



U.S. Department of
Agriculture

**Caledonia/Essex
County FSA**

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St. Johnsbury, VT 05819

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1-800-862-1121

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www.fsa.usda.gov

Hours

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

County Committee

Burt Patenaude, Chair
Robert Porter, Vice Chair
William Nelson, Member
Michael Tanguay, Member

**COC meets 2nd Thursday
of each month at 10:30 am**

**County Executive
Director**

Patricia Passut (x104)
patricia.passut@vt.usda.gov

Program Staff

Patty Matte, PT (x100)
Donna Rae Heath, COR

Farm Loan Staff

(802) 334-6090 or
1-866-241-2190 (toll free)
Brian Kuper, FLM
Diane Gilman, FLO
Dorcas McAllister, FLO

NRCS Staff

www.nrcs.usda.gov
Tim McKay, DC (x109)
Nick Comerchi, SC (x101)
Daniel O'Brien, ITS (x113)
Roger DeKett, SS (x111)

NRCD Staff

Kerry O'Brien, (x110)
Caledonia District Mgr
Tamara Stevens, (x114)
Essex District Mgr
Brandon Carpenter, (x106)
Land Treatment Planner

Rural Development

www.rd.usda.gov
Steve Campbell, (x102)
Area Director
Mark Koprowski, (x120)
Loan Specialist
Suzanne Smith, (x112)
Area Technician

Farm Service Agency

FSA UPDATES

January
2008

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Burt Patenaude! Burt was re-elected to represent farmers from Burke, Kirby, Lyndon, Newark, St. Johnsbury, and Waterford on the county committee (COC). The election results for Local Administrative Area 2 are:

Burt Patenaude — Re-elected to the county committee,
Michael Daly — 1st alternate to the county committee,
David Allard — 2nd alternate to the county committee

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

The COC held their organizational meeting and re-elected Burt Patenaude to serve as the chairperson and Robert Porter to serve as the vice-chairperson. The monthly meeting of the COC will be held on the second Thursday of each month beginning at 10:30.

Dairy Disaster Aid Program Dairy Disaster temporarily suspended

The Dairy Disaster Assistance Program (DDAP-III) sign-up has been temporarily suspended. DDAP-III was previously authorized by an Appropriations Act in 2007, to provide benefits to eligible dairy producers who suffered dairy production losses as a result of natural disasters occurring during the period of January 1, 2005, through February 28, 2007. The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008 (2008 Act), has made some changes to the program. This will require extensive changes to software and procedure. Therefore, DDAP-III sign-up has been temporarily suspended until automation, policy, procedure, and other administrative items have been updated.

Livestock Compensation Program (LCP) — Sign-up continues for the Livestock Compensation Program (LCP). An ending date has not been announced for this program, but you are encouraged to apply now. The LCP program covers pasture loss and additional feed costs for crop year 2006.



Crop Disaster Program (CDP) — Sign-up continues for the Crop Disaster Program (CDP). An ending date has not been announced for this program. CDP provides benefits to farmers who suffered quantity or quality losses to 2005 or 2006 crops from natural disasters and related conditions. Producers who incurred qualifying losses must choose only one year to receive benefits. Producers may apply for benefits for losses to multiple crops as long as the losses occurred in the same crop year. ****Producers must have suffered quantity losses in excess of 35 percent to be eligible for CDP.** Only producers who obtained crop insurance coverage or coverage under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the year of loss will be eligible for CDP benefits.** We are only administering the *quantity* part of the CDP program at this time. USDA will announce and conduct CDP sign-up for *quality* losses as a later date.

Wool/Mohair/Unshorn Pelt LDPs

For crop year 2007—January 31, 2008 is the final deadline to apply for a 2007 crop wool/ mohair/unshorn pelt Loan Deficiency Payment (LDP). **You must apply and provide documentation by this date!**



LDP rates are announced every Wednesday. The current ungraded wool LDP price is 15 cents per pound and the mohair LDP price is 57 cents per pound. The payment for unshorn pelts is calculated as follows 6.865 lbs. X ungraded wool rate = price paid per pelt.

For crop year 2008— There is a form that producers need to sign once per crop year, indicating their intention to apply for a Loan Deficiency Payment. This form must be signed and submitted prior to losing beneficial interest in the crop. **This program is only authorized through March 15, 2008.**

Please contact the office for more details.

Loans for Socially Disadvantaged

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) can make and guarantee loans to socially disadvantaged applicants to buy and operate family size farms and ranches. Funds specifically for these loans are reserved each year. A socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of the group without regard to their individual qualities. For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, and Asians and Pacific Islanders. Contact your local FSA Farm Loan Manager or Officer for more details and assistance in applying.

Applications for FSA Loans

Farmers and ranchers that intend to apply to the Farm Service Agency for loan assistance for the upcoming crop year are encouraged to file their applications as early as possible. Filing early will help ensure that your loan is processed and approved as early as possible so that planting decisions can be made. Failure to apply early can result in a delay in processing loans due to the volume of applications that must be processed in date order. Contact your local FSA farm loan manager or officer for more details and assistance in applying.

Youth Loans

Remember 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 your local FSA office for more details

Year End Reviews

Producers that have a farm loan with FSA are reminded they must provide data for their Year End Analysis (YEA) to their loan officer each year. Borrowers are urged to provide this information timely so their files can be maintained.

Contact Farm Loan Staff Toll Free

With loan customers in Orleans, Caledonia, Essex, and Orange counties in Vermont and Coos and Grafton counties in New Hampshire, the Newport Farm Service Agency has a toll free telephone line. This should help current and potential borrowers contact the loan staff. The toll free number is 1-866-241-2190.



Customer Statement

January signals the beginning of a new year, and a time to gather financial records and starting thinking about filling out a 1040. If you are among the growing number of producers who have access to the Internet at home, you might be interested in a USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account. This would allow access to your farm data via the Customer Statement. The Customer Statement provides the producer online access 24/7 to the farm's USDA business transactions in a single report accessed with one login and password. It includes participation, application and payment status in various commodity and conservation programs, farm loans, maps, and land unit information.

Access to the USDA Customer Statement is available to all USDA program participants. In order to insure personal identity, you must first register for a **USDA eAuthentication Level 2 Account**. This process is easy and starts online by creating a user ID and password and confirming your email.

Because Level 2 Access involves highly sensitive electronic information, the final step requires visiting the local USDA Service Center to have your identity verified and complete the eAuthentication process.

Not only does a Level 2 account allow access to the Customer Statement, but also to many other USDA e-Services, including submitting forms online through USDA e-File, such as eLDP.

For more information about the Customer Statement and registering for a USDA eAuthentication Level 2 Account, go to <http://customerstatement.usda.gov> or call the FSA office.

WHAT IS THIS MONTH?

January is . . .

Cervical Health Awareness Month

<http://www.nccc-online.org/awareness.html>

<http://www.cervicalcancercampaign.org/>

February is . . .

American Heart Month

<http://www.americanheart.org>

<http://www.nsc.org/issues/heartmonth.htm>

Black History Month

<http://www.infoplease.com/spot/bhm1.html>

<http://www.biography.com/blackhistory/>

March is . . .

National Nutrition Month

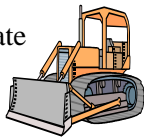
<http://www.eatright.org>

Women's History Month

<http://www.history.com/minisites/womenhist/>

Attention Producers, Landowners!

- Do you intend to clear timber areas to create or to expand existing crop areas?
- Are you converting a pasture field into a crop field?
- Are there any areas on your farm(s) that you are considering cropping that have not been cropped in recent years?
- Is there a wet spot in a field that you want drain to make cropping easier?
- Are you disturbing a wildlife habitat area of any type?
- Are you doing anything different on your farm(s) this year?



These are Highly Erodible and Wetlands provision questions that need to be considered each year by producers to assure that they may remain eligible for USDA benefits. If you have any question or concern that something you plan to do on your farm could jeopardize your eligibility for benefits, please contact your NRCS representative before you begin work.

Payment Limitation/Eligibility

USDA payments and benefits are subject to producer eligibility and limitation provisions as defined by law. Documents and forms to determine eligibility and limitation once completed are reviewed on an annual basis. It is the producer's responsibility to report changes in the farming operation which may affect payment eligibility and payment limitation. Entities such as corporations, limited partnerships, trusts and estates are required to provide names, addresses, and ID numbers of their members.

Change in Farming Operations?

Have you put your land into a trust? Incorporated your farm? Formed a partnership? Producers are reminded how important it is to contact the office with changes in operations on a farm so records can be kept current and accurate.

Status Date

The status of an individual or entity on April 1 of the applicable program year is the basis for determining the number of "persons" for payment limitation purposes for that year. Actions taken by an individual or entity after that date to increase the number of "persons" will not be recognized for the current program. For example, if an individual holds more than 50 percent interest in a corporation, as of the status date, the individual and entity will be considered one "person" for the applicable year.

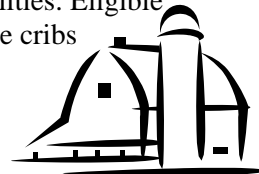
Ag Census due by February 4th

Reminder: If you received a 2007 Census of Agriculture from the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), the deadline to return it is February, 4, 2008. Producers can return their forms by mail or, for the first time, they have the convenient option of filling out the Census online via a secure web site at <http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/>.

Farm Storage Needed?

Low cost loans for storage facilities are available for producers to build or remodel farm storage facilities for a variety of commodities, including wheat, rice, soybeans and corn.

The seven-year Farm Storage Facility Loans are available for the purchase and installation of eligible storage facilities, permanently affixed drying or handling equipment, or remodeling existing facilities. Eligible facilities include new conventional-type cribs or bins and new and remanufactured oxygen-limiting and other upright silo-type structures.



All Farm Storage Facility Loans are secured by a promissory note and security agreement. The maximum amount that may be borrowed is 85 percent of the net cost of the storage or handling equipment, up to \$100,000 for each borrower. A minimum down payment is also required. For details, contact the county office staff. The interest for January is 3.625%.

Direct Deposit & Bank Account Changes

Forms are available at the FSA office to sign up for direct deposit if you haven't yet. Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into your bank account. For those already signed up, it is important that we are notified anytime there is a change in your account number or financial institution. You need to notify the office if you close your account or if another financial institution purchases your bank. Payments can be delayed if the FSA office is not aware of updates to your account and routing numbers.

Power of Attorney

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., FSA has a power of attorney form available that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. This can be done by completing an FSA-211, Power of Attorney. The form is available at your local USDA Service Center or on-line at <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov>. Forms obtained and completed outside USDA Service Center offices must be notarized. To find out more, call the office.

Spousal Signatures

Husbands and wives may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation programs in which either has an interest. This option is automatically available unless a written request for exclusion is made to the county office staff by either spouse.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



"The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

Foreign Buyers Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA.

Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, Realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

Dates to Remember

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| Jan 29-31 | Farm Show at the Barre Civic Complex |
| Jan 31 | Application deadline for crop year 2007 Wool/Mohair/Unshorn Pelt LDP |
| Feb 18 | Office Closed for George Washington's Birthday |
| March 15 | Deadline to apply for 2008 wool/mohair/unshorn pelt LDP |
| Continues | Livestock Compensation Program
Crop Disaster Program - quantity sign-up |
| Ongoing | Farm Storage Facility Loans |
| Coming | Crop Disaster Program - quality sign-up |

Appeal Process

After an FSA official makes a decision on your request for USDA services or application, you will be sent a letter informing you of the decision and options you can pursue if you disagree.

Generally, program participants have four choices – an informal review with the original agency decision-maker, an opportunity for mediation, appeal to State Committee and appeal to the USDA National Appeal Division (NAD).

Civil Rights Complaint Process

Any person, class or group of persons may file a discrimination complaint with 180 days of an alleged discriminatory action. Complaints may be filed in writing or orally with the agency head, any designated agency official or the Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Assistance in filing a complaint can be obtained by calling or visiting any FSA office.

Special Accommodations

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the county FSA office staff directly or by phone.

Controlled Substance

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium, poppies and other drug producing plants.