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Foreign landowners must report land transactions within 90 days of the date of the sale.

Report forms FSA-153, Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act Report are available at all FSA offices and may be downloaded from the agency's web site.

This requirement has been on the books since 1978. Failure to file an accurate or timely report can result in a penalty with fines up to two percent of the fair market value of the agricultural land.

The act requires reports to be filed by individuals who are not: U.S. citizens, lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence or who are not paroled into the United States under the Immigration & Nationality Act; any organization created under the laws of a foreign government or which has located its principal place of business outside the United States; any U.S. organization in which a significant interest or substantial control is directly or indirectly held by foreign individuals, organizations, or governments; and any foreign governments.

Agriculture secretary Tom Vilsack has announced that the sign-up period for the 2009 crop year Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) will begin on Jan. 10, 2011. SURE is one of five disaster programs included in the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 that provides assistance to farmers and ranchers who have suffered losses due to natural disasters.

“This program provides a tremendous amount of assistance to producers who have suffered from natural disasters, and is part of the “safety net” designed to assist farmers and ranchers who feed America and the world,” Vilsack said. “USDA encourages producers who suffered losses during the 2009 crop year to visit their local FSA office to learn more about the SURE program.”

To be eligible for SURE a farm must have:

- At least a 10 percent production loss on a crop of economic significance;
- A policy or plan of insurance under the FCIA or NAP for all economically significant crops;
- Been physically located in a county that was declared a primary disaster county or contiguous county by the Agriculture Secretary under a Secretarial Disaster Designation. Without a Secretarial Disaster Designation, individual producers may be eligible if the actual production on the farm is less than 50 percent of the normal production on the farm due to a natural disaster.

Producers considered socially disadvantaged, a beginning farmer or rancher, or a limited resource farmer may be eligible for SURE without a policy or plan of insurance or NAP coverage.

Please contact the office for more information and to schedule an appointment.

The deadline is fast approaching to purchase 2011 coverage for certain crops. The deadline for spring crops such as pasture, alfalfa, millet hay, forage sorghum, mixed forage, etc. is March 15.

Signup has begun for the 2011 DCP/ACRE Program. Advance payments are authorized at 22

percent of the farm's projected payments. If you have made changes to your operation for crop year 2011 please contact us as soon as possible so that your records are up to date when you sign up.

Please call for an appointment at 352-4747 now if you would like December or January advance payments. We are also taking acreage reports, so please bring in planting dates and acreages that you might have turned into your insurance companies. When you call just let the office know if you would like to report your acreages at the same time.

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