



Words of Windham

April 2009

A Newsletter For People Who Care About Agriculture

Loan Servicing Options through Farm Loan Programs

The Farm Service Agency is aware that many dairy producers are experiencing financial stress due to recent price downturns. We want to take this opportunity to inform you of several loan servicing options that Farm Loan Programs (FLP) has available to ease the financial stresses you may be experiencing.

FSA will consider releasing milk proceeds so that you can pay essential family living and farm operating expenses, if necessary. Essential expenses are those which are basic, crucial, or indispensable.

FSA may restructure your debt if you are in financial distress or your account is delinquent and the operation can project a positive cash flow. Debt restructuring options are subject to an eligibility determination and may include:

- Lowering your FLP payments on livestock and equipment loans through debt rescheduling and consolidation
- Lowering your FLP payments on real estate loans through reamortization,
- Deferral of part of your FSA payments from 1 to 5 years,
- Write-down of a part of your FSA debt depending on your eligibility and the value of your security. (Note: If eligible, this is available only once, and could limit your eligibility for your future FSA loans.)

If you would like to discuss your current operation, you have any questions, or want to review possible options available to you please call Ron Clark 860-887-9941 X 105.

Source to Sea

Join the Last Green Valley as they paddle the lakes, streams, and segments of the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers from April through June, starting in the upper headwaters and winding slowly down to the Thames River and Long Island Sound.

More than 60 partner organizations have planned river-related events for you and your family to enjoy. From river festivals, cleanups, and paddles to water pipes, toy boats, and water trail dedications, there's something for everyone. Most of these events are free and open to the public. For more information and a schedule of activities check out their website.

A few of the events in our area are:

- *April 11-Thompson-West Thompson Lake Earth Day Cleanup
- *May 2-Tolland-Mansfield-Upper Willimantic River Paddle
- *May 16-Sterling-Plainfield-Moosup River Paddle
- *June 6-Pomfret-Stream Walk

Information from www.lastgreenvalley.org

Earth Day

Earth Day is on April 22nd and it marks the 39th Anniversary. Following the first very successful Earth Day, an estimated 20 million people participated, groundbreaking federal legislation was passed. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency was established in 1970, followed by the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act of 1972, and the Endangered Species Act of 1973. Today Earth Day is celebrated all around the world. This Earth Day we urge you to be part of it by doing simple things; walk for short trips instead of driving and not letting the water run unnecessarily.

“Man despite his historic pretensions, his sophistication, and his many accomplishments owes his existence to a six inch layer of top soil and the fact that it rains”

Author Unknown

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Help For Dairy Farmers

State lawmakers are making a push to save Connecticut dairy farmers with a four part plan. With only 157 farms left and 50 farms lost since 2007, a handful of legislators are behind the four bills this session that could bring big relief to the struggling farms.

First is increasing the annual fee retailers pay to sell milk to \$500 or \$3,000 depending on how much milk they sell. Currently the fee is \$30. This will bring in an estimated \$4 million which would be distributed to farmers based on production. Also, the environment committee has proposed a two part bill. The first part of the bill proposes handing out surplus funding quarterly instead of yearly and setting up a fund to help farmers in danger of having to close their farm. Where the money will come from has not yet been determined. Lastly, a tax credit has been proposed to be enacted when farmers are losing money on milk sales. The bills are a promising start to getting much needed help to an industry that is hurting.

A break down of how a gallon of milk is selling at the moment: a gallon of milk is \$3.82, farmers get \$1.21, bottlers \$.73 cents and the store gets \$1.88.

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Ron Clark, Farm Loan Manager
860-887-9941 x 105

COUNTY COMMITTEE:

Harold Bishop, Chairman
Betsy Molodich,
Vice-Chairman
Charles Tyler,
Regular Member



April Calendar



4/22 Earth Day

4/25 Farm & Landscape Equipment Auction Middlefield CT
Lisa Scirpo 860-883-5828.

5/2 & 5/3 Zagray Farm Museum Spring Show & Gas Up Swap
Meet. Route 85 Colchester CT. Starts at 8:00AM
Both days admission is \$5.00 a car.

Eligibility Forms

Just a reminder that with the new farm bill came many changes in the forms needed to sign producers up for programs and issue payments. All these new forms need to be filled out **before we can issue any payments.**

Also, we are still signing producers up for **DCP** and the deadline is **June 1st**. If you have any questions or would like to make an appointment to fill out the new forms please call the office at 860-774-8397 X 110.

Please call before you come into office to allow us to better prepare for your visit.