

Agricultural News

By Wanda Alexander FSA Director

Bank of Mt. Vernon Customers
Customers of Community Trust Bank, formerly Bank of Mt. Vernon, who receive or expect to receive payments from the Farm Service Agency are urged to complete a new Standard Form 1199A, Direct Deposit Sign Up Form, at their earliest convenience. Routing numbers for the bank have changed and some account numbers have also been changed. When routing numbers and/or account numbers change without our records being updated it means producer's payments are not correctly depositing. So if you want to continue receiving your payments make a point to stop by today and complete this form to avoid delays.

Marketing Cards
Producers who have sold the current year's crop of tobacco are encouraged to return their marketing card to the FSA as soon as possible. Marketing cards are then compared to sales recorded for accuracy. Failure to return marketing cards promptly could result in producers receiving incorrect information for the 2001 quota, scheduled to be released February 6th.

Stewardship Incentive Program (SIP)
Producer who own more than 10 acres of non-industrial forest land may apply for SIP benefit through March 31, 2001. This program includes cost share for establishing or re-establishing stands of trees through

planting or direct seeding of trees for conservation and sustainable timber production, forest improvement and to maintain or improve water quality and soil productivity on forest land to restore wetlands. For more information contact the local Farm Service Agency.

Spousal Signature
Farm Service Agency (FSA) permits a husband or wife to sign on behalf of the other for most farm programs in which either has an interest. To DENY a spouse this authority FSA MUST HAVE WRITTEN NOTIFICATION.

Crop Insurance
Just a reminder - Producers who wish to purchase Federal Crop Insurance on 2001 crops have until March 15th to do so. We urge you to contact your agent at the earliest to assure protection.

Redesigned Web Site
FSA has announced the introduction of a redesigned FSA web site at www.fsa.usda.gov. The redesign includes user-friendly features and easily accessible online FSA forms.

Producers now receive county loan deficiency, payment rates and expanded program information directly from the web site. With new online forms feature, farmers and ranchers can download program and disaster assistance forms when it's most convenient for them without visiting their local FSA office.

Growers
The Board of Directors discussed at length the survival of the programs, warehouses and growers. The Board has implemented a plan that would secure the future of the Tobacco Program through legislative efforts. Those efforts include: requiring all tobacco, contract or auction, to be inspected by the USDA Grading Service, requiring all growers pay a grading fee, and establishing the same penalty for tobacco companies who do not purchase their buying intentions as for farmers who overmarket (this is 75 percent of the prior year's market average per pound). These changes are statutory and would require action on the federal level.

The Board, which is chaired by Owensboro tobacco farmer Rod Kuegel, also explored avenues of alternative marketing structures for those who choose not to contract or are displeased with the contracting grade they receive.

"I'm confident that 50 percent of our tobacco growers would not con-

tract as long as they had another option," said Kuegel. "We promise our growers to offer that option for all growers including those who have contracted and are not satisfied with their grade."

The Burley Co-op was resolute about its support for the auction system and the Tobacco Program, which together, offers growers the only protection against cheap world market prices while ensuring the growers' independence. Much concern was voiced about the ability to maintain price supports without auctions. Contingency plans are being made to provide alternative marketing systems in the event the auction system is eliminated.

"The Program was made to protect and we intend to fight for that protection," said Kuegel. "We will protect all farmers - those contracting and those who choose to stick with the auction system. We will continue to provide price supports for all."

Many other trees and shrubs that may not directly grow food birds like will be back to lots of insects. So if you enjoy birds among your landscape plants, I hope you have found a useful idea or two!

And don't forget a few annual and perennial flowers for the yard. A sunflower in a backyard bed can make you smile with its big yellow bobbed head. But it represents a potential feast to the cardinal or chickadee. A monarda, a coneflower, or a salvia (even a thistle) can provide a nectar for a hummingbird or bee in summer and delectable seeds for other birds in fall and winter.

No trees or shrubs in your yard? Well, as you sit looking out the window on a cold winter's day... why not resolve to change that when spring comes? Now is a good time to be making those landscape plans for springtime planting! Meanwhile, how about a bird feeder? Supplemental feeding of birds can start with a

simple, but sanitary, bird feeder and a bag of seeds from the store. Birds will be attracted to bread crumbs scattered in the yard on a cold day. Or in a treat of oatmeal and peanut butter patties. How about making a garland of raisins of other dried fruit and draping this over a shrub in the yard? Don't forget! A place to get a drink, and a place to bathe are mighty important, too. A meal without something to drink... not a pleasant prospect to a human or a bird.

A birdbath, a fountain, a small waterfall or goldfish pond can all be attractive elements in your landscape - and a welcome place for all the birds you attract to quench their thirst. And a shallow basin or a trickling stream of water are good spots in which they can bathe. (Some birds like dust or sand to bathe in rather than water.)

Stumps, logs, driftwood pieces are some other landscape decorations birds may enjoy as much as you will.

Gardening & Landscaping Tips

By: Max Phelps

Gardening & Landscaping for the Birds

Ever listen to songbirds outside your window? It can be a joy. And watching a bird flutter as it bathes, or watching a pair of birds dance in courtship ritual can be a real treat on a lazy weekend morning!

Imagine sitting in an outdoor hot tub and having all five senses soothed... the touch of the water, the sight of greenery and blossoms and birds, the sounds of "sweet" and "trill" as a songbird alights on a nearby branch, the fragrant smell of honeysuckle or clematis carried on a gentle evening breeze, or the taste of blueberries or currants freshly picked from a nearby shrub before the birds beat you to them!

A place for a home, and shelter to help in help attract birds to your yard and neighborhood. But probably the surest way to a bird's heart (just like mine) is through his stomach. They love to eat. A yard full of seed-bearing and fruit-bearing shrubs can be enticing to a bird as a five food restaurant! (And a bird feeder with clean

seed will be a welcome banquet place for feathered friends also.)

Vines make great windbreaks and privacy screens. They double as pleasant to look at, a place for fragrant blossoms to exhibit all their glory, a vertical aspect on a wall or trellis or arbor, and as a place birds will love. Grape vines can bear edible fruit for a human or an oriole. Trumpet vines, honeysuckle, or scarlet runner beans are some of the blossoming vines as hummingbird would find enticing.

Cherries, hollies, hennip, mountain ash, service berry, tulip poplar, sassafras, black gum, hawthorn, crabapples, dogwoods, white fringe trees... and many other trees provide "dinner" as well as homes for birds.

A fragrant blossoming viburnum is a beauty all by itself... but there is probably no better magnet for drawing birds. Other shrubs the birds will "thank you" for include juncos, cottonasters, burning bushes, Oregon grape hollies, blueberries, yucca, etc.

Brindle Ridge Volunteer Fire Department

invites the public to a

Good Old Country Breakfast

at the Fire Station, midway between Mt. Vernon and Berea in Conway

Saturday

Feb. 3, 2001

6 a.m.-11 a.m.

We will be serving Country Ham, Bacon, Fried Eggs, Biscuits & Jelly, Gravy, Coffee & Juice.

\$5 per plate

If you don't have time to sit down and eat with us, no problem. Call 256-0000 for Carry-Out.

Proceeds go towards our New Fire Station

Board vows to protect price supports for all growers

With a steadfast attitude, the Burley Tobacco Growers Cooperative Association, Board of Directors reaffirmed its commitment to the Tobacco Price Support Program and tobacco growers at a meeting last week in Elizabethton. The 30-member Board of Directors met to discuss the role of the Burley Co-op in a predominantly contracting situation. The results of the meeting were resoundingly strong support for the program and commitment to all growers, both those who choose not to contract and to contracts. The Burley Co-op believes all growers need protection through quota control and price supports.

The Burley Co-op has long been opposed to contracting and has made

and continues to make a strong effort for regulation of contracting through legislation. Despite the concerns that contracting poses a serious threat to the tobacco program - a system of supply and demand and price supports established by federal law - the Phillip Morris USA contracting program was able to contract with numerous growers this year. Phillip Morris will increase its contracting program and all but two of the other tobacco companies and deal leaders have also entered contracting situations.

"The industry is changing fast," said Danny McKinney, CEO of the Burley Co-op. "But one thing will remain, our commitment to the Tobacco Program and to protecting all

FIRST SOUTHERN National Bank

Bill Sowder, of Mt. Vernon, is now affiliated with First Southern National Bank Crab Orchard office as our Branch Manager and Loan Officer.

Bill invites all Rockcastle Countians to stop by his office for all your financial needs and enjoy a cup of coffee.



Bill Sowder

First Southern National Bank offers competitive rates on Fixed Rate Mortgage Loans and Commercial and Business Loans.

Banking Hours

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Garry and his wife, Sherry, are the parents of Jason and Brian (Kristi) and the grandparents of Jacob and Brinnan. A native of Rockcastle County, Garry is the son of Iver McClure Hansel and the late "Rum" Hansel. He and his family reside in Mt. Vernon where they are members of Northside Baptist Church. Garry is also very active in the Mt. Vernon Fire & Rescue Department where he is Assistant Chief.

Our family at Dowell & Martin is proud to include Garry as a member of our staff, serving Rockcastle area families for half a century.

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