



**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
Melinda Marston,
Program Technician
Anne Helmers,
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

**FSA OFFICES TO DISCONTINUE
MAILED PAPER NEWSLETTERS**

**GOVDELIVERY
SIGN UP NOW!**

This is the last paper version of the Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough County FSA newsletter we will be able mail to you. The USDA Farm Service Agency offices are moving toward a paperless operation. Producers are asked to enroll in the new GovDelivery system which provides notices, newsletters and reminders via electronic mail.

FSA, like many other organizations, is trying to work smarter and be more efficient. Moving to electronic notifications via e-mail will help conserve resources and save taxpayer dollars. Note that County Committee ballots will continue to be mailed to all eligible producers.

Producers can subscribe to receive free e-mail newsletters and other notifications electronically at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe> Please feel free to contact the FSA office at 223-6003 and we will be happy to assist you with sign up.

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.

This year an election will be held for a representative for LAA-1, which includes the towns of Alton, Barnstead, Center Harbor, Gilford, Gilmanton, Laconia, Meredith, New Hampton and Sanbornton. Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters on November 5 and must be returned to the FSA Office by December 3. Please vote!

CROP CERTIFICATION

The annual requirement of reporting your crops 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.

Thank you to all of our Producers for your cooperation during crop reporting /acreage reporting/ crop certification this year! The federal budget crunch significantly impacted our ability to make farm visits over the last two years. We appreciate the efforts made by all of our producers to report your crop acreage by visiting our office and/or corresponding with the office via phone, fax and e-mail.

**IMPORTANT CROP CERTIFICATION
DEADLINE CHANGES**

The producer certification deadline for Perennial Forage, Fall Forage Seeding, and Fall-Seeded Small Grains has changed. Forage crops for the 2013 growing season must be reported to your FSA County Offices by November 15, 2012. We will be contacting producers in the coming weeks to collect your 2013 Perennial Forage crop reports. Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this change in the 2013 crop reporting deadline.

HAY NET

Producers are encouraged to use Hay Net on the FSA website <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet> This online service allows producers with hay and those who need hay to post ads so they can make connections. Hay Net is a popular site for farmers and ranchers who have an emergency.

Individual ads can be posted free of charge by producers who complete a simple online registration form the first time they use the site.

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 2013 crop year coverage must be filed by the applicable crop's application closing date.

- **September 1, 2012** is the closing date to apply for 2013 NAP coverage for ornamental nursery, aquaculture, Christmas trees, floriculture, and fall seeded garlic;
- **September 30, 2012** is the closing date to apply for 2013 NAP coverage for forage crops;
- **November 20, 2012** is the closing date to apply for 2013 NAP coverage for perennial crops; and
- **December 1, 2012** is the closing date to apply for 2013 NAP coverage for Honey and Maple Sap.

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.

The CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and prevented planting and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. Timely filing of a Notice of Loss is required for all crops including grasses. For losses on crops covered by NAP, you must file a CCC-576, Notice of Loss, in the FSA County Office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent.

If filing for prevented planting, an acreage report and CCC-576 must be filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.

FSA FARM LOANS

The Farm Service Agency 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, or regularly borrow from 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 have a maximum limit of \$1,214,000. This makes the maximum combination of direct and guaranteed loan indebtedness \$1,514,000.

The one-time loan origination fee charged on FSA guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans is 1.5 percent of the guaranteed portion of the loan.

To find out more about FSA loan programs, contact the county office staff at 223-6003.

BEGINNING AND LIMITED RESOURCE LOANS

FSA has a program 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. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years;
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm;
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA;
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's median size.

Each member of an entity must meet the eligibility requirements. Loan approval is not guaranteed.

Additional program information, loan applications and other materials are available at the local USDA Service Center or visit www.fsa.usda.gov

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, 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.

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 \$5,000.

Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

Be a citizen of the United States 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; and 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.

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 settlement issue contact:

Hispanic and Women Farmer Claims Process:

www.farmerclaims.gov or call 1-888-508-4429

ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME

USDA and the Internal Revenue Service have established an electronic information exchange process for verifying compliance with the adjusted gross income (AGI) provisions for farm programs. Written consent is required from each producer or payment recipient for the tax review process. No actual tax data will be included in the report that IRS sends to FSA.

This ensures that payments are not issued to producers whose AGI exceeds certain limits. The limits set in the 2008 Farm Bill are \$500,000 nonfarm average AGI for commodity and disaster programs; \$750,000 farm average AGI for direct payments and; \$1 million nonfarm average AGI for conservation programs.

PAYMENT LIMITATIONS

Anyone that plans to participate in 2013 programs is required to submit a completed CCC-902, CCC-926, and CCC-901, if applicable, for payment eligibility and payment limitation purposes. The form used previously was called a CCC-502.

Contributions

All partners, stockholders or members with an ownership interest in the legal entity must make a contribution, whether compensated or **not** compensated, for active

personal labor, active personal management, or a combination of active personal labor and active personal management to the farming operation.

*Note: there are exceptions for spouses.

Additional information is available at FSA county offices or online at:

www.fsa.usda.gov

MILC PROGRAM

FSA's Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC) compensates dairy producers when domestic milk prices fall below a specified level. MILC payments are made when the Boston Class I milk price falls below \$16.94 per hundredweight (cwt) as adjusted by the dairy feed ration adjustment. The monthly Boston price is posted online at:

http://www.fmmone.com/Northeast_Order_Prices/NE_Prices_main_new.htm.

Eligible producers should submit the current MILC (Milk Income Loss Contract) statements for payment. Eligibility for 2012 must be completed before payments can be disbursed. Please contact the office to check the status of your eligibility. New producers are encouraged to apply for the program any time before Sept. 30, 2012.

SODBUSTING

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 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.

HIGHLY ERODIBLE LANDS AND WETLAND COMPLIANCE

Producers participating in most programs administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) are required to abide by certain conditions on any land owned or farmed that is highly erodible or that is considered a wetland.

To be in compliance with the highly erodible land conservation and wetland conservation provisions, producers must agree, that they will not:

- Produce an agricultural commodity on highly erodible land without a conservation system;
- Plant an agricultural commodity on a converted wetland;
- Convert a wetland to make possible the production of an agricultural commodity.

Producers planning to remove fence rows, convert woodlots to cropland, combine crop fields, divide a crop field into two or more fields, install new drainage, or improve or modify existing drainage, must notify the FSA and update Form AD-1026. FSA will notify NRCS and NRCS will then provide highly erodible land or wetland technical determinations.

To get additional information on highly erodible land and wetland conservation compliance contact the FSA office or the NRCS office at a local USDA Service Center. Additional information about FSA conservation programs can be found online at www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation, and information on NRCS programs can be found at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>

SUCCESSOR-IN-INTEREST

Many FSA programs will allow payments to be made to heirs or successors when a program participant passes away. Additionally, contracts in programs such as CRP must be revised to reflect the successor(s) to a deceased participant's interest.

In the event of an FSA program participant's death, it is important that FSA be notified. Entities and joint operations that participate in FSA programs also need to notify FSA if a shareholder or member passes away. FSA benefits are reported to IRS and maintaining current, accurate records about participants is vital to ensuring that those payments are reported correctly.



THE PURPOSE OF THE FSA

The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Farm Service Agency (FSA) helps to keep America's farmers and ranchers in businesses as they face 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.

DISASTER ASSISTANCE

The Farm Service Agency would like to remind both crop and live-stock producers and owners of nonindustrial private forest land that programs are available to assist with disaster related recovery. If your agricultural operation or nonindustrial private forest land has recently experienced severe damage from a storm, flooding, wind, or other natural disaster there may be a FSA program to provide you with financial or technical assistance.

Disaster programs include the Noninsured Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), and the Emergency Forest Conservation Program (EFRP). NAP provides financial assistance for crop losses due to natural disaster for those crops for which crop insurance is not available. ECP provides emergency funding and technical assistance to farmers to rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disaster. You must sign up for the NAP program in advance. EFRP provides funding to restore forestland damaged by natural disaster. ECP and EFRP are for instances where damage is so costly to rehabilitate that Federal assistance is required to restore the land productive agricultural use (for ECP) or complete the restoration (for EFRP).

DATES TO REMEMBER

9/1/2012	NAP application deadline for 2013 coverage for ornamental nursery, aquaculture, Christmas trees, floriculture, and fall seeded garlic
9/30/2012	NAP application deadline for 2013 coverage for forage crops
11/5/2012	Election Ballots Mailed
11/15/2012	Crop Reporting Deadline for 2013 perennial forage, fall forage seeding, and fall seeded small grains
11/20/2012	NAP application deadline for 2013 perennial crops
12/1/2012	NAP application deadline for 2013 maple sap and honey
12/3/2012	Last day to return ballots to the local FSA Office
1/1/2013	Elected committee member and alternate take office
3/16/2012	NAP application deadline for 2013 annual spring seeded crops