



April 2008

FSA UPDATES

**Chittenden/Washington
County
USDA Service Center**

**Chittenden/Washington
County FSA**

802 865-7895 x3
800 910-2035 x3
802 865-7947 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/VT

Hours

Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

County Committee

Richard Parizo LAA-1
Claude Lapierre LAA-2
Deborah Conant LAA-3
Elwin Neill, Jr. LAA-4
Michelle Gardner LAA-5

**Upcoming County
Committee Meeting**

Dates

April 23, 2008
May 21, 2008

Staff

Lawrence Parker x102
Eileen Powers x106
Pearl Wells x100
Bradford Parker x103

**Natural Resources
Conservation Service**

Caroline Alves x203
Tate Jeffrey x119
Michel Lapointe x118
Danny Peet x202
Norman Smith x117

**Winooski Natural
Resources Conservation
District**

Jessica Androletti x104

Change in County Committee membership

We would like to welcome **Richard Parizo** to the Chittenden/Washington County FSA Committee (COC). Rick will be representing LAA 1, which includes the towns and cities of *Burlington, Colchester, Essex, Milton, South Burlington, Westford, and Winooski*. Rick operates a dairy farm located in Milton, and was recently elected to the Alternate's position on the COC. Rick agreed to become the Regular Member on the COC when the seated Regular Member Donald Pouliot was no longer eligible to serve due to a change in residency. Don and his wife have recently moved to Cambridge, and according to regulation, a COC member must reside in the LAA that he or she represents. The COC would like to thank Don for his many years of service, both as a regular member and a frequently called upon alternate. His thoughtful consideration of program issues and sense of humor will be missed.

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 **June 15th** for **small grains** and **July 15th** for **all other 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.

Notice to NAP Participants

In addition to acreage reporting, all producers enrolled in the 2008 Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) are reminded that your 2007 NAP production reports are due for all crops covered in 2007. The deadline for this information is the same as your acreage reporting deadline. This information is used to establish your actual production history and is used in calculating any benefits you may receive for eligible losses. If production information is not received by the deadline a "0" will be entered for your production history. This will drastically lower future payments. Also remember that you must report crop losses to our office within 15 calendar days after the disaster event (flooding, hail, freeze, etc.) or when the crop damage becomes apparent (drought, disease, etc.). Once our office is notified, we will send you a CCC-576 Notice of Loss and Application for Payment form. Your Notice of Loss is not considered filed unless the CCC-576 is completed and returned to our office. If you will not harvest your crop(s), do not harrow, plow, destroy, or replant the crop until a crop loss adjuster has in-

spected the crop(s). If you destroy the crop without authorization, you will be ineligible for assistance.

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 such as soybeans, 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.

Extending Wool, Mohair, Unshorn 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.

Farm Bill Extended Until April 18th

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."

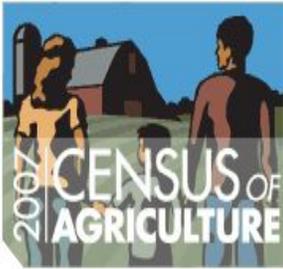
Responding to the census is required by law and the privacy of answers given is protected.

"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.

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 than 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 and www.nrcs.usda.gov.

Farm Storage Facility Loans

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 down payment is also required, so for more info call your FSA 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 reluc-

tant 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 the county office staff.

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 your local FSA office for more details.

Crop Disaster Program Updates:

The signup for the *Livestock Compensation Program (LCP)* continues, with no announced ending date. This program reimburses livestock owners for pasture loss and/or increased feed expenses suffered from May 15, 2006 through May 14, 2007. Eligible livestock includes sheep, goats, beef, dairy, beefalo and others. The animals do not have to be on pasture to qualify; confinement operations are eligible to apply

The *Crop Disaster Program (CDP)* is open to all producers who carried crop insurance or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage during the years 2005, 2006, or 2007. CDP benefits cover eligible quantity and quality losses to crops suffered as a result of adverse weather conditions. Benefits are currently being issued for quan-



tity losses, while the quality loss component of the CDP will be opened at a future date. There is no announced end for signup.

Dairy farmers are reminded that the *Dairy Disaster Assistance Program (DDAP-III)* signup **deadline is May 5, 2008**. Vermont dairy farmers are eligible to apply for benefits on lost milk production realized in 2006 & 2007 that was a result of the poor quality crops harvested in 2006.

Selected Interest Rates for April 2008	
90-Day Treasury Bill	2.25%
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	3.00%

Dates to Remember	
May 5 th	DDAP Closes
May 26	Memorial Day – Office Closed
June 14	Flag Day
July 4	Independence Day – Office Closed
Continuing	LCP, CDP

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

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