



Caledonia/Essex County Updates

August 2010

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
Darcy Smart, Member
Heather Trudeau, Member

**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
Meghan Dubois, FLO

NRCS Staff

www.nrcs.usda.gov
Nick Comerchi, ext 101
Jacob Clough, ext 117
Brandon Carpenter, ext 106

NRCD Staff

Kerry O'Brien, ext 110
Tamara Stevens, ext 114

Rural Development

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



Reminder!

You can still elect to receive an advance payment on your 2010 DCP contract.

CRP General Sign-up 39 now through August 27th

General sign-up 39 for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is now open and will continue through August 27, 2010. During the sign-up period, farmers and ranchers may offer eligible land for CRP's competitive general sign-up. FSA will accept offers only during the sign-up period.

CRP provides conservation practices that preserve the soil, clean water, and restore wildlife habitat. Producers enrolling in CRP plant long-term, resource-conserving covers in exchange for annual rental payments, cost-share, and technical assistance. Participants voluntarily remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production by entering into long-term contracts for 10 to 15 years.

FSA will rank offers according to the Environmental Benefits Index (EBI). FSA collects data (primarily based on location, soils information and desired conservation practice) on environmental indices for the land offered. Each eligible offer is ranked in comparison to all other offers and selects from that ranking. After the sign-up ends, the Secretary will decide where to make the EBI cutoff. Producers may consult with local FSA and NRCS staff on how to maximize EBI points and increase the likelihood that their offer will be accepted.

Reminder to Report Disasters and Adverse Weather Conditions

One of the responsibilities of the COC is to *document weather conditions, occurrences, and cropping progression* throughout the area at their regularly scheduled monthly meetings. This documentation becomes an *official record* that can be used to justify requests for disaster declaration and may lead to eligibility for various disaster programs.



The best source of local information is you, the producer. If there is an adverse weather event in your area or your crops are suffering, we would appreciate it if you take the time to let us know.

Those with NAP coverage, don't forget to timely report all covered losses. If you feel there is a problem brewing, report it! ***Be proactive and communicate your observations and situations; it can only help!***

Tree Assistance Program (TAP)

The Tree Assistance Program (TAP) provides disaster assistance to eligible orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate trees, bushes, and vines lost or damaged due to an eligible natural disaster, such as plant disease, insect infestation, drought, fire, freeze, flood, earthquake, lightning, or other occurrences, as determined by the Secretary.

An eligible owner of trees, bushes, or vines, or a contract grower with a claim to ownership share in the crop, **MUST** have been located in an administrative county affected by an eligible natural disaster.

The trees, bushes, and vines that are eligible for TAP, except for Christmas trees and nursery, are **NOT** required to have a policy or plan of insurance or NAP; however, the crop from the tree, bush, or vine **MUST** be insured.

Producer must sustain 15% mortality PLUS normal mortality (Vermont determined a 10% loss is expected each year as normal). This means that the producer has to sustain a 25% loss before any benefits can be considered.

Applicants who suffered eligible tree, bush, and vine losses after May 7, 2010, must file FSA-899 and supporting documentation within 90 calendar days from the following:

- occurrence of the disaster event,
- date that the loss of trees, bushes, or vines became apparent to producer.

For additional information of this program, please call the county office.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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SURE Program – 2008 Application Deadline

Sept 30, 2010

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters that occurred in crop years 2008 through 2011.

September 30, 2010 is the application deadline for 2008 SURE program payments.

Here are some specifics--All your crops in all counties must have been insured (either through RMA or NAP). At least one crop of economic significance must have suffered a 10% production loss due to an eligible disaster condition.

Call the office to see if you meet the quality loss factors and what you need to provide for production records.

Dates to Remember

<u>Aug 2-27</u>	CRP General Signup 39
<u>Aug 26</u>	Women's Equality Day
<u>Sept 6</u>	Office Closed – Labor Day
<u>Sept 8</u>	Office Closed – All Employee Meeting
<u>Sept 30</u>	SURE Deadline for 2008 crops
<u>Ongoing</u>	Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL) Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) sign-up

Debt for Nature Program (DFN)

The Debt for Nature Program (DFN), also known as the Debt Cancellation Conservation Contract Program, is a unique program for eligible landowners that protects important natural resources and other sensitive areas while providing a debt management tool.

Debt for Nature is available to persons with Farm Service Agency (FSA) direct loans secured by real estate. These individuals may qualify for cancellation of a portion of their FSA indebtedness in exchange for a conservation contract with a term of 50, 30, or 10 years. The conservation contract is a voluntary legal agreement that restricts the type and amount of development that may take place on portions of the landowner's property. Contracts may be established on marginal cropland and other environmentally sensitive lands for conservation, recreation, and wildlife purposes.

By participating in this program, direct loan customers may reduce their Farm Service Agency debt, thereby improving their overall financial stability.

For more information contact your local FSA loan Office:

- Middlebury, VT 802 388-6748 888-408-3783
- St Albans, VT 802 527-1296 800-717-8637
- Newport, VT 802 334-6090 866-241-2190
- White River Jct., VT 802 295-7942 800-789-6713