



**USDA  
Litchfield/Fairfield  
County FSA Office**

1185 New Litchfield St  
Torrington, CT 06790-6098

860-626-8852 phone  
860-626-8850 fax  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/CT](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/CT)

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

**County Committee**

**Daniel Logue, Chairman**  
**Donald Taylor, Vice Chair**  
**Luke Tanner, Member**  
**George Klug, Member**  
**Charles Ferris IV, Member**  
**Dorothy Jacquier,**  
**Minority Advisor**

**County Office Staff**

**Howard E. Rood Jr.,  
County Executive Director**  
**Ellen Losee,  
Farm Loan Manager**  
**Karen Tomlinson,  
Farm Loan Officer**  
**Barbara Hawley,  
Program Technician**  
**Carolyn A. Tomczyk,  
Program Technician**



June/July 2010

# *Litchfield/Fairfield FSA News*

## **COC Election Nominations**

The election of agricultural producers to the Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committee starts with the nomination of eligible candidates. Eligible candidates must farm in the areas which are holding elections this year. Local Administrative Area #1-5 in Fairfield County, in the towns of: Bridgeport, Fairfield, Monroe, Newtown, Sandy Hook, Shelton, Southport, Stratford, Trumbull, and Westport, and LAA #1-3 in Litchfield County, in the towns of: Canaan, Cornwall, Kent, North Canaan, Salisbury, Sharon, and Warren are holding elections this year. To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign nomination form FSA-669A. The form includes a statement that the nominee agrees to serve if elected. This form is available at USDA Service Centers and online at:

[http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA\\_File/sa0669a\\_committee\\_electform.pdf](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/sa0669a_committee_electform.pdf)

Nomination forms for the 2010 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on August 2, 2010.

Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in an FSA program may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee. Individuals may nominate themselves or others as a candidate. Additionally, organizations representing minority and women farmers or ranchers may nominate candidates. Nomination forms are filed for the county committee of the office that administers a producer's farm records.

## **Tree Assistance Program Signup**

Tree Assistance Program (TAP) signup for orchardists and nursery tree growers began Monday, May 10, 2010, at local Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices.

TAP provides help to 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. The 2008 Farm Bill expanded eligibility to include Christmas tree and nursery tree growers that were ineligible under prior legislation. **Trees grown for pulp or timber are not eligible.**

To be eligible producers must have suffered more than a 15 percent death loss due to the natural disaster after adjustment for normal mortality. TAP is a cost-reimbursement program, with payments covering up to 70 percent of replant costs and 50 percent of pruning, removal and other salvaging costs for replacing or salvaging damaged trees.

Producers can receive assistance for up to 500 acres of trees, bushes or vines. Producers must also have purchased a policy or plan of insurance under the Federal Crop Insurance Act or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program, or for 2008, obtained a waiver of the risk management purchase requirement through the buy-in provision. Eligible losses must have occurred on or after January 1, 2008, and before October 1, 2011.

For more information on the new TAP program, contact your county FSA office or the website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>

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## Farm Loan Program

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers loans for farmers and ranchers to purchase farmland and finance agricultural operations. FSA loan programs are designed to help producers who are temporarily unable to obtain private or commercial credit. In many cases, applicants are beginning farmers who have insufficient net worth to qualify for financing through a commercial lender. In other instances, borrowers might have suffered setbacks from natural disasters or might be persons with limited resources.

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 \$1,094,000. Emergency loans are always direct loans for farmers who may have suffered physical or production losses in disaster areas designated by a Presidential or Secretarial disaster declaration. Rural Youth Loans, Loans to Beginning Farmers and loans for socially disadvantaged applicants are also available through FSA.

For details just contact the county office staff for an appointment with a farm loan officer.

## Crop Reporting

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.

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

### *NOTE:*

Please call the office to make an appointment to come in to report your acreage.

## CRP & NAP Certification

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. **NAP producers must also report last year's production.**

## Prevented Planting

Prevented planting is to 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.

## Sodbusting

The term "sodbusting" is used to identify the plowing up of erosion-prone grasslands for use as cropland. Sodbuster violations are unauthorized tillage practices on highly erodible lands that converted native vegetation such as rangeland or woodland, to crop production after December 23, 1985.

Farmers and ranchers should be aware that if they use highly erodible land for crop production without proper conservation measures, they risk losing eligibility to participate in Farm Service Agency programs.

Before producers clear, plow or otherwise prepare areas not presently under crop production for planting, they are required to file an AD-1026, indicating the area to be brought into production.

If Natural Resources Conservation Service indicates on a CPA-026 that the area will be highly erodible land, the producer will be required to develop and implement a conservation plan on the affected acreage, before bringing land into production.

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In addition, producers and the producer's affiliates have to file an AD-1026 with the staff in the administrative or control county office before any farm program payments can be made. The AD-1026 is the producer's signed certification that HELC, as well as wetland conservation, provisions will not be violated.

### **FSA Signature Policy**

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.

Individuals signatures are also required on certain Farm Loan Program and Farm Storage Facility Loan documents.

For more clarification on spousal signature authority, feel free to contact your local FSA Office.

### **FSA Rural Youth Loans**

The Farm Service Agency makes loans to youth in rural communities who want to start learning the business of agriculture.

The Rural Youth Loan Program is designed to provide start-up funds (maximum amount being \$5,000.) to establish and operate income-producing projects of modest size in connection with participation in 4-H clubs, FFA and similar agriculturally focused organizations.

Each project is designed to be part of an organized and supervised work program. Youths plan and operate their projects with the help of an adult or project advisor. The project should provide the youth with practical business and educational experience and produce sufficient income to repay the loan.

Each year many young entrepreneurs take advantage of these loans and gain valuable business experience in the process.

To qualify for a loan, you must:

- be a citizen of the United States or a permanent resident;
- Be at least 10 years old, but not yet 21;
- Live in a rural community

You should also be capable of planning, managing, and operating the project with guidance and assistance from a project advisor.

The project advisor recommends the project and the loan, and agrees to provide adequate adult supervision.

These loans may be used to finance nearly any agriculturally based, income-producing project. Some common projects include:

- raising and breeding livestock;
- growing fruits or vegetables for resale;
- growing flowers or plants for resale;
- producing field crops.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Please call our office at: 860-626-8852, or at the FSA website <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

### **Banking Changes**

Almost all Farm Service Agency payments are made electronically using Direct Deposit. This innovation has cut down on the number of missing and late payments and reduced the time required to move funds. It has been calculated that having a problem with a payment is 20 times greater with checks than with Direct Deposit. Another benefit is that Direct Deposit to your account can be made within 48 hours.

If you have changed accounts or institutions that might affect the direct deposit of your FSA payments, contact the FSA county office so we can update our files to insure continued uninterrupted service.

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Farm Service Agency  
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PRESORTED STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
TORRINGTON, CT



### **Crop Year 2008 Late-Filed FSA-578's, Acreage Reports**

Our office may now accept late-filed FSA-578 Acreage Reports for crop year 2008 for the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) Program, and for ALL other programs except Emergency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP). Late file fees are waived and physical evidence in the field is not required. If you have any questions, please call our office.

### **Beginning and Limited Resource Farmers and 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. For more information about being a beginning farmer or limited resource farmer or rancher, please call this FSA office at: 860-626-8852.

### **JUST A REMINDER OF OUR OFFICE EXTENSION NUMBERS:**

**Howard – 101, Ellen – 104, Barbara – 102, Karen – 103, Carolyn - 100**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs 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 programs. (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 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."