



April 2009

Chittenden/Washington County FSA News

**Chittenden/Washington
County
USDA Service Center**

**Chittenden/Washington
County FSA**

802 865-7895 x4
800 910-2035 x4 (VT only)
802 865-7947 fax
www.fsa.usda.gov/VT

Hours

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

County Committee

Richard Parizo LAA-1
Claude Lapierre LAA-2
Sumner Farr, Jr LAA-3
Catherine Scribner LAA-4
Michelle Gardner LAA-5

**Upcoming County
Committee Meeting**

Dates

May 6, 2009
June 10, 2009

Staff

Lawrence Parker x102
Eileen Powers x106
Pearl Wells x100
Bradford Parker x103

**Natural Resources
Conservation Service**

Caroline Alves x203
Tate Jeffrey x119
Michel Lapointe x118
Danny Peet x202
Norman Smith x117

**Winooski Natural
Resources Conservation
District**

Ashley Lidman x104



The ACRE Program

The Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) is a new program authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill that begins in crop year 2009. Through ACRE, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers producers an alternative to Direct and Counter-cyclical (DCP) payments. The ACRE alternative provides eligible producers a state-level revenue guarantee, based on the 5-year state Olympic average yield and the 2-year national average price.

ACRE payments are made when both state- and farm-level triggers are met. By participating in ACRE, producers elect to forgo counter-cyclical payments. Producers also elect to receive a 20-percent reduction in direct payments and a 30-percent reduction in loan rates. ACRE sign-up dates will be announced soon so a producer can choose to participate in ACRE, or stay with DCP.

A decision to elect ACRE binds the producer to the program through the 2012 crop year, the last crop year covered by the 2008 Farm Bill. For more details contact your local FSA office.

Disaster Buy-In Waiver Extension

Producers who did not obtain crop insurance or Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for 2008 can pay a buy-in fee through May 18, 2009, to become eligible for 2008 disaster assistance programs authorized by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008.

Farmers have an additional opportunity to become eligible for several programs if they suffered 2008 agricultural losses due to natural disaster.

If you have not already taken the necessary steps to become eligible for the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE), Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP), and the Tree Assistance Program (TAP), you are required to complete the following steps by May 18, 2009:

- Pay a \$100 "buy-in" fee per crop. The maximum fee is \$300 per county, per producer, not to exceed \$900 for multi-county producers.
- In the case of each insurable crop, excluding grazing land, agree to obtain a policy or plan of insurance for the next insurance year for which crop insurance is available; coverage level should equal 70 percent or more of the yield at 100 percent of the price.
- In the case of each noninsurable crop, agree to file the required paperwork and pay the applicable administrative NAP coverage fee by the applicable state application closing date for the next available year.

Those who choose to "buy in" under this provision will be considered, for insured crops, to have obtained a policy or plan of insurance for the 2008 crop year at a level of coverage not to exceed 70 percent of the yield at 100 percent of the price. For noninsurable crops, producers will be considered to have a level of coverage equal to 70 percent of the yield. These levels of coverage will be used to calculate the 2008 SURE guarantee.

Producers who meet the definition of "Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource," or "Beginning Farmer or Rancher," are not required to pay the buy-in fee.

Acreage Reporting

Acreage reporting time will soon be here. 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 for many Farm Service Agency programs. For crops other than NAP (Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program) crops, acreage reports are to be certified by the June 30th deadline on small grains and a July 15th deadline on 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 30th for small grains and July 15th for all other crops, or 15 calendar days before the onset of harvest or grazing of the specific crop acreage being reported.

NAP Production Reporting

Production records for individual crops need to be filed with our office to establish an approved NAP yield. If this is the first year you participated in NAP, you can provide production and acreage information from prior years to establish your yield. If you participated in NAP in previous years, you must report your production and acreage on a yearly basis to keep your yield up-to-date. Records submitted must be reliable or verifiable. Records need to show crop disposition. We recommend producers submit 2009 production records as soon as harvest is complete. **All production records must be submitted by the subsequent crop year's final acreage reporting date**

Timely Filing of Loss

The CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and prevented planting and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. Timely filing a Notice of Loss is required on for **ALL CROPS INCLUDING GRASSES**. For losses on crops covered by the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and crop insurance, you must file a CCC-576 (notice of loss) in the FSA County Office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent.

If filing for prevented planting, an acreage report and CCC-576 must be filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.

Public Comment on Farm Storage Facility Loan Program

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA), on behalf of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), will hold two public meetings to solicit comments on the Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) Program.

Each comment received will be considered in the preparation of a Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for FSFL. The purpose of the PEA is to aid USDA decision-makers and the public with an analysis of the environmental benefits and potential impacts associated with implementing various changes to FSFL consistent with the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008.

Two national meetings are scheduled for the following dates and locations:

April 14, 2009, from 5 until 8:00 p.m. at the Hilton Garden Inn, Kansas City

April 15, 2009, from 5 until 8:00 p.m. at the Hilton Garden Inn Cleveland Downtown, Edison 1 Room.

In addition, written and electronic comments may be submitted by the close of business on May 13, 2009, to ensure consideration. Comments and requests for copies of the final PEA should be directed to:

FSFL PEA, Geo-Marine Incorporated
2713 Magruder Blvd., Suite D
Hampton, VA 23666-1572

Producers can also log on to <http://public.geo-marine.com>. For more information on the FSFL or other FSA farm programs, please visit your FSA county office or at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

LO-DOC Loans

What is a Lo-Doc loan? Simply put, it is a loan that requires less paperwork than the standard FSA loan. To qualify for a Lo-Doc loan, you must meet the following requirements:

1. Be current on all payments to all creditors including the Agency (if an Agency borrower)
2. Have not received primary loan servicing on any Agency debt within the past 5 years
3. Meet one of the following sets of criteria:
 - a. The loan requested is \$50,000 or less and the total outstanding Agency Operating Loan (OL) loan debt at the time of loan closing will be less than \$100,000; or
 - b. The loan requested is to pay annual operating expenses and the applicant is an existing Agency borrower who has received and timely repaid at least two previous annual OL loans from the Agency.

Continued on Page 3 Lo Doc

Continued from Page 2 Lo Doc

Your Lo-Doc Application request must include the following documents before it can be processed:

- completed FSA-2001 (application)
- entity information (if applicable)
- environmental information
- farm operating plan
- payment of credit report fee
- balance sheet

The loan application will not be processed until all the requirements are met. Your FSA Loan Officer may require additional information from what is listed here if needed to make a determination on the loan application. See your local FSA Farm Loan Officer for more details.

U.S. CENSUS 2010

Address Canvassing: Coming to Your Neighborhood

On April 20, 2009, U.S. Census employees will begin visiting every community in Vermont during the first major field activity in preparation for the 2010 Census.

By verifying each address, the Census Bureau will know where to send questionnaires and enumerators when it conducts the Census next year.

The U.S. Constitution mandates that everyone in the United States be counted every 10 years. The Census – the government’s largest peacetime operation – collects data that is used to determine representation in Congress.

The data also is used to decide how to disburse about \$300 billion annually to state and local governments.

For the address-canvassing operation, about 600 Census workers will fan out across Vermont with hand-held computers to identify the location of every housing unit. The workers will be wearing badges identifying themselves as Census workers.

This is how it will work: Employees will visit each housing unit and knock on the door. If someone answers, they will identify themselves and state what they are doing; they will not wait for someone to respond before doing their work.

The Census employees will stand in front of each housing unit for several minutes while they capture the address and GPS coordinates in the hand-held computer. In some cases, they may ask residents a few questions to clarify the address and the number of housing units in the

building. If no one is available, they will simply move on.

Address canvassing in Vermont will take place between April 20 and July 2.

About 310 million people live in the United States. Vermont’s population totals about 624,000.

For more information on the Census in general and the 2010 Census in particular, please visit www.census.gov.

2010 Census Timeline: Key Dates

Spring 2009: Census Employees go door-to-door to update address lists nationwide.

Fall 2009: Recruitment begins for census takers to support peak workload.

February-March 2010: Census Questionnaires are mailed or delivered to households.

April 1, 2010: Census Day

May-July 2010: Census takers will visit households that did not return a questionnaire by mail.

NASS Statistical Survey

Have you been asked to participate in a survey with USDA’s Agriculture Statistics Service?

The Quarterly Agricultural Surveys, conducted by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) provide inventory and production estimates for crops and livestock at state and national levels. Each quarter a list sample of farm operators are contacted by mail, telephone or personal interview for inventory information on the land they operate. Sample segments also screened for farm operators.

Why is it important for producers to participate in these surveys? Because...

Statistical information on acreage, production, stocks, prices, and income is essential for the smooth operation of Federal farm programs. It is also indispensable for planning and administering related Federal and State programs in such areas as consumer protection, conservation and environmental quality, trade, education, and recreation.

Regularly updating the information helps ensure an orderly flow of goods and services among agriculture's producing, processing, and marketing sectors. Reliable, timely, and detailed crop and livestock statistics help maintain a stable economic climate and minimize the uncertainties and risks associated with the production, marketing, and distribution of commodities.

Chittenden/Washington County FSA Office
 1193 S Brownell Rd STE 35
 Williston, VT 05495
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Dates to Remember	
Continuous	Continuous Conservation Reserve Program
MILC	Continues
COC meets	May 6, 2009 & June 10, 2009
August 14, 2009	DCP Signup Deadline
Selected Interest Rates for March 2009	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.250%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	2.25%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	4.125%
Farm Ownership Loans — Down Payment	1.50%
Emergency Loans	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility Loans	2.50%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.625 %

Farm Reconstitutions

In program terminology, farms are *constituted* to group all tracts having the same owner and the same operator under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation take place, a farm *reconstitution* is necessary. The reconstitution — or recon — is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. The following are the different methods used

Estate Method — the division of bases, allotments and quotas for a parent farm among heirs in settling an estate;

Designation of Landowner Method — may be used when (1) part of a farm is sold or ownership is transferred; (2) an entire farm is sold to two or more persons; (3) farm ownership is transferred to two or more persons; (4) part of a tract is sold or ownership is transferred; (5) a tract is sold to two or more persons; or (6) tract ownership is transferred to two or more persons. There are additional requirements

DCP Cropland Method — the division of bases in the same proportion that the DCP cropland for each resulting tract relates to the DCP cropland on the parent tract;

Default Method — the division of bases for a parent farm with each tract maintaining the bases attributed to the tract level when the reconstitution is initiated in the system.

If payments have already been issued on a particular farm, the reconstitution will be effective for the next year, unless the payments are refunded. Request for recons should be filed by June 1. See your local FSA office for details.

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