

April 2008

## **New Haven/Middlesex County News**

**New Haven/  
Middlesex  
County USDA  
Service Center**

**New Haven/  
Middlesex County  
FSA**

900 Northrop Road  
Suite# A  
Wallingford, CT 06492  
203-269-6665 (phone)  
203-294-9741 (fax)  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/ct](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ct)

**Hours:**

Monday - Friday  
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**County Committee:**

Bill Weed –  
Chairman

Nelson Cecarelli –  
Vice-Chairman

Richard Brock –  
Regular Member

Joyce Werbiski –  
Minority Advisor

**Next County  
Committee meeting:**

Monday April 21<sup>st</sup>  
at 7:00 PM

**Staff:**

Ann Marie McCard -  
Program Technician

Teresa Peavey -  
Program Technician

Nancy Welsh -  
County Executive  
Director

**Farm Bill Extended Until April  
18<sup>th</sup>**

Passage of the farm bill, currently being debated by Congress, has been delayed, requiring a 33-day extension that was recently passed and signed by President George W. Bush.

"America's farmers deserve better than a series of short-term extensions here of our current law," says Secretary of Agriculture Ed Schafer. "They need to know what farm policy is going to be so that they can make sound business decisions about what to plant this year and how they are going to finance it."

The current farm bill will now extend to April 18. Congress will have until that date to pass a consolidated bill.

**NASS Still Accepting Ag  
Census**

The Census of Agriculture is conducted every five years and the deadline for producers to turn the forms in was Feb. 4. However a large number of the census forms have not been returned according to National Agricultural Statistics Service Deputy Administrator Carol House. She says they're waiting for the rest of them and will give farmers until June 1 to turn them in.

"We are sending another form out there again with encouragement to fill it out," House says. "We'll give a little bit of time and then we're going to start calling people. Of course calling costs money, it's tax payer dollars, so hopefully producers out there will go ahead and fill it out before we have to make a phone call."

Responding to the census is required by law and the privacy of answers given is protected.

"If a producer is not filling it out because they have a question, they're not quite sure how to go about it, they're not sure whether they're required to fill it out or not, please call," House says. "We've received 130,000 calls since census forms were sent out."

A toll-free help line is available at (888) 424-7828. The census can also be submitted online at [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov).

**Extending Wool, Mohair, Un-  
shorn Pelt, and Honey MALs &  
LDPs**

The Farm Bill extension signed by the President on December 26, 2007, authorized the MAL and LDP programs for the 2008 crop of graded and ungraded wool, mohair, and unshornpelts through March 15, 2008. On March 14, 2008, S. 2745 was signed into law, and subsequently authorizes FSA to continue administering 2008 crop wool, mohair, and unshorn pelt MALs and LDPs through April 18, 2008.

Because the availability date for 2008 crop honey begins on April 1, 2008, FSA County Offices are authorized to accept 2008 honey MAL and LDP requests from April 1, 2008 through April 18, 2008.

**Sign-up for DDAP III Ends May  
5<sup>th</sup>**

Eligible dairy producers who suffered production losses in 2005, 2006 or 2007 have until May 5 to make application to receive benefits under the Dairy Disaster Assistance Program III.

New Haven and Middlesex County dairy producers with a dairy operation in either county are eligible if losses are a result of natural disasters occurring between January 1, 2005 and December 31, 2007.

More information on the Dairy Disaster Assistance Program III is available at your local county FSA office, or on line at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.



### **Beginning and Limited Resource Farmers & Ranchers**

FSA has funding to assist beginning farmers and or members of socially disadvantaged groups to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more that 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's average size.

Each member of an entity must meet the eligibility requirements. Loan approval is not guaranteed.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) and [www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov) .

### **Reporting Crop Acreage**

The annual requirement of reporting to the FSA office can be referred to as crop reporting, acreage reporting, or crop certification. Filing an accurate and timely report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent loss of benefits for a variety of Farm Service Agency programs. All cropland on the farm must be reported to receive benefits from the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, marketing assistance loans and Loan Deficiency Payments.

Conservation Reserve Program acreage must be reported to receive annual rental payments. And, crop acreage for Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) must also be reported.

Crop reports, form FSA-578, Report of Acreage, must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. Producers are required to file reports by July 15th for all crops.

#### **Prevented Planting:**

Prevented planting needs be reported no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date.

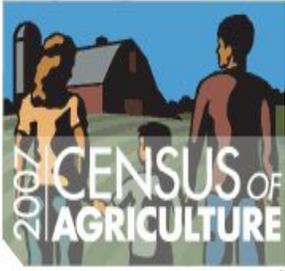
#### **Failed Acreage:**

Reports of failed acreage must be filed before disposition of the crop, and producers must be able to establish to the satisfaction of the county committee that the crop failed and was prevented from being replanted through the normal planting period because of natural disaster conditions.

### **Conservation Compliance**

All participants in USDA programs are required to have a conservation system in place on all the highly erodible land (HEL) that they operate. Several areas where problems can arise with complying with a conservation system are: renting new cropland, purchasing new land, breaking out additional cropland, planting different crops and changing or removing existing conservation practices.





It is very important that you contact the FSA office before doing any of the above. Also, it is very important that you contact our office before modifying - tiling, draining, dredging, filling, or leveling - any wetland or drainage ditch. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in loss of all Federal payments and eligibility.

### **FSA Signature Requirements**

Proper signatures on Farm Service Agency contracts, applications and forms must be submitted before the document will be considered as filed. All entities, including revocable and irrevocable trusts, corporations, partnerships, estates, etc., must provide evidence of signature authority stipulating those individuals who are authorized to represent the entity. FSA cannot accept signatures without such documentation on file. Examples of acceptable evidence include trust agreements, corporate charters or resolutions, partnership agreements and court orders of appointment. Spouses can sign for one another on most program documents unless written notification denying a spouse this authority has been provided to the county office staff. For more information about appropriate signature authority, please contact your local FSA county office.

### **Direct and Guaranteed Loans**

The Farm Service Agency is committed to providing family farmers with loans to meet their farm credit needs. If you are having trouble getting the credit you need for your farm, or regularly borrow from FSA, direct and guaranteed loans are available now.

Ask your lender about an FSA loan guarantee if you've had a setback and your lender is reluctant to extend or renew your loan.

Loan funds can be made available. Producers are encouraged to apply early so that a loan can be processed and funded in a timely manner.

Most of our loan programs have special funding available for minority, female and beginning farmers.

FSA employees will help you complete the necessary application and other forms, and help you understand what information is required, where to find it or who to contact to get it. To find out more about FSA loan programs, contact Ellen Losee at (860) 626-8258 Ext# 104.

### **Rural Youth Loans**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA) makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to establish and operate income producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be initiated, developed, carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organization or with a vocational teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and operated with the assistance of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. Contact Ellen Losee for more details at (860) 626-8258 Ext# 104.

### **Banking Changes?**

If you have changed banks and not notified FSA, your payment could be delayed. Payments are electronically transferred into your bank account, and if we are not aware of changes to your account and routing numbers, there could be problems. In order to make timely payments, you need to notify the office if you close your account or if another financial institution purchases your bank. It is important that any changes in producer's account such as type account, bank mergers, routing number or account numbers, be provided to the county office promptly to avoid possible payment delay.



Selected Interest Rates for April 2008	
90-Day Treasury Bill	Call for %
Farm Operating - Direct	3.25%
Farm Ownership - Direct	4.875%
Limited Resource	5.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	4.00%
Emergency	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility	Call for %
Sugar Storage Facility	Call for %
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	Call for %
Tobacco (TTPP) Discount Rate	Call for %

Please call Ellen Losee at (860) 626-8258  
Ext#104 for current rates not shown.

Dates to Remember	
May 5th	DDAP Signup Ends

Visit our Web site: <http://www.fsa.usda/ct>

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