



April 2007

## FSA Updates

Chittenden/Washington  
County  
USDA Service Center

**Chittenden/Washington  
County FSA**  
802-865-7895 x4  
800-910-2035 x4  
802-865-7947 (fax)  
www.fsa.usda.gov/VT

### Hours

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

### County Committee

John Rowley, Jr., LAA-1  
Claude Lapierre, LAA-2  
Deborah Conant, LAA-3  
Kendall Maynard, LAA-4  
Walter Bothfeld, LAA-5

### Upcoming County Committee Meeting Dates

April 18, 2007  
May 23, 2007

### Program Staff

Lawrence Parker x12  
Eileen Powers x16  
Pearl Wells x10

### Loan Staff

Bradford Parker x16

### Natural Resources Conservation Service

Caroline Alves x23  
Tate Jeffrey x19  
Michel Lapointe x18  
Danny Peet x22  
Norman Smith x17

### Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District

Jessica Andreoletti x14

## DCP Enrollment Deadline Extended To August 3, 2007

FSA Administrator Teresa Lasseter recently announced that FSA has extended the sign-up deadline for the 2007 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) to Aug. 3, 2007.

Problems with the FSA's web-based computer system caused agency officials to extend the deadline in order to ensure adequate opportunity for all producers to participate in the sign-up. While the sign-up deadline is extended, the cut-off for participation remains Sept. 30, 2007. Those producers failing to sign up by Aug. 3, 2007, but before Sept. 30, will pay a late-file fee of \$100.

Enrollment in DCP for the 2007 contract period began Oct. 1, 2006, and was scheduled to end on June 1, 2007. The extension applies only to the enrollment period, and does not extend the DCP contract period.

DCP provides payments to eligible producers on farms enrolled for the 2002 through 2007 crop years. There are two types of DCP payments - direct payments and counter-cyclical payments. Both are computed using the base acres and payment yields established for the farm. The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 authorizes DCP, which is administered by FSA.

## Beginning, Small and Limited Resource Farmers & Ranchers: Do You Require Financial Assistance to Fund Conservation Program Initiatives?

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Farm Service Agency (FSA) have worked together to make conservation

programs more available to beginning, small, and limited resource farmers. As producers move from initial contract development into the implementation stage under NRCS' Environmental Quality Incentives Program, many face the inability to acquire the initial capital investment of their cost-share portion needed for contract implementation.

To help producers implement conservation measures, FSA has several loan programs available to assist with up-front costs. FSA makes direct and guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans to family-size farmers and ranchers who cannot obtain commercial credit otherwise. A primary objective of FSA's farm loan programs is to assist small, beginning, and socially disadvantaged (minority and female) producers. In fact, a portion of FSA's loan funds are reserved for beginning and socially disadvantaged producers. These loan programs are not new and have been used successfully in conjunction with conservation programs throughout the United States.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) and [www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov).

## Conservation Compliance

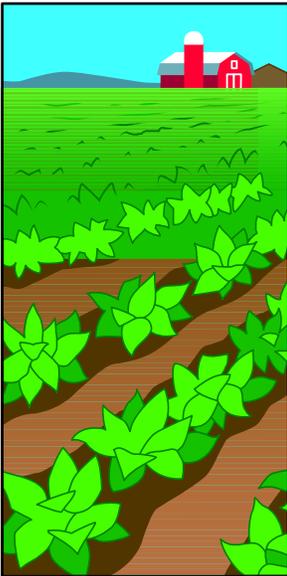
Federal regulations discourage the production of crops on highly erodible cropland unless the land is protected from erosion by an approved conservation system. Status reviews are conducted to ensure producers follow a conservation plan on highly erodible land.

In addition to the highly erodible land, a person may not plant an agricultural commodity on wetland converted after Dec. 23, 1985, or convert a wetland to make agricultural production

possible after Nov. 28, 1990. Failure to comply with these provisions will cause a person to be ineligible for USDA benefits. County Committees may review noncompliance situations for good faith and provide relief in approved cases.

### ***FSA Signature Requirements***

Proper signatures on Farm Service Agency contracts, applications and forms must be submitted before the document will be considered as filed. All entities, including revocable and irrevocable trusts, corporations, partnerships, estates, etc., must provide evidence of signature authority stipulating those individuals who are authorized to represent the entity. FSA cannot accept signatures without such documentation on file. Examples of acceptable evidence include trust agreements, corporate charters or resolutions, partnership agreements and court orders of appointment. Spouses can sign for one another on most program documents unless written notification denying a spouse this authority has been provided to the county office staff. An FSA-211 may be filed to delegate signature authority for FSA program purposes to another individual.



### ***Farm Storage Facility Loans***

Low cost loans for storage facilities are available for producers to build or remodel farm storage facilities for a variety of commodities, including wheat, rice, soybeans and corn. The seven-year Farm Storage Facility Loans are available for the purchase and installation of eligible storage facilities, permanently affixed drying or handling equipment, or remodeling existing facilities. Eligible facilities include new conventional-type cribs or bins and new and remanufactured oxygen-limiting and other upright silo-type structures. All Farm Storage Facility Loans are secured by a promissory note and security agreement. The maximum amount that may be borrowed is 85 percent of the net cost of the storage or handling equipment, up to \$100,000 for each borrower. A minimum down payment is also required. For details, contact the county office staff.

### ***Farmer's Choice of Administrative County***

Until recently the County Administrative office of program participants was basically the county office in which the principal farm operator resided. Now a change in a farm's administrative county may be permitted without completing a farm combination in the receiving county, if the producer documents that the changed administrative County Office is significantly more convenient. Changing an administrative County Office because of convenience is a **one time selection (for the current operator)** and **will not** be used to evade program rules.

Those who use the convenience method will still be able to vote for county committee candidates running for county committee in their original county's Local Administrative Area, however they will not be permitted to be a candidate for that County's committee.

A farm transfer can be initiated by the farm's operator or owner or the receiving or transferring county committee. All owners and operators must sign a FSA-179, TRANSFER OF FARM RECORDS BETWEEN COUNTIES.

### ***Acreage Reporting***

Acreage reporting time is just around the corner! Please remember that filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs.

Failed acreage must be reported within 15 days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date.

Acreage reports are required if you want to be eligible for Farm Service Agency programs. On crops other than NAP (Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program) crops, acreage reports are to be *certified* by **June 30<sup>th</sup> for small grains and July 15<sup>th</sup> for all other crops**.

Acreage reports on crops for which NAP assistance may be paid are due in the county

office by the *earlier of* June 30<sup>th</sup> for small grains and July 15<sup>th</sup> for all other crops, or 15 calendar days before the onset of harvest or grazing of the specific crop acreage being reported.

For *Washington County* farmers, we will be at the BERLIN office for acreage reporting on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, June 5<sup>th</sup> and June 19<sup>th</sup>! The first appointment of the day will be at 9am. *Please call* our office at 1-800-910-2035 x4 for an appointment!

### ***Payment Limits***

USDA payments and benefits are subject to producer eligibility and limitation provisions as defined by law. It is the producer's responsibility to report changes in the farming operation which may affect payment eligibility and payment limitation. Failure to do so can result ineligibility for payments for all years affected.

The following payment limits apply to DCP for each contract year through both direct and counter-cyclical payments. For all covered commodities, except peanuts: \$40,000 for direct payments and \$65,000 for counter-cyclical payments. For Peanuts: \$40,000 for direct payments and \$65,000 for counter-cyclical payments. The Environmental Quality Incentive Program has a \$450,000 payment limitation total for fiscal years 2002 – 2007. The Conservation Reserve Programs annual limit is \$50,000 per person. Marketing loan gains payment limit is \$75,000 per person.

Entities such as corporations, limited partnerships, trusts and estates are required to provide names, addresses, and ID numbers of their members.

### ***Rural Youth Loans***

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA) makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to establish and operate income producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be initiated, developed, carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organization or with a vocational

teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and operated with the assistance of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. Contact your local FSA office for more details.

### ***Banking Changes?***

If you have changed banks and not notified FSA, your payment could be delayed. Payments are electronically transferred into your bank account; if we are not aware of changes to your account and routing numbers, there could be problems. In order to make timely payments, you need to notify the office if you close your account or if another financial institution purchases your bank. It is important that any changes to a producer's account such as type of account, bank mergers, routing number or account numbers, be provided to the county office promptly to avoid possible payment delay.

### ***Toll-Free Number for Borrowers***

Direct loan borrowers with USDA's Farm Service Agency can now check the status of their accounts around the clock using a new toll-free telephone number.

The toll-free number, 1-888-518-4983, is available in both English and Spanish. The system delivers information on active FSA loans 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

During the first call to the new system, borrowers will enter their tax identification number or the Social Security Number associated with the loan. They also will need to enter their ZIP code. Borrowers will create a personal identification number for security. Customers must enter their PIN every time they use the system and may change their PIN. The system menu helps the producer access helpful information. The system may also direct borrowers to contact their local FSA servicing office if action is necessary on their accounts.





PRESORTED STANDARD  
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
 Mailed from Zip Code 05495  
 PERMIT #40

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| 90-Day Treasury Bill  | 5.125% |
| Farm Operating - Direct   | 5.25   |
| Farm Ownership - Direct   | 5.50   |
| Limited Resource  | 5.00   |
| Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher | 4.00   |
| Emergency   | 3.750% |
| Farm Storage Facility   | 4.50   |
|   |        |
| Commodity Loans 1996-Present                                      | 6.00   |
|   |        |

| Dates to Remember |                            |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>MAY 22</b>     | Acreage Reporting - Berlin |
| <b>June 5</b>     | Acreage Reporting - Berlin |
| <b>June 19</b>    | Acreage Reporting - Berlin |
|                   |                            |
| <b>May 28</b>     | Memorial Day–Office Closed |
| <b>June 14</b>    | Flag Day                   |
| <b>July 4</b>     | Holiday – Office Closed    |
|                   |                            |

Visit our Web site: <http://www.fsa.usda/VT>

### MILCX Rates

March – 0.00  
 April – 0.00

### **ALL PRODUCERS!**

The effort to update ALL producer's eligibility files continues. If you receive paperwork from us, *please don't delay* in responding! **Fill out, sign, date, and return all documents that we send you.** Program payments can not be issued until your records are complete!

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