



July 2010

# Windsor/Orange County FSA News

**USDA**  
**Windsor/Orange FSA**  
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**Hours**  
Monday - Friday  
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

#### County Staff

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## COC Nominations Open

County committees (COC) play a crucial role in helping the county office staff implement the Farm Bill. Due to the important services that COC members provide, producers are encouraged to participate in the FSA county committee election process by nominating an eligible candidate by Aug. 2.

To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign form FSA-669A. The form and other valuable information about FSA county committee elections are available online at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>; click on News & Events, then County Committee Elections. Nomination forms for the 2010 election must be postmarked or received in the county office by close of business on August 2, 2010.

FSA county committee members make decisions on disaster and conservation programs, emergency programs, commodity price support loan programs and other important agricultural issues. Members serve three-year terms. Committees consist of three to five members who are elected by eligible local producers.

Ballots will be mailed to producers beginning November 5, 2010. Voted ballots are due back at the county office either via mail or in person by December 6, 2010.

## Crop Certification Deadline

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 FSA programs. All cropland on the farm must be reported to receive benefits from the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, marketing assistance loans and Load Deficiency Payments.

Certification form FSA-578, Report of Acreage, must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. The producer certification deadline is **July 15, 2010**.

## FSA Farm Loans

FSA 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, FSA direct and guaranteed loans are currently available.

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.

Farm ownership loans or farm operating loans may be obtained as direct loans for a maximum of up to \$300,000. Guaranteed loans can reach a maximum indebtedness of \$1,112,000. Producers are encouraged to apply early so that a loan can be processed and funded in a timely manner.

FSA employees will help you complete

the necessary application and forms, and help you understand what information is required, where to find it or who to contact to get it. Call your county office staff today.

## Foreign Landowner Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) 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, real estate agents, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

## Rural Youth Loans

FSA makes loans to rural youths to establish and operate income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5000.

### Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

- Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) or a legal resident alien
- be 10 years to 20 years of age
- Comply with FSA's general eligibility requirements
- Reside in a rural area, city or town with a population of 50,000 or fewer people
- Be unable to get a loan from other sources
- Conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work as outlined above
- Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor. The project supervisor must recommend the project and the loan, along with providing adequate supervision.

Stop by the county office for help preparing and processing the application forms. The FSA staff can help you with questions you may have about a particular program.



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## Loans for the Socially Disadvantaged

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operating type loans and/or purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided priority funding for members of Socially Disadvantaged Applicants.

A socially disadvantaged applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities.

For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders.

If producers or their spouses believe they would qualify as socially disadvantaged, they should contact their local FSA office for details. FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

## TAP Signup Continues

Tree Assistance Program (TAP) signup for orchardists and nursery tree growers opened May 10, 2010. The program helps orchardists and nursery tree growers who produce trees, bushes and vines for commercial purposes, to replant or rehabilitate trees, bushes and vines damaged or destroyed by natural disasters. Trees grown for pulp or timber are not eligible.

For eligibility requirements contact your FSA office or the website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

## Help Available to Stressed Farmers

Recently, the economy, inclement weather, and other factors have hurt some farming operations around the country. These events can push a producer to the emotional breaking point. Watching your livelihood being threatened is difficult for farmers and ranchers, especially for those whose income is solely dependent on agriculture.

The National Suicide Prevention Hotline is available to help. If you know a farmer or rancher who is under stress and is reluctant to ask for help, or if you just need to talk to someone, call 1-800-273-TALK (8255). Your call will be routed to the crisis center nearest you, where trained staffers are available 24/7. This nationwide service is free and confidential. Help is just a phone call away.

For more information, go to <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>. This service is not affiliated with the US Department of Agriculture.

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202)-720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."