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Orleans County News



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

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Donna Hammond, Voting Member
Donna Hammond, Minority Advisor

COC meets 2nd Wednesday of each month.

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Dee Nault
Paul Daniels, Chair
Bill Lawson, Vice Chair
Richard Delfavero, Treasurer
Karen O'Donnell
William Ryan
Darryl Mongeon



LDP Deadline on Unshorn Lamb Pelts

Eligible producers have until Jan. 29, 2010, to apply for Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP) for unshorn pelts produced during the 2009 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.

IRS Form 1099-G

Producers annually receive CCC-1099Gs detailing payments producers have received from FSA. This year, the 2009 Advance payments producers received from the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment (DCP) Program were processed as overpayments and offset from the 2009 Final payments. The 2009 Advance payments will not be reflected on the CCC-1099Gs producers receive. The CCC-1099G's will reflect only the 2009 DCP direct entitlement.

SURE

The 2008 Farm Bill amended the Trade Act of 1974 to create the Supplemental Revenue assistance program (SURE).

The SURE program provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disaster that incurred in the crop years 2008 through September 30, 2011. To be eligible for SURE payments, a producer is required to obtain crop insurance on all crops in all counties or, if crop insurance is not available, to participate in the Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) except for grazed acreage. However, crop insurance or NAP coverage is no longer required for crops that are not of economic significance or those where the administrative fee required to buy NAP coverage exceeds 10 percent of the value of the coverage.

Eligible farmers and ranchers who meet the definition of Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, or Beginning Farmer or Rancher are exempt from the risk management purchase requirement.

The following are the conditions that trigger SURE payments:

- at least one crop of economic significance must suffer a 10% production loss due to an eligible disaster condition
- crop of economic significance is a crop that has contributed or would have contributed at least 5% or more of the total expected revenue from all crops on the farm
- producers in counties declared disaster counties by the Secretary of Agriculture, or in contiguous counties, or those who show proof of an individual loss of at least 50% are eligible to receive SURE payments for crop producer or crop quality losses.

Losses are measured with consideration to the whole-farm revenue, which includes crop insurance indemnities and commodity program payments, so that producers are not paid more than once for the same loss.

More details on the SURE Program are available at county FSA offices or online at www.fsa.usda.gov

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.

There are exceptions to the rule, where spouses may not sign on behalf of each other for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations or other similar entities. Individual signatures are also required on certain Farm Loan Program and Farm Storage Facility Loan documents. For more clarification on spousal signature authority, please contact your local FSA office.

BCAP

FSA is currently accepting applications from biomass facilities interested in participating in the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP). BCAP provides financial assistance to producers or entities that deliver eligible biomass material to designated biomass conversion facilities for use as heat, power, bio-based products or bio-fuels. Initial assistance will be for the Collection, Harvest, Storage and Transportation (CHST) costs associated with the delivery of eligible materials. Once an agreement is signed between FSA and a facility allowing funding through the program to become available, the facilities can begin accepting materials that meet qualifications for matching payments.

Producers who sell these materials can apply for matching payments under the collection, harvest, storage and transportation (CHST) component of BCAP.

A biomass material producer is eligible to receive payments for two years. The purpose of the matching payments is to assist biomass producers with the CHST cost of delivering biomass to a qualified biomass conversion facility. Once a facility becomes qualified, eligible material owners or producers who deliver biomass to that facility may be eligible to receive CHST payments.

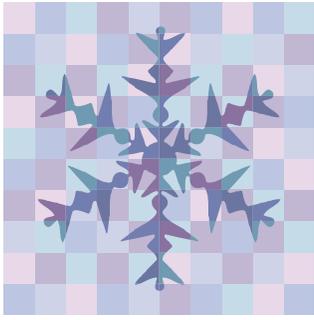
The terms 'owner' and 'producer' are used interchangeably when discussing BCAP. **It is important to understand that only persons that can prove "ownership" of the delivered material to the BCF (Biomass Conversion Facility) are entitled to receive matching payments for eligible material.**

Eligible material owners or producers, who market eligible material to a qualified biomass conversion facility, may apply for the matching CHST payment at their FSA county office. An application must be submitted before the eligible material is sold and delivered to a qualified biomass conversion facility. After the product is delivered, a producer must provide FSA with documentation of product quantity, quality and payment rate. County offices will validate payment requests with information in the county office and information provided under the terms of MOU's with the qualified biomass conversion facilities.

NAP Deadline for maple sap

Sugaring in Vermont is a risky business; it is hard to think of any crop that is more dependent on the weather. The window of opportunity for a successful season is narrow; the temperatures can be too warm, too cold, and occasionally just right. One tool available to help lessen the economic impact of a poor season is FSA's Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). NAP payments are issued when covered producers experience catastrophic loss of production due to adverse weather conditions. While the NAP payments themselves may not be huge, what is more significant is that NAP coverage is a requirement of the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE), which is the latest version of FSA's crop disaster program. SURE is designed to insure a pre-determined level of whole farm revenue, a function of yield and price. The loss threshold for SURE is lower than that of NAP, and payments could be substantial. The deadline for purchasing 2010 NAP coverage for Maple Sap is close of business January 4, 2010. Basically, the cost of NAP is \$250 per crop per county. For more details, please call this office at 802-334-6090.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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Renewable Energy Options for Farms

The Essex County Natural Resources Conservation District will be hosting a panel discussion/workshop highlighting the on-farm production of renewable energy options. The workshop will take place at The Guildhall (Town Offices) in Guildhall on January 14, 2010 from 10:00 am- 3:30 pm. Anaerobic digesters, solar, wind and hydro powers will be discussed, in addition to the permitting processes and available grants for such endeavors.

Bring a bag lunch; refreshments will be served.

For additional information, contact Tamara at 802-748-3885 ext. 114.

2010 DCP Signup Continues

Enrollment for the 2010 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) has begun and will continue through June 1, 2010. USDA urges producers to make use of the eDCP automated website to sign up, or producers can visit any USDA Service Center to complete their 2010 DCP contract.

USDA computes DCP Program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2010, eligible producers may request to receive advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment. USDA will issue advance direct payments beginning Dec. 1, 2009. Counter-cyclical payment rates vary depending on market prices. Counter-cyclical payments are issued only when the effective price for a commodity is below its target price. The effective price is the higher of the national average market price received during the 12-month marketing year for each covered commodity and the national average loan rate for a marketing assistance loan for the covered commodity.

ACRE

The Average Crop Revenue Election Program (ACRE) provides a safety net based on state revenue losses and acts in place of the price-based safety net of counter-cyclical payments under DCP. A farm's payment is based on a revenue guarantee calculated using a 5-year average state yield and the most recent 2-year national price for each eligible commodity. For 2010, the 2-year price average will be based on the 2008 and 2009 crop years.

An ACRE payment is issued when both the state and the farm have incurred a revenue loss. The payment is based on 83.3 percent (85 percent in 2012) of the farm's planted acres times the difference between the State ACRE guarantee and the State revenue times the ratio of the farm's yield divided by the State expected yield. The total number of planted acres for which a producer may receive ACRE payments may not exceed the total base on the farm. In exchange for participating in ACRE, in addition to not receiving counter-cyclical payments, a farm's direct payment is reduced by 20 percent, and marketing assistance loan rates are reduced by 30 percent.

The decision to enroll in the ACRE Program is irrevocable. The owner of the farm and all producers on the farm must agree to enroll in ACRE. Once enrolled, the farm shall be enrolled for that initial crop year and will remain in ACRE through the 2012 crop year.

The June 1, 2010, deadline is mandatory for all participants. USDA will not accept any late-filed applications.

Farming for Modern Markets

The VT Grass Farmers Association, the VT Beef Producers Association, VT Sheep & Goat Association and UVM Center for Sustainable Agriculture will host the 14th Annual VT Grazing & Livestock Conference at a new location –The Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee, VT – on January 22 & 23, 2010. The conference will offer a wide variety of educational opportunities for livestock producers and agricultural service providers seeking to more successfully and sustainably manage animals, land and farm business. Keynote speaker Brian Moyer will highlight the conference theme of *Farming for the Modern Market*, speaking to the changing economic times and how we are positioned locally to address these challenges.

Registration discounts will apply for partnering organization members. Overnight lodging is available. For more information, visit www.uvm.edu/pasture or contact Jennifer Colby, Conference Coordinator, at (802) 656-0858 or jcolby@uvm.edu. The conference is coordinated by the [UVM Center for Sustainable Agriculture's Pasture Program](#).

County Committee Elections

After counting ballots at the last County Committee meeting, producers in LAA 2 have elected Doug Lawson to serve as the county committee member and have elected Jody Stoddard as the 1st alternate. Congratulations to both for their willingness to serve for the benefit of their fellow producers. The county committee is responsible for the overall direction of the operations of the County FSA Office and the Administration of farm programs at the county level.