



## Caledonia/Essex Service Center

**November 2010**

**Farm Service Agency**  
481 Summer St., Ste 201  
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819

Phone (802) 748-2641  
(802) 748-3885  
(802) 748-8746  
In VT 1-800-862-1121  
Fax (802) 748-1621  
www.fsa.usda.gov

**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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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**  
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**  
Steve Campbell, ext 102  
Mark Koprowski, ext 120  
Suzanne Smith, ext 112

## NAP Coverage – Deadline November 20<sup>th</sup> for hay!

The Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) was designed to reduce financial losses that occur when natural disasters cause a catastrophic loss of production or prevented planting of an eligible crop by providing coverage equivalent to catastrophic (CAT) insurance.

In the 2008 Farm Bill; in general, the term "farm" means the sum of all crop acreage in all counties/states that is planted or intended to be planted for harvest by the eligible producer. In the case of honey, the term "farm" means all bees and beehives in all counties that are intended to be harvested for a honey crop by the eligible producer.

The 2008 Farm Bill created five new disaster programs. These programs include:

- Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP)
- Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP)
- Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)
- Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) Program
- Tree Assistance Program (TAP)

**To be eligible for these programs, producers must purchase at least catastrophic risk protection (CAT) level of crop insurance for all insurable crops and/or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for all non-insurable crops.**

➡ **The deadline to purchase 2011 NAP coverage for perennial and forage crops is Nov 20, 2010.**

NAP coverage costs \$250 per crop, but not more than \$750 per producer per county. ◀

## Voting for County Committee Begins

Ballots for this year's county committee election will be mailed to eligible voters on November 5, 2010. Voters must complete their ballots and return them to the Farm Service Agency county office by the close of business on December 6, 2010. If mailed, ballots must be postmarked by midnight December 6, 2010.

The election this year is for Local Administrative Area (LAA) #2 which includes the towns of Burke, Kirby, Lyndon, Newark, St Johnsbury, and Waterford. This year the candidates are **Gregory Gilman, Burt Patenaude, Karl Sjolander, and Roger Sylvain.**

Eligible voters in the local administrative who have not received a ballot should contact the FSA county office staff.

**Voter Requirements** Persons meeting requirements in **1 or 2, plus 3**, below, is eligible to vote:

1. Be of legal voting age and have an interest in a farm or ranch as either of the following:
  - an owner, operator, tenant or sharecropper, *or*
  - a partner in a general partnership or member of a joint venture that has an interest in a farm as an owner, operator, tenant or sharecropper; or
2. Not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations on an entire farm; *and*
3. Eligible to participate in any FSA program that is provided by law, regardless of the status of funding.

**Discrimination Prohibited** No person shall be denied the right to vote because of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital or family status.

## CCC-927 or CCC-928 Must Be Sent To IRS

Producers who participated in 2009 or 2010 programs subject to adjusted gross income limitations (AGI) had to certify compliance with AGI rules. The average AGI verification process for 2009 and 2010 payment eligibility requires all program participants to provide written consent to IRS for the disclosure of certain information to FSA.

On October 6, 2010, a letter was mailed to producers who have not submitted:

- **CCC-927:** “Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information-Individual Form” and/or
- **CCC-928:** “Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information-Legal Entity”

Individuals and legal entities, including members of legal entities, that certified to average AGI compliance for 2009 and/or 2010 payment eligibility must submit a completed CCC-927 or CCC-928 to IRS regardless of whether they received program benefits directly or as a member of a joint operation or entity. These forms must be submitted to IRS in order to avoid a demand for refund of program payments and benefits received.

## Farm Safety Tips

- Don't wear loose clothing around moving machine parts like PTOs, or while entering confined spaces such as grain bins or silos.
- Use seat belts while operating farm machinery.
- Do not allow additional passengers on the tractor with you.
- Be a role model for your children by practicing safety and obeying laws.
- Noise is a common factor in farm-related injuries and can lead to hearing loss. Wear ear protection while working around loud noise.



## FSA Conservation Loan Program

The Farm Service Agency makes and guarantees conservation loans on farms and ranches to help conserve our natural resources. The Conservation Loan (CL) Program provides farmers with the credit necessary to implement conservation measures on their land.

The direct CLs loan limit is up to \$300,000 and guaranteed CLs up to \$1,119,000 (amount adjusted for inflation), may be available by applying with lenders working with FSA to obtain a guarantee.

Applicants will work with Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS) Staff to develop a conservation plan. Conservation practices must be approved by NRCS before FSA can provide financing. Examples of conservation practices include installation of conservation structures, establishment of forest cover, installation of water conservation measures, establishment or improvement of permanent pastures, transitioning to organic production, manure management, including manure digestion systems, etc.

## Beginning and Limited Resource Farmers

FSA assists 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 average size.

Additional information, loan applications, and other materials are available by calling the loan staff toll free at 1-866-241-2190 or you may also visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

## 2011 Conservation Tillage Payments Available!

Hurry! Sign up by November 22<sup>nd</sup>

Spring Conservation Tillage incentive payments are now available to farmers cropping field corn, perennial forages, or vegetables in Caledonia County. In tandem with the state's Farm Agronomic Practices (FAP) programs, incentive payments can be up to \$37/acre for implementing alternative manure incorporation practices and up to \$24/acre for implementing minimum tillage practices. Call Kerry at 748-3885 x110 or email [kerry.obrien@vt.nacdnet.net](mailto:kerry.obrien@vt.nacdnet.net) for more information.

Happy Thanksgiving

From the staff at the  
USDA Service Center



## 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>  
**Note:** FSA/CCC will begin this process in the coming months.

### 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.

### 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.

## New Financial Management Web Page Available for Producers

Producers who have level 2 e-authentication access can use the new Public Financial Management Information web page. The website allows producers to generate reports that show both current and historical financial information. This resource will allow users to view details on payments, collections and outstanding debt. The website is a great tool for producers to conveniently access financial information at any time. To view the Financial Management Information web page, visit <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/fmi>. Please contact your county office if you have any questions regarding the web page.

**Note:** Website use requires level 2 e-authentication access. Follow the steps below to obtain level 2 access . . .

1. Go to [www.eauth.egov.usda.gov](http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov), complete a customer profile and submit it online
2. After submitting your customer profile, you will receive a confirmation email, and you must respond to it within 7 days to activate your account
3. Then you must complete the "Identity Proofing" process by visiting a local USDA Service Center and presenting a photo ID, such as your driver's license.

Return Service Requested



## Sign up for a FREE Farm Energy Audit

Agricultural Energy Management Plans (AgEMP) will once again be available through the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Vermont.

An AgEMP is an analysis of current farm infrastructure and management with recommendations on how you can be more energy efficient and save on your energy costs. It will also identify financial assistance opportunities for implementation that are appropriate to your particular situation. Plans can be developed for field crop systems, greenhouses, dairy barns, milk houses, maple sugar operations, and more.

Your AgEMP will be developed by a qualified professional (Technical Service Provider or TSP) registered with USDA. Eligible producers will receive a payment from NRCS, and Efficiency Vermont will pay the balance due – so your AgEMP is FREE! AgEMPs are on a first-come first-served basis (depending on funding availability) as the applications are received and certified as eligible.

Contact EnSave (the TSP for AgEMPs in VT) at 1-800-732-1399 for more details. Questions? Contact Bob Kort, Civil Engineer, NRCS-VT, 802-951-6796 x233 or [Bob.Kort@vt.usda.gov](mailto:Bob.Kort@vt.usda.gov)

### Selected Interest Rates for November 2010

Farm Operating – Direct	2.000%
Farm Ownership - Direct	4.125%
Limited Resource	5.000%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.500%
Emergency	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility – 7 year	1.875%
Farm Storage Facility – 10 year	2.500%
Farm Storage Facility – 12 year	2.750%

### Dates to Remember

Nov. 5	COC Election Ballots mailed
Nov. 11	Veterans Day – Office Closed
Nov. 20	NAP Fees Due – <b>2011 Mixed Forage &amp; Perennials, Fruit trees, bushes &amp; grains</b>
Nov. 25	Thanksgiving Day – Office Closed
Dec. 1	NAP Fees Due – <b>Honey</b>
Dec. 6	Deadline to return COC Election Ballots
Dec. 24	Christmas Holiday – Office Closed
Dec. 31	New Year’s Holiday – Office Closed
Jan. 1, 2011	NAP Fees Due – <b>Maple Sap</b>
Ongoing	Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL)
	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)