



Caledonia/Essex County Updates

June 2009

Farm Service Agency

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St. Johnsbury, VT 05819

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Hours

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

County Committee

Burt Patenaude, Chair
Robert Porter, Vice Chair
William Nelson, Member
Michael Tanguay, Member
Darcy Smart, Advisor

**COC meets 2nd Thursday
of each month at 10:30 am**

County Executive Director

Patricia Passut, ext 104
patricia.passut@vt.usda.gov

Program Staff

Patty Matte, ext 100

Farm Loan Staff

**(802) 334-6090 or
1-866-241-2190** (toll free)
Brian Kuper, FLM
Dorcas McAllister, FLO

NRCS Staff

www.nrcs.usda.gov
Tim McKay, ext 109
Nick Comerchi, ext 101
Jacob Clough, ext 117

NRCD Staff

Kerry O'Brien, ext 110
Tamara Stevens, ext 114
Brandon Carpenter, ext 106

Rural Development

www.rd.usda.gov
Steve Campbell, ext 102
Mark Koprowski, ext 120
Suzanne Smith, ext 112



2009 County Committee Elections

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency county committees is important to ALL farmers and ranchers, whether beginning or long-established, with large or small operations. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

County committee members are a critical component of the operations of FSA. They help deliver FSA farm programs at the local level. Farmers and ranchers who serve on county committees help with the decisions necessary to administer the programs in their counties. They work to make FSA agricultural programs serve the needs of local producers.

FSA county committees operate within official regulations to carry out federal laws. County committee members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions.

Nominations for candidates to run for the Farm Service Agency County Committee election will be accepted from **June 15 through Aug. 3, 2009.**

The election this year is for Local Administrative Area (LAA) #1 and LAA #5.

LAA #1 includes the towns of

Hardwick Sutton
Sheffield Walden
Stannard Wheelock

LAA #5 includes the towns of

Brunswick Granby
Concord Lunenburg
East Haven Maidstone
Guildhall Victory

Candidate Eligibility --To hold office as a county committee member, a person must meet the basic eligibility criteria:

- Participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA
- Be eligible to vote in a county committee election
- Reside in the LAA in which the person is a candidate
- Not have been:
 - Removed or disqualified from the office of county committee member, alternate or employee
 - Removed for cause from any public office or have been convicted of fraud, larceny, embezzlement or any other felony
 - Dishonorably discharged from any branch of the armed services.

Individuals may nominate themselves or others as candidates. Also, organizations representing socially disadvantaged minorities and women farmers or ranchers may also nominate candidates. To be valid, the nomination form must be signed by the person being nominated, indicating agreement to serve if elected, and returned to the FSA county office by the close of business on Aug. 3, or postmarked by midnight Aug. 3.

A nomination form, FSA-669A, is included in this newsletter. Additional forms and details may be picked up at your local FSA county office or downloaded from <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA> under News & Events/County Committee Elections.

Important dates for this year's election:

- ✓ June 15 Nomination period begins
- ✓ Aug. 3 Deadline to submit nomination forms
- ✓ Nov. 6 Ballots mailed to eligible voters

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 Load 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 is **June 30 for small grains** and **July 15 for all other crops.**

Planting Dates -- Please keep track of your planting dates as these are needed when you certify your crop acreage. Those dates are helpful to you in the event of a disaster program. Planting dates are required for farmers enrolled in NAP and crop insurance.

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.

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.



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) Updates

For each month that there is a payment rate, our goal is to process payments so the direct deposit will be in your account by the fifth of the month. The disbursement statement will be mailed from the National Payment Service Center. We have been told it can take up to 2 weeks before receiving the statement. If you would like to confirm the payment amount in the meantime, feel free to either check with the bank or call the FSA office.

Loan Applications Being Accepted for New Agricultural Stimulus Financing

Vermont farmers may apply immediately for the new agricultural stimulus financing available through VEDA's farm lending program, the Vermont Agricultural Credit Corporation (VACC). VACC has up to \$6 million in low-interest financing available, made possible by \$1 million in federal economic stimulus funds from VT's share of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The new loan funding is available to help farmers with this season's operational costs- feed, seed, fertilizer or other needs, or to refinance prior years' operating costs. The stimulus financing has a variable rate, now at 2%. The term for the financing is generally 2 year and the maximum loan amount is \$100,000.

To learn more, VT farmers in need of financing are encouraged to speak with one of VACC's experienced farm lenders by calling 1-866-828-3276. Detailed information about the program is available at www.veda.org.

Gleaning in the Northeast Kingdom

Efforts are being made to start a farm gleaning network in the Northeast Kingdom. This network involves local farmers, volunteers, and area food shelves. Farmers can contact the coordinator, **Sarah Damsell**, when they have excess/unmarketable goods, which will be gleaned by volunteers on the farm and then donated.

To learn more about utilizing this service and other ways you help please call **802.673.5379** or email sarahdamsell@yahoo.com.

DCP and ACRE Sign UP

Signup for the 2009 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment (DCP) Program has been **extended until August 14, 2009**. FSA will not accept any late-filed applications. Signup in the ACRE option is also available through **August 14, 2009**.

The Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) is a new program authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill. Under the ACRE Program, eligible producers may receive revenue-based payments as an alternative to receiving price-based counter-cyclical payments.

Producers who elect the ACRE program for a farm agree to:

- forgo counter-cyclical payments;
- accept a 20-percent reduction of the direct payments; and
- accept a 30-percent reduction in loan rates for all commodities produced on the farm

Only farms with covered commodity base acres may participate in the ACRE Program. Farms that are already enrolled in the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program (DCP) may elect to switch to ACRE before the end of signup.

Commodities eligible for ACRE payments include wheat, corn, grain sorghum, barley, oats, soybeans, sunflower seed, canola, flaxseed, safflower, mustard seed, rapeseed, sesame seed, crambe, dry peas, lentils, small chickpeas and large chickpeas, and additional crops.

More information and an ACRE calculator spreadsheet is located on the FSA website <http://www.fsa.usda.gov> under the heading Direct and Counter Cyclical Program/ACRE.

Dates to Remember

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|----------------|--|
| <u>June 15</u> | COC nomination opens |
| <u>June 30</u> | Acreage reporting deadline for small grains |
| <u>July 3</u> | Independence Day (observed) – Office closed |
| <u>July 15</u> | Acreage reporting deadline for all other crops |
| <u>Aug 3</u> | COC nomination deadline |
| <u>Aug 14</u> | DCP / ACRE enrollment deadline |
| <u>Ongoing</u> | Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL)
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) sign-up |