



**Merrimack
Belknap
Hillsborough
County
FSA Office**

The Concord Center
10 Ferry Street
Box/Suite 212
Concord, NH 03301

603-223-6003 phone
603-223-6030 fax
www.fsa.usda.gov/NH

Hours

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

**County Committee
Members**

Charles Price, Chair
Martha Crete, Vice-Chair
Sumner Dole III,
Member
William Hall Jr., Member
Eric Tenney, Member

**County Farm
Program Staff**

Donna Juneau,
County Executive
Director
Susan Sargent,
Program Technician
Melinda Marston,
Program Technician

NH Farm Loan Staff

Keith Farrell, District
Director and Acting
Farm Loan Manager
Lorna Wakefield,
Farm Loan Officer
Rebecca Davis,
Farm Loan Officer
William Wilson,
Farm Loan Officer
Sandra Carter,
Program Technician

THE PURPOSE OF THE USDA FARM SERVICE AGENCY (FSA)

The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Farm Service Agency (FSA) helps to keep America's farmers and ranchers in business as they face the uncertainties of weather and markets. The FSA delivers commodity, credit, conservation, disaster, and emergency assistance programs that help improve the stability and strength of the agricultural economy.

FSA COUNTY COMMITTEE

The FSA County Committee is the direct link between the farm community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. County Committee members are a critical component of the day-to-day operations of FSA. They help deliver FSA farm programs at the local level. Farmers who serve on committees help decide the kind of programs their counties will offer. They work to make FSA agricultural programs serve the needs of local producers. The three counties of Merrimack, Belknap, and Hillsborough are currently divided into five Local Administrative Areas (LAAs). A County Committee member is elected to represent each one of these five areas.

COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTION RESULTS

Congratulations to Charles (Chuck) Price of Gilmanton Iron Works! Chuck was re-elected to represent farmers from LAA-1 which includes the cities/towns of Alton, Barnstead, Center Harbor, Gilford, Gilmanton, Laconia, Meredith, New Hampton and Sanbornton. Chuck was re-elected to his third consecutive term.

Congratulations to Martha Crete of Boscawen! Martha was re-elected to represent farmers from LAA-2 which includes the cities/towns of Andover, Boscawen, Bradford, Danbury, Dunbarton, Franklin, Henniker, Hill, Hopkinton, Newbury, New London, Salisbury, Sutton, Tilton, Warner, Webster and Wilmont. Martha was re-elected to her third consecutive term.

Congratulations to Sumner Dole III of Canterbury! Sumner was elected to represent farmers from LAA-3 which includes the cities/towns of Allenstown, Belmont, Bow, Canterbury, Chichester, Concord, Epsom, Hooksett, Loudon, Northfield, Pembroke, and Pittsfield. Sumner was elected to his first consecutive term. Gordon Jones was elected as an alternate for LAA-3.

Congratulations to Eric Tenney of Antrim! Eric was re-elected to represent farmers from LAA-4 which includes the cities/towns of Antrim, Bennington, Deering, Francestown, Greenfield, Goffstown, Hancock, Hillsborough, Manchester, Mont Vernon, New Boston, Weare and Windsor. Eric was re-elected to his second consecutive term.

Congratulations to William (Bill) Hall Jr. of Hollis! Bill was re-elected to represent farmers from LAA-5 which includes the cities/towns of Amherst, Bedford, Brookline, Greenville, Hollis, Hudson, Litchfield, Lyndeborough, Mason, Merrimack, Milford, Nashua, New Ipswich, Pelham, Peterborough, Sharon, Temple and Wilton. Bill was re-elected to his third consecutive term.

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works because of your participation.

FSA County Committee meetings are scheduled on a quarterly basis in accordance with the federal government fiscal year. The 2012 fiscal year began on October 1, 2011 and extends through September 30, 2012.

The Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough Quarterly County Committee Meeting Schedule for fiscal year 2012 is as follows:

- December 9, 2011 at 10 am;
- February 8, 2012 at 10 am;
- April 18, 2012 at 10 am; and
- August 19, 2012 at 7:00 pm.

Additional meetings may be scheduled on an as needed basis. County Committee meetings are held in the USDA Conference Room 211 located at 10 Ferry Street, Concord. The public is always welcome to attend County Committee meetings.



LDPS FOR UNSHORN LAMB PELTS

Eligible producers have until Jan. 31, 2012, to apply for Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP) for unshorn pelts produced during the 2011 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.

Marketing assistance loans provide producers with interim financing at shearing time to meet cash flow needs without having to sell their commodity when market prices are typically at shearing time lows. Allowing producers to store production at shearing time facilitates more orderly marketing of the commodity throughout the year. A producer who is eligible to obtain a loan, but who agrees to forgo the loan, may obtain an LDP. The LDP rate equals the amount by which the applicable loan rate (where the commodity is stored) exceeds the alternative loan repayment rate for the respective commodity.

Please note that effective LDP rates for ungraded wool dropped from a high of \$0.29/pound to a low of \$0.00/pound during this past year. The effective LDP rate for ungraded wool initially dropped from \$0.29/pound to \$0.23/pound on March 8, 2011; then down to \$0.17/pound on March 15, 2011; down to \$0.11/pound on March 22, 2011; down to \$0.03/pound on April 5, 2011; and finally down to \$0.00/pound on April 19, 2011. The effective LDP rate for ungraded wool has remained at **\$0.00/pound** from April 19, 2011 through January 10, 2012.

Producers can monitor the daily LDP rates on the FSA website at:
http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/mktpriclean.xls

NON-INSURED CROP DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (NAP)

The noninsured crop disaster assistance program (NAP) is a program that helps producers reduce their risk when growing food and fiber crops, specialty crops and crops for livestock feed. These benefits are only available for crops for which the catastrophic level of crop insurance is not available. Application for coverage must be filed by the applicable crop's application closing date. **March 15, 2012** is the closing date to apply for NAP coverage for Annual Spring Seeded crops.

Production records for all crops must be reported to FSA no later than the acreage reporting date for the crop for the following year. FSA requires that any production reported in a loss year be verifiable according to Agency specifications. *NAP Losses must be reported within 15 days of loss.*

In general terms, the effective LDP rate is driven by the market price for wool. If the market price for wool is high the LDP rate is correspondingly low. Producers considering submitting an application for LDP for ungraded wool can monitor the effective daily LDP rates at the FSA website listed above or contact the FSA county office to obtain the daily rate. Eligible producers have until January 31, 2012 to apply for LDP for unshorn pelts produced during the 2011 crop year.

2012 DCP/ACRE SIGN-UP

The 2012 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) enrollment will begin January 23, 2012 and will end June 1, 2012. Here are some important reminders:

All producers planting on DCP base acres must be identified on the DCP/ACRE contract and receive a proportionate share of DCP/ACRE payment for the farm.

Changes on the farm after enrolling June 1st in DCP/ACRE must be reported to your local FSA office such as:

- Ownership changes
- Producer changes
- Change in crop shares

Note: Changes cannot be made after Sept. 30, 2012.

SUPPLEMENTAL REVENUE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SURE)

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters that occurred in the crop year 2010. SURE is available to eligible producers on:

- Farms in counties with Secretarial disaster declarations, including contiguous counties, that have incurred crop production or quality losses, or both, and includes all crops grown by a producer nationwide, except grazed crops.
- Any farm in which, for the crop year, the actual production on the farm because of disaster-related conditions is 50 percent or less than normal production of the farm.

The sign-up for 2010 losses runs through **June 1, 2012.**



FSA ADOPTING GOVDELIVERY ELECTRONIC INFORMATION DELIVERY

The USDA Farm Service Agency offices are moving toward a “paperless” operation. County FSA Offices will be transitioning from mailing newsletters, reminder cards and other general information to electronic distribution of materials. County Committee ballots will continue to be mailed to all eligible producers.

FSA, like many other organizations, is trying to work smarter and be more efficient. Moving to electronic notifications via email will help conserve resources and save taxpayer dollars.

Interested producers may send their e-mail addresses to the Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough County FSA Office at: MBHCountyFSA@nh.usda.gov

Producers may also enroll in the new GovDelivery system at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe>.

CUSTOMER STATEMENT

January signals the beginning of a new year, and a time to starting thinking about filing taxes. Producers who have signed up for a USDA authentication Level 2 account will be able to access their farm data via their Customer Statement.

The Customer Statement puts a range of USDA services and programs into a single report that’s at your fingertips and available online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

It allows USDA customers to view their participation, application and payment status in various commodity and conservation programs; information on farm loans; and conservation plan and land unit information.

POWER OF ATTORNEY

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., FSA has a power of attorney form available that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. If you are interested, contact any Farm Service Agency office at 223-6003 for more information

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.

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

For more clarification on spousal signature authority, contact your local FSA office.

IRS FORM 1099-G

Producers annually receive CCC-1099-Gs detailing payments producers have received from the Commodity Credit Corporation. The annual report of program payments on CCC-1099-Gs is a service intended to help our customers report taxable income. It is not intended to replace the producers’ responsibilities to report income to IRS. FSA staff cannot interpret IRS regulations or advise producers about which payments to report on their income tax returns. However, county office staff can review payments for accuracy.

BANK ACCOUNT CHANGES

Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into your bank account. For timely payments to be made, producers need to notify the FSA office if the account has been changed or if another financial institution purchases your bank. Payments can be delayed if the FSA office is not aware of updates to your account and routing numbers.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium, poppies and other drug producing plants.

FARMING OPERATION CHANGES

If you have bought or sold land, or if you have added or dropped rented land from your operation, make sure you report the changes to the office as soon as possible. You need to provide a copy of your deed or recorded land contract for purchased property.

Failure to maintain accurate records with FSA on all land you have an interest in can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. Making the record changes now will save you time in the spring. Update signature authorization when changes in the operation occur.

Producers are reminded to contact the office of a change in operations on a farm so that records can be kept current and accurate.



Hispanic and Women Farmers Claims Process

A process to resolve the claims of Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who believe they were discriminated against when seeking USDA farm loans has been established.

If you believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) improperly denied farm loan benefits to you between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic, or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation.

For additional information on this and other settlement issues contact:

Hispanic and Women Farmer Claims Process:
www.farmerclaims.gov or call 1-888-508-4429

Pigford – The Black Farmers Discrimination Litigation: www.blackfarmercase.com or call 1-866-950-5547

Keepseagle - The Native American Farmers Class Action Settlement: www.IndianFarmClass.com or call 1-888-233-5506



CONGRATULATIONS TO SHERRY HARRIS!

On November 31, 2011 Sherrill (Sherry) Harris retired from her position as Farm Loan Manager of the NH Farm Loan Group. We are grateful for Sherry's over twenty-two years of dedicated service to the farm community. We wish her the very best in her retirement!

DATES TO REMEMBER

1/16/2012	Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday
1/31/2012	2011 LDP Sign-Up Deadline
2/20/2012	George Washington Holiday
3/15/2012	NAP Annual Spring Seeded Crop Deadline
5/28/2012	Memorial Day Holiday
6/1/2012	2010 SURE Sign-Up Deadline
6/1/2012	2012 DCP Sign-up Deadline
7/4/2012	Independence Day Holiday
7/14/2012	Acreage Report Deadline