

U.S. Department

of Agriculture

Rockingham & Strafford

County FSA

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Epping, NH 03042

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Hours

Monday - Friday

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

Excluding Federal Holidays

Farm Service Agency

County Committee

Richard Babcock, Chair

Judith Merrill, Vice-chair

Wayne Elwood

Katherine McPhee

Steven Panish

COC Meetings:

Wed. Mar. 9 @ 12:30

Wed. Apr. 13 @ 12:30

Wed. May 11@ 12:30

County Executive Director

Linda Pearson (ext 111)

linda.pearson@nh.usda.gov

Program Staff

Carol Sargent, PT (ext 100)

carol.sargent@nh.usda.gov

Farm Loan Manager

Sherrill Harris

(603)223-6003

sherrill.harris@nh.usda.gov

Dates to Remember

Feb. 1-28: Sorghum

Referendum

Feb. 21: Washington's

Birthday Office Closed

Mar. 15: NAP deadline

for annual crops

Mar. 14 - Apr. 15:CRP

sign-up

Ongoing: Continuous CRP

sign-up

County Committee Election

Congratulations to the newest members of the Rockingham-Strafford County Committee. Wayne Elwood was elected to represent the LAA 4 towns of Atkinson, Auburn, Brentwood, Chester, Danville, Derry, Fremont, Hampstead, Kingston, Londonderry, Newton, Plaistow, Salem, Sandown, and Windham. Steven Panish will represent the towns of Farmington, Middleton, Milton, New Durham and Strafford in LAA 1.

Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation Compliance

Highly erodible land conservation (HELC) compliance is required to earn benefits for all USDA programs. Producers with highly erodible soils need to be aware of tillage, crop residue and rotation requirements. If you have any questions about your land, call the Natural Resources Conservation Service office (NRCS) at 679-1587 **before** you begin work on any of the following: clear timber areas to create or expand existing crop areas, convert existing pasture to crops, crop acres that have not been cropped in recent years, or drain a wet spot in a field to make cropping easier.

Foreign Owners Notification The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county to report the transaction to the Secretary of Agriculture, through the Farm service Agency, within 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form FSA-153, can result in civil penalties of up to 25% of the fair market value of the property.

County government offices, Realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of the reporting requirement

2011 DCP Signup

Enrollment for the 2011 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) has begun and will continue through June 1, 2011.

USDA computes DCP Program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2011, eligible producers may request partial direct payments as an advance on the total amount.

Thank You !!

A huge thank you to both Phil Fernando and Ruth Scruton, our retiring committee members. Their expertise in various aspects of farming served the committee and the farmers they represented well during their tenure.

IRS Form 1099-G

Producers annually receive CCC-1099-Gs detailing payments they 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.

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.

Sorghum Check-off

Referendum

USDA will conduct a referendum on the Sorghum Check off Program Feb. 1-28, 2011, at Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices. Any eligible person engaged in the production or importation of sorghum from July 1, 2008, to December 31, 2010, is eligible to participate. Individuals are required at the time of voting, to provide documentation such as a sales receipt or a remittance form that shows they engaged in the production or importation of sorghum.

Ballots may be obtained in person, by mail or facsimile at county FSA offices, or via the Internet at:

www.ams.usda.gov/sorghumpage

SURE

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disaster through September 30, 2011. To be eligible for SURE payments, a producer is required to obtain crop insurance on all crops in all counties or, if crop insurance is not available, to participate in the Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) except for grazed acreage. However, crop insurance or NAP coverage is no longer required for crops that are not of economic significance or those where the administrative fee required to buy NAP coverage exceeds 10% of the value of the coverage.

Eligible farmers who meet the definition of Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, or Beginning Farmer or Rancher are exempt from the risk management purchase requirement.

The following are the conditions that trigger SURE payments:

- at least one crop of economic significance must suffer a 10% production loss due to an eligible disaster condition
- a crop of economic significance is a crop that has contributed or would have contributed at least 5% or more of the total expected revenue from all crops on the farm
- producers in counties declared disaster counties by the Secretary of Agriculture, or in contiguous counties, or those who show proof of an individual loss of at least 50% are eligible to receive SURE payments for crop production or crop quality losses. Losses are measured with consideration to the whole-farm revenue, which includes crop insurance indemnities and commodity program payments, so that producers are not paid more than once for the same loss.

If you would like additional clarification call or stop by your local FSA office.

TAA—Trade Adjustment Act for Lobster

Those who applied and were approved to participate in the TAA for Lobster should attend in person or complete the 4 hour training online. If you wish to attend in person, the following meetings have been scheduled at the Urban Forestry Center in Portsmouth:

Fri. February 18, 2011

Thurs. February 24, 2011

Wed. March 9, 2011

All meetings will take place between 6 and 8pm. Additional information can be found at: [http://](http://nhsustainablefisheries.blogspot.com/p/lobster-taa.html)

nhsustainablefisheries.blogspot.com/p/lobster-taa.html

If you wish to complete the required training online, the website is: www.TAAforFarmers.org. To complete online training you will need to set up a user account. Your account will require you to fill out the training course information under the exact name and address in which you applied for the program. You will be required to enter the last four digits of your social security number or employer ID number.

Loans for Aquaculture

Loans are available for the husbandry of any aquatic organisms, including fish, mollusks, crustaceans or other invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, or aquatic plants, raised in a controlled or selected environment of which the applicant has exclusive rights to use. Loans cannot be made for aquatic organisms or their products for which there is no established market or that are ordinarily used for pets and not typically associated with human consumption.

If you are interested in more information on Aquaculture loans please give the Farm Loan Office a call at 603-223-6003.

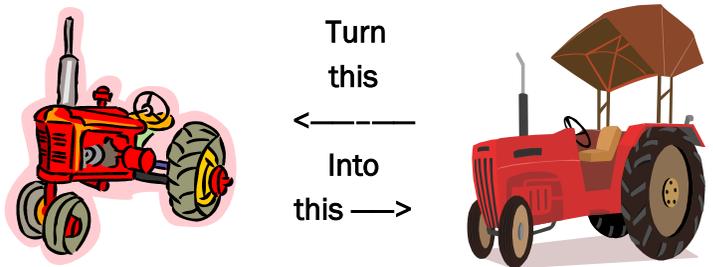
New Hampshire Rollover Protection System Program Rebate:

Farmers are eight times more likely to be killed on the job than other American workers, and tractor rollover is the number one cause of farming fatalities. But a rollover protection system (ROPS) and seatbelt are 99% effective in preventing these deaths. Yet many older tractors in use on New Hampshire farms are not equipped with ROPS, also known as roll bars.

In partnership with the New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health, UNH Cooperative Extension, and N.H. Farm and Rural Education Foundation, the N.H. Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food is bringing a ROPS Retrofit Rebate Program to New Hampshire.

With this program, farmers will receive a 70% rebate for the cost of their ROPS, up to \$765. Farmers will also get help finding the appropriate ROPS and assistance ordering the equipment.

For more information about ROPS or to register for the program, call toll-free **1-877-ROPS-R4U** or visit www.ropsr4u.com.



Adjusted Gross Income

USDA has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Internal Revenue Service to establish 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 USDA. The agreement 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.

Participants in CCC programs subject to average AGI rules must submit form CCC-927 (Individual) and/or CCC-928 (Legal Entity) to the Internal Revenue Service by June 15.

These forms may be obtained from local FSA and NRCS offices or online at: <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainservlet>.

Rockingham/Strafford County FSA Office
Knightly Plaza
629 Calef Highway, Suite 203
Epping, NH 03042



United States
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of Agriculture

FSA Standard Rate
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Return Service Requested

Paper Check Conversion – Over the Counter (PCC –OTC)

Over the next year, FSA/CCC is moving toward an electronic method for processing producers' checks.

This will allow FSA/CCC to process collections faster. When producers present checks, either in person or through the mail, the checks will be converted into an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). The funds will be debited from the producer's account, usually within 24 hours of receipt. Please see the U.S. Department of Treasury legal notices posted in the Service Center or visit the following

U.S. Department of Treasury Internet site for detailed information: <https://www.pccotc.gov/pccotc/pcc/usingpcc/Legal%20Notices/legalnotices.htm>

What is PCC - OTC?

PCC – OTC is a process for converting paper checks presented to FSA into electronic debits to the producer's bank account. It presents many benefits, such as reducing lost/misplaced checks and paper handling. This improves customer relations, speeds the check clearing process, and reduces the potential for human error.

How will my checks be handled?

If the check is presented in person, the check will be scanned into the system, voided, and stamped with the words, "Electronically Processed" or "Electronically Presented" and the voided check will be returned to the customer. If the check is mailed to FSA, the check will be scanned into the system and voided. The customer will not receive the check back from FSA. FSA will hold checks for up to 14 calendar days to ensure that the item was successfully processed, and then FSA will shred the check.

"The U.S. Dept of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all of 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, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (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 to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

How quickly will funds be transferred from my account?

The transfer of funds from your account could occur within 24 hours. Therefore, you should be sure that you have sufficient funds in your account to process the transaction. If you do **not** have sufficient funds, we may initiate the transaction again.

How will this transaction appear on my account statement?

The transfer of funds will be reflected on your account statement. The transaction may be recorded in a different place on your statement than where your checks normally appear, such as under "other withdrawals" or "other transactions".

What are my rights if there is a problem with the transaction?

You have protections under Federal law for an unauthorized electronic fund transfer from your account.

You should contact your financial institution immediately if you believe that the transaction reported on your account statement was not properly authorized or is otherwise incorrect.



Facility Loans

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency Farm Storage Facility Loan Program provides low-interest financing for producers to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities. The FSA is authorized to implement the program through USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation.

The following commodities are eligible for farm storage facility loans:

- Corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley or minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain
- Corn, grain sorghum, wheat, oats or barley harvested as other-than-whole grain
- Pulse crops – lentils, chickpeas and dry peas
- Hay
- Renewable biomass
- Fruits (includes nuts) and vegetables – cold storage facilities

An FSA farm storage facility loan must be approved by the local FSA county committee before any site preparation and/or construction can be started.

The following types of facilities and upgrades are eligible for farm storage facility loans:

- New conventional cribs or bins designed and engineered for whole grain storage having a useful life of at least 15 years.
- New oxygen-limiting structures and remanufactured oxygen-limiting structures built to original manufacturer's specifications and other upright silo-type structures designed for whole grain wet storage having a useful life of at least 15 years.
- New flat-type storage structures, with permanent floors and bulkheads, designed and primarily used to store whole grain for the loan term.
- New electrical equipment integral to the proper operation of the grain storage and handling equipment, excluding the installation of electrical service to the electrical meter.
- New safety equipment, as required by CCC and meeting the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements, such as interior and exterior ladders and lighting.
- New equipment to improve, maintain or monitor the quality of stored grain, such as cleaners, moisture testers, and heat detectors, installed in conjunction with a proposed storage facility.
- New concrete foundations, aprons, pits, and pads, including site preparation, labor and material, essential to the proper operation of the grain storage and handling equipment.
- Renovation of existing farm storage facilities, under certain circumstances, if the renovation is for maintaining or that have a useful life of at least 15 years.
- New permanently affixed grain handling and grain drying equipment determined by CCC to be needed and essential to the proper operation of a grain storage system (with or without a loan for the storage facility).

More information about the Farm Facility loan can be found at the following website at your local FSA office or at http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/fsfl09.pdf

Farm Loan Program

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 can reach a maximum indebtedness of \$1,119,000. Producers are encouraged to apply early so that a loan can be processed and funded in a timely manner.

Conservation Loan Program

The Conservation Loan (CL) Program provides farmers with the funding necessary to implement conservation measures on their land. The available limit for a direct CL is \$300,000, and the limit for a guaranteed CL is \$1,119,000.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will work with applicants to develop a conservation plan containing approved conservation practices. Examples of some conservation practices are: water conservation structures, forest cover, permanent pastures, manure digesters, and other installations.

Rural Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency 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.

For more information on loans, call the Merrimack County office at 603-223-6003. To find out more about FSA loan programs, contact the county office staff.

CRP General Signup Announced

The general signup for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) will begin on March 14, 2011, and continue through April 15, 2011. During the signup period, farmers may offer eligible land for CRP's competitive general signup at their county Farm Service Agency (FSA) office.

Land currently not enrolled in CRP may be offered in this signup provided all eligibility requirements are met. Additionally, current CRP participants with contracts expiring this fall may make new contract offers. Contracts awarded under this signup are scheduled to become effective Oct. 1, 2011.

FSA will evaluate and rank eligible CRP offers using an Environmental Benefits Index (EBI) that shows the environmental benefits to be gained from enrolling the land in CRP. The EBI consists of five environmental factors (wildlife, water, soil, air and enduring benefits) and cost. Decisions on the EBI cutoff will be made after the sign-up ends and after analyzing the EBI data of all the offers.

In addition to the general sign-up, CRP's continuous sign-up program will be ongoing. Continuous acres represent the most environmentally desirable and sensitive land. For more information, visit <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/crp>, or contact your local New Hampshire USDA Service Center.