-752-7672 or email: pastockdale@ucdavis.edu.

November 7-8
Northeast Greenhouse Conference and Expo, DCU Center, Worcester, MA. For more information visit: http://www.negreenhouse.org/index.html

November 8-10
Southeast Strawberry Expo, Hilton University Place, Charlotte, N.C. For more information email: info@ncstrawberry.com or visit: www.ncstrawberry.org

November 15
3B Category Exam Training, Westfield, Union County, $140. In lieu of 40 hours on-the-job-training. For more information call 866-851-4389 or email: classes@njpma.com

November 14-15
Pacific Northwest Vegetable Association Conference & Trade Show, Three Rivers Convention Center, Kennewick, Washington. For more information call 509-585-5460 or visit: www.pnva.org

November 28-29
Mississippi Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference, Jackson, Miss. For more information call 601-955-9298, email: info@msfruitandveg.com or visit: www.msfruitandveg.com

December 2012

December 3-5
Washington State Horticultural Assoc. Annual Meeting, Yakima Convention Center, Yakima, Wash. For more information contact Nicole Brunner by email: Nicole@wahort.org

December 4-6
Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable & Farm Market EXPO, DeVos Place Convention Center, Grand Rapids, Mich. For more information visit: www.glexpo.com

December 6
3A Category Exam Training, Morris Plains, Morris County, $140. In lieu of 40 hours on-the-job-training. For more information call 866-851-4389 or email: classes@njpma.com
January 2013

January 7-8
Kentucky Fruit and Vegetable Conf., Embassy Suites Hotel, Lexington, Ky. For more information contact John Strang 859-257-5685 or email: jstrang@uky.edu

January 8-10
Minnesota Apple Growers Winter Conference, LaCrosse, Wis. For more information contact Ralph Yates, 507-895-2388, email: info@minnesotaapple.org or visit: www.minnesotaapple.org

January 9-11
Illinois Specialty Crops, Agritourism and Organic Conf., Crowne Plaza Hotel, Springfield, Ill. For more information contact Diane Handley 309-557-3662 or email: dhandley@ilfb.org

January 10-12
Great Plains Growers Conference and Trade Show, St. Joseph, Mo. For more information contact Christy Dipman at 785-532-6173 or email: cdipman@ksu.edu or visit: www.greatplainsgrowers.org

January 10-13
Southeast Regional Fruit & Vegetable Conf., International Trade & Conv. Center., Savannah, Ga. For more information call 877-994-3842 or visit: www.gfvga.org

January 14-16
Ohio Produce Growers & Marketers Assoc. Congress, Kalahari Resort, Sandusky, Ohio. For more information call 614-487-1117, email: opgma@ofa.org or visit: www.opgma.org

January 15-16
Southeastern Apple Growers Meeting, Crowne Plaza Resort, Asheville, NC. For more information contact Peggy Laughter at 828-685-3241.

January 17-18
Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference, St. Cloud Civic Center, St. Cloud Civic Center, St. Cloud, Minn. For more information call 763-434-0400, email: info@mfvga.org or visit: www.mfvga.org

January 20-22
Wisconsin Fresh Fruit & Veg. Conf., Wisconsin Dells, Wis. Wisconsin Apple Growers. For more information call 800-722-3120, email: office@waga.org or visit: www.waga.org.

January 21-22
Northwest Michigan Orchard & Vineyard Show, Grand Traverse Resort, Acme, Mich. For more information call 231-946-1510 or email: nwmihort@msu.edu

January 21-23
Ohio Produce Growers & Marketers Association Congress, Kalahari Resort, Sandusky, Ohio. For more information call 614-487-1117, email: opgma@ofa.org or visit: www.opgma.org
January 22-23
Wisconsin Cranberry Growers School, Holiday Inn Hotel & Convention Center, Stevens Point, Wis. For more information call 715-423-2070

January 22-24
Indiana Horticultural Congress, Wyndham West, Indianapolis. For more information contact Tammy Goodale at 765-494-1296, email: tgoodale@purdue.edu or visit: www.inhortcongress.org

January 22-24
Empire State Fruit & Vegetable Expo, Oncenter Convention Center, Syracuse, New York. For more information contact Jeanette Marvin by email: nysvga@twcny.rr.com

January 23-26
Practical Tools and Solutions for Sustaining Family Farms, Little Rock, Ark. For more information visit: www.ssawg.org

January 24-25
Iowa Fruit & Vegetable Growers & Marketers Conference, Ankeny, Iowa. For more information contact Darrell Geisler 515-964-2640 or email: dkgeisler@hughes.net

January 29-30
Ontario Processing Vegetable Industry Conference, London, Ontario. For more information call 519-681-1875, email: opvg@opvg.org or visit: www.opvg.org

January 29-31
Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention, Hershey, Pa. For more information contact William Troxell 717-694-3596, email: pvga@pvga.org or visit: www.mafvc.org

January 30-Feb. 1
North American Raspberry & Blackberry Conference, Portland, Ore. For more information call 919-542-4037, email: info@raspberryblackberry.com or visit: www.raspberryblackberry.com

February 2013

February 1-6
28th Annual NAFDMA Convention, Portland, OR. For more information call the North American Farmers’ Direct Marketing Association 413-244-5374 or visit: www.nafdma.com
REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETINGS

✓ Indicates meeting will be held at RCE of Cumberland County

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
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<th>Dates</th>
<th>Additional Information</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pesticide Certification Exam</td>
<td>291 Morton Avenue, Millville, NJ 08332</td>
<td>Sep 26, Oct 24, Nov 7, Dec 19</td>
<td>To Register call 609-984-6614. For directions call 856-451-2800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumberland County Agriculture Development Board</td>
<td>291 Morton Avenue, Millville, NJ 08332</td>
<td>Aug 8, Sep 5, Oct 10, Nov 14, Dec 12</td>
<td>*Meetings start at 10 a.m. \nReg. Meetings start at 7 p.m. \nCall DeAnn at 856-453-2211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumberland County Board Of Agriculture Of Agriculture</td>
<td>291 Morton Avenue, Millville, NJ 08332</td>
<td>Sep 20, Oct 18, Nov 15, Dec 20</td>
<td>For info call Shirley Kline, President 856-685-3784</td>
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Cumberland County Improvement Authority (CCIA)
Pesticide Container Recycling
9:00 a.m. to 12 Noon
Cumberland County Solid Waste Complex
169 Jesse’s Bridge Rd. (located off Route 55 Exit 29)
Deerfield Township, New Jersey
Questions? Call Karen Kritz, NJ Dept. of Ag 609-984-2506

August 17, September 21, October 19, November 16

Sincerely,

James R. Johnson
Agricultural Agent
Nursery Management Commercial
Internet: jjohnson@njaes.rutgers.edu

Wesley L. Kline, Ph.D.
Agricultural Agent
Vegetable & Herb Production
Internet: wkline@njaes.rutgers.edu

Pesticide User Responsibility: Use pesticides safely and follow instructions on labels. The user is responsible for the proper use of pesticides, residues on crops, storage and disposal, as well as damages caused by drift.

Use of Trade Names: Trade names are used in this publication with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement is implied. In some instances the compound may be sold under different trade names, which may vary as to label.
Have you visited the Cumberland County website for the Present and/or past issues of “Cultivating Cumberland”? It's a great resource for information and dates……..

http://Cumberland.njaes.rutgers.edu/

Public Notification and Non-discrimination Statement

Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station Cooperative Extension educational programs are offered to all without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait, marital status, civil union status, domestic partnership status, military service, veteran status, and any other category protected by law. Rutgers Cooperative Extension encourages individuals with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. If you need special accommodations, have questions about physical access, or require alternate means for program information, please contact your local Extension Office. Contact the State Extension Director's Office if you have concerns related to discrimination, 732-932-5000, ext. 584.
Growing New Jersey:
IR-4 Helps and More Uses.

Reaching regulation of susceptible pests.

Crop Canners:
Please help us continue to assist specialty crop growers.

NDA-IR-3, National IR-4 Project

Contact us...
Helping New Jersey

II-4 Helps Food Crop Growers

Outcome:

- Increased crop productivity
- Reduced pest and disease pressure
- Improved crop quality and yield
- Enhanced soil health and fertility

Program Facts:

- Aims to protect and enhance wild pollinators
- Includes integrated pest management practices
- Provides education and outreach to farmers

Who Benefits from II-4 Activities?

- Farmers and agricultural producers
- Gardeners and home gardeners
- Community members who enjoy fresh produce

About II-4

The II-4 Program is a cooperative effort funded by the USDA-VS and managed by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture. It is designed to promote the health and well-being of New Jersey's natural resources and support the growth of healthy food systems.
This document presents a program to manage thrips for ornamental horticulture.

**Key for Suggested Thrips Applications**

- **Program A**
  - No or low treatment
  - Program B
  - Program C
  - Program D
  - Program E
  - Program F

**Program Management**

- Pruning and sanitation
- Biological control
- Chemical control
- Cultural practices

**Thrips Management Program**

1. Identify thrips in the landscape
2. Determine the thrips population
3. Select a control method
4. Implement the control method
5. Monitor the results
6. Adjust the control method as necessary

**Thrips Management**

- Use biological control agents
- Chemical control
- Cultural practices
July 2012

Atlantic/ Cape May/ Cumberland County News

**2012 FSA County Committee Elections**

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to all farmers and ranchers, whether beginning or long-established, large or small operation. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

County Committee (CCC) members are a critical component of FSA operations. The intent is to have the CCC reflect the makeup of the producers and to represent all constituents. This means wherever possible, minorities, women or lower income producers need to be on the committee to speak for these underrepresented groups.

County committees provide local input on:
- Commodity price support loans and payments
- Conservation programs
- Incentive, indemnity and disaster payments for some commodities
- Emergency programs
- Payment eligibility

FSA county committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws. County committee members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions.

**Election Period**

June 15, 2012 - The nomination period begins.
Aug. 1, 2012 - Last day to file nomination forms (FSA-669A) at the local USDA Service Center
Nov. 5, 2012 - Ballots mailed to eligible voters
Dec. 3, 2012 - Last day to return voted ballots to the USDA Service Center

Jan. 1, 2013 - Newly elected county committee members take office

**Who Can Hold Office**

To hold office as a county committee member, a person must meet the basic eligibility criteria:
- Participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA
- Be eligible to vote in a county committee election
- Reside in the Local Administrative Area (LAA) in which the person is a candidate

Not have been:
- Removed or disqualified from the office of county committee member, alternate or employee
- Removed for cause from any public office or have been convicted of fraud, larceny, embezzlement or any other felony
- Dishonorably discharged from any branch of the armed services

**Nominations**

To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign nomination form FSA-669A. The form includes a statement that the nominee agrees to serve if elected. This form is available at USDA Service Centers and online at [http://www.fsa.usda.gov/internet/FSA_Files/fsa0669a_committeeelectform.pdf](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/internet/FSA_Files/fsa0669a_committeeelectform.pdf)

Nomination forms for the 2012 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business Aug. 1, 2012.

Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in an FSA program may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee. Individuals may nominate themselves or others as a candidate.

Additionally, organizations representing minority and women farmers or ranchers may nominate candidates. Nomination forms are...
filed for the county committee of the office that administers a producer’s farm records.

Who Can Vote
Agricultural producers of legal voting age may be eligible to vote if they participate or cooperate in any FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm may also be eligible to vote. More information about voting eligibility requirements can be found in the FSA fact sheet titled “FSA County Committee Election - Eligibility to Vote and Hold Office as a County Committee Member.” Producers may contact their local USDA Service Center for more information.

Farming Operation Changes
If you have bought or sold land, or if you have added or dropped rented land from your operation, make sure you report the changes to the office as soon as possible. You need to provide a copy of your deed or recorded land contract for purchased property. Failure to maintain accurate records with FSA on all land you have an interest in can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. Making the record changes now will save you time in the future.

Farm Loans Available
There are several types of Farm Loans available from the Farm Service Agency. The following lists the types available:
- Direct Operating or Farm Ownership Loan
- Emergency Loans
- Guaranteed Operating Loan or Farm Ownership Loan
- Youth Loans
Please contact the office for more information.

NAP Production Reporting
Production records for individual crops need to be filed with our office to establish an approved NAP yield. If this is the first year you participated in NAP, you can provide production and acreage information from prior years to establish your yield. If you participated in NAP in previous years, you must report your production and acreage on a yearly basis to keep your yield up-to-date. Records submitted must be reliable and verifiable. Records need to show crop disposition. We recommend producers submit 2011 production records as soon as harvest is complete. All production records must be submitted by the subsequent crop year’s final acreage reporting date, which is July 15th.

Acreage Reporting
Acreage reporting time is here. Filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs.

Failed acreage must be reported within 15 days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date.

Acreage reports are required for many Farm Service Agency programs. For 2012 crops other than NAP (Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program) crops, acreage reports are to be certified by the July 15th deadline for most crops. Please contact the office for specific dates. Some deadlines will be changing for the 2013 crop year.

Acreage reports on crops for which NAP assistance may be paid are due in the county office by the earlier of July 15th or 15 calendar days before the onset of harvest or grazing of the specific crop acreage being reported.

Timely Filing of Loss
The CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and prevented planting and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. Timely filing a Notice of Loss is required for ALL CROPS INCLUDING GRASSES. For losses on crops covered by the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and crop insurance, you must file a CCC-576 (notice of loss) in the FSA County Office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent.
if filing for prevented planting, an acreage report and CCC-576 must be filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.

**Hispanic and Women Farmers**

A process to resolve the claims of Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who believe they were discriminated against when seeking USDA farm loans is being established.

If you believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) improperly denied farm loan benefits to you between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic, or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation.

For additional information on this and other settlement issues contact:
- Hispanic and Women Farmer Claims Process, please visit: [www.farmerclaims.gov](http://www.farmerclaims.gov) or call 1-888-508-4429;
- Piford – The Black Farmers Discrimination Litigation, please visit: [www.blackfarmercase.com](http://www.blackfarmercase.com) or call 1-866-950-5547;
- Keepseagle - The Native American Farmers Class Action Settlement please visit: [www.IndianFarmClass.com](http://www.IndianFarmClass.com) or call 1-888-233-5506.

**Over the Counter Channel (OTCnet)**

FSA/CCC is moving toward OTCnet, an electronic method for processing customer check payments. When a check is submitted for payment either in person or through the mail, the check will be converted into an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). The funds will be debited from the producer’s account, usually within 24 hours of receipt. Please see the U.S. Department of Treasury legal notices posted in the Service Center or visit the following U.S. Department of Treasury Internet site for detailed information.


**What is OTCnet?**

OTCnet is a Web-based online application process for converting paper checks presented to FSA into electronic debits to the producer’s bank account. It presents many benefits, such as reducing lost/misplaced checks and paper handling. This improves customer relations, speeds the check clearing process, and reduces the potential for human error.

**How will my check be handled?**

The check will be scanned into the system and voided. The customer will not receive the check back from FSA. FSA will hold checks for up to 14 calendar days to ensure that the item was successfully processed, and then FSA will shred the check.

**How quickly will funds be transferred from my account?**

The transfer of funds from your account could occur within 24 hours. Therefore, you should be sure that you have sufficient funds in your account to process the transaction. If you do not have sufficient funds, we may initiate the transaction again.

**How will this transaction appear on my account statement?**

The transfer of funds will be reflected on your account statement. The transaction may be recorded in a different place on your statement than where your checks normally appear, such as under “other withdrawals” or “other transactions”.

**What are my rights if there is a problem with the transaction?**

You have protections under Federal law for an unauthorized electronic fund transfer from your account. You should contact your financial institution immediately if you believe that the transaction reported on your account statement was not properly authorized or is otherwise incorrect.

**MILC Program**

FSA’s Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC) compensates dairy producers when domestic milk prices fall below a specified level. MILC payments are made when the Boston Class I milk price falls below $16.94 per hundredweight (cwt) as adjusted by the dairy feed ration adjustment. The monthly Boston price is posted online at: [http://www.fnmone.com/Northeast_Order_Prices/NE_Prices_main_new.htm](http://www.fnmone.com/Northeast_Order_Prices/NE_Prices_main_new.htm).

Eligible producers should submit the current MILC (Milk Income Loss Contract) statements for payment. Eligibility for 2012 must be
completed before payments can be disbursed. Contact the office to check the status of your eligibility. New producers are encouraged to apply for the program before Sept. 30, 2012.
State and county offices shall view and print their producer spot check lists as posted on the designated website. If an entity is selected from the national database that is no longer farming or participating in the 2012 crop year, a notation shall be made on the spot check list. For more information about the new spot check selection procedure, contact the local office.

Sign Up for FSA Fence Post for Daily Updates
The Farm Service Agency Fence Post is an online newsletter that is updated on an almost daily basis. It contains articles of interest on the agency’s programs and departments, as well as success stories from the field. To access Fence Post visit http://fsa.blogs.govdelivery.com/. Producers can sign up for weekly Fence Post updates by putting an email address in box that says “Get Email Updates.”

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<th>Dates to Remember</th>
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Civil Rights/Discrimination Complaint Process
As a participant or applicant for programs or activities operated or sponsored by USDA you have a right to be treated fairly. If you believe you have been discriminated against because of your race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual’s income is derived from any public assistance program, you may file a discrimination complaint. The complaint should be filed with the USDA Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights within 180 days of the date you became aware of the alleged discrimination. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.