



December 2007

Orleans County News

Farm Service Agency

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

County Committee

Scott Birch, Chair
Brad Maxwell, Vice Chair
Doug Lawson, Voting Member
Donna Hammond, Minority Advisor

COC meets 2nd Wednesday of
each month.

NRCS District

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Marybeth Whitten, ARS X22
Dee Nault
Paul Daniels, Chair
Betsy Inkel, Vice Chair
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Angela Goodridge, PT X12
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LDP Deadline on Unshorn Lamb Pelts

Eligible producers have until Jan. 31, 2008, to apply for LDPs for unshorn pelts produced during the 2007 crop year. Eligible producers must have beneficial interest in the pelts, owned the lamb for at least 30 calendar days before the date of slaughter and sell the unshorn lamb for immediate slaughter. Producers must also comply with wetland conservation and highly erodible land conservation provisions on all lands they operate or have interest in. To qualify for payment, pelts must have been produced by an eligible producer from live unshorn lambs of domestic origin in the United States.

DISASTER PROGRAMS—sign-up NOW

FSA is now accepting applications for the Livestock Compensation Program (LCP), the Crop Disaster Program (CDP) for Quantity and the Dairy Disaster Assistance Program (DDAPIII).

The LCP program covers pasture loss and additional feed costs for crop year 2006. Qualifying producers will be compensated based on livestock numbers owned and on-site on May 1, 2006. Payments will be the lesser of either a per-head livestock payment, or the combined value of grazing losses and additional feed purchases required due to disaster conditions. Maximum per-head payments will apply and are based upon established rates. For pasture losses you will need to indicate on a map where you had pasture in 2006, the number of days grazed, and type of pasture (native grass or improved pasture). You will also need to indicate your "percentage of loss" for the pasture.

If you incurred additional feed costs in the disaster year (calendar year 2006 only) above the amount purchased in a normal year, these additional expenses are eligible as long as it was purchased because of the "disaster". Documentation will need to be provided. For purchased forage (hay, haylage or corn silage) you will need a receipt, signed and dated by the seller. For all other purchased concentrates, additives or extenders you will need to provide a comparison of purchased feeds prepared by your feed consultant or feed dealer on company letterhead showing the differences in type, amount and dollars of feed purchased between a normal year and the disaster year.

The CDP program provides benefits to farmers who suffered quantity or quality losses to 2005, 2006 or 2007 crops from natural disasters and related conditions so long as the actual crop lost was planted or prevented from being planted before Feb. 28, 2007. 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.** We will how

ever, accept all data from you or your feed consultant at this time for both quantity and quality and keep the information on file until such time as the quality part is implemented.

DDAPIII

Dairy producers can now sign up for DDAPIII. Nationwide, this program provides \$16 million in benefits. No payments will be issued until all applications are in and tabulated. If the total calculated benefits total \$16 M or less, then a maximum payment rate per pound based on the 2006 Mailbox price by State will be utilized. If the total calculated benefit nationwide totals more than \$16M, then those losses exceeding 20% will receive benefits as above. Losses below 20% loss will be factored based on the total eligible losses of less than 20% divided by funds remaining.

A producer's loss will be calculated by subtracting commercially marketed production from the base year production. Base year production is based on the 2006 NASS average for VT which is 18,383 lbs/cow/year

For those herds that normally produce less than the NASS average, rules are unclear at this point in time exactly how the COC is to allocate "true" production to reflect losses due to the disaster.

Cow numbers will need to be reported for each month from Jan through Dec, 2006. Annual marketed production will need to be provided for 2006. However, since our disaster declaration started on May 1st, we will only use production information from May 1 through December 31 to calculate lost production. For further information on any of the disaster programs, please contact the county office.

NAP Coverage Deadline Approaching

January 1, 2008 is the deadline to purchase coverage for Maple Sap for the 2008 crop year.

USDA Works to Protect Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

USDA has formally launched a Department-wide campaign to make certain that producers' "Personally Identifiable Information" or PII, is being protected. The PII generally refers to information which is maintained by a USDA agency about an individual, including USDA customers and USDA employees. As part of USDA's official policy on social security numbers, USDA will collect, use, maintain, and/or disseminate Social Security numbers only when required by statute or when specifically authorized to do so. USDA agencies will not use the number as an identity number. Agencies must mask or encrypt Social Security numbers so that they cannot be viewed on computer screens, reports, or other products. Agencies will not use Social Security numbers to access customer records.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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Pesticide Certification Class Scheduled for January 10

The Conservation District is sponsoring a pesticide certification class on January 10, 2008 for all farmer and Christmas Tree growers in the Northeast Kingdom who would like to be able to use herbicides and insecticides on their property. Anne Hazelrigg of UVM Extension and Matt Wood of the Vermont Agency of Agriculture will lead the class. The class will be held in East Burke at the Burke Mountain Clubhouse on Route 114 beginning at 9:00 AM. The morning session will cover the core material, sample calculations and allow time for questions and answers. Lunch will be available for \$6.00 or bring your own bag lunch. Following lunch, the exam will be given and upon passing the exam the participant will have a Private Applicators License.

There will be no charge for the class however the study manuals cost \$33. The study manual must be purchased ASAP to allow the participant to read ahead of time and be prepared for the class and exam.

To reserve a place in the class and to order a study manual call: Susan Alexander at 802/229-2720.

FSA Seeks Public Comment on Emergency Conservation Program

FSA is offering members of the public an opportunity to voice opinions they may have about the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) and suggest ideas about improving the program in the future.

ECP provides emergency funding and technical assistance for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters and for carrying out emergency water conservation measures in periods of severe drought. Funding for ECP is appropriated by Congress.

To learn more about ECP program issues and proposed alternatives, please review the Federal Register at <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2007/pdf/e7-20961.pdf>

Written comments on the scope of the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement and requests for copies should be directed to **ECP SEIS**, Geo-Marine Incorporated, 2713 Magruder Blvd., Suite D, Hampton, VA 23666-1572.

To ensure that the full range of issues and alternatives are addressed, FSA invites comments. **Comments should be submitted by close of business December 24, 2007.**

Ag Census Begins in December

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will begin distribution of the 2007 Census of Agriculture later this month, thereby allowing America's farmers and ranchers the opportunity to participate in shaping the future of agriculture. Conducted every five years by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Census is a complete count of the nation's farms and ranches and the people who operate them. According to NASS, the Census of Agriculture provides information that is not available elsewhere. The last Ag Census was conducted in 2002.

NASS will mail out Census forms on December 28, 2007 to collect data for the 2007 calendar year. Completed forms are due by 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/>.

The Census looks at land use and ownership, operator characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures and other topics. It provides the only source of uniform, comprehensive agricultural data for every county in the nation. Policy-makers use Census data for decisions concerning agricultural and rural programs. Community planners use Census information to target delivery of local services. Companies rely on Census data when determining where to locate their operations. And farmers themselves look at Census data when deciding to make changes in their production strategies.

Loans for Beginning Farmers, Socially Disadvantaged

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.