



NEWSLETTER



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.gov

Hours

Monday – Friday
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

County Committee

Richard Parizo LAA-1
Daniel Pillsbury LAA-2
Sumner Farr, Jr LAA-3
Catherine Scribner LAA-4
Morgan Churchill LAA-5

Upcoming County Committee Meeting Dates

February 9, 2011
March 9, 2011

FSA Staff

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

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Caroline Alves x203
Heather Dorsey x115
Tate Jeffrey x119
Michel Lapointe x118
Danny Peet x202
Norman Smith x117
John Thurgood x204

Natural Resources Conservation District

Karina Dailey x104
Justin Kenney x104

VT Association of Conservation Districts

Mark Marsh x206

Happy New Year and Welcome 2011!

SURE Signup

Signup for the 2009 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) begins Jan. 10, 2011. SURE provides benefits for 2008 - 2011 crop year farm revenue losses due to natural disasters. A farm enrolled in SURE is eligible when either:

- a portion of the farm is located in a county covered by a qualifying natural disaster declaration (USDA Secretarial Declarations only) or a contiguous county; or,
- the actual production is less than 50% of the normal production.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

The Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) is a federally funded program that helps producers reduce their risk when growing food and fiber crops, specialty crops and crops for livestock feed. Benefits under this program are available only for crops that commercially available insurance policies do not cover such as hay crops, fruits and vegetables, and maple sap. Available coverage may vary by county. Chittenden and Washington County producers who take advantage of this program offering are also automatically eligible to participate in the SURE crop disaster program if a disaster declaration is issued for the crop year. Claims for losses on a NAP crop must be reported

within 15 days of when the producer determines a loss has or will occur.

A producer's requirements under NAP are: (1) make a report of all acreage intended for harvest by crop reporting deadlines of the crop year; (2) make a report of all production for covered crops by the acreage reporting deadline of the following crop year. For anyone having been covered by NAP for the 2010 crop year, please compile your production records and submit your yields as soon as possible. If you get forage analysis done by your feed consultant, those measurements are acceptable. You may also do a simple self-certification of your tonnage or bale count. Please make sure the records you submit cover all harvested crops and double check your 2010 Report of Acreage (FSA-578) to make sure all the properties you operate on are listed. As always, please call the office with any questions or concerns!

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Richard Parizo! Richard was re-elected to the County Committee to represent farmers from Burlington, Colchester, Essex, Milton, S. Burlington, Westford & Winooski. Richard was elected to his second consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area 1 are:

Richard A. Parizo — Elected to the county committee (COC),

Murray Thompson — 1st alternate to COC.

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The County Committee system works only because of your participation.

The committee members held their organizational meeting on January 9th and elected Richard Parizo as committee chairman and Daniel Pillsbury as vice-chairman.

Foreign Buyers Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. FSA administers this program for USDA.

All individuals who are not U.S. citizens, and have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form (FSA-153) could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.



Farming Operation Changes

If you have bought or sold land, or if you have added or dropped rented land from your operation, make sure you report the changes to the office as soon as possible. You need to provide a copy of your deed or recorded land contract for purchased property. Failure to maintain accurate records with FSA on all land you have an interest in can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. Making the record changes now will save you time in the spring.

You also need to update signature authorization when changes in the operation occur. Producers are reminded to notify the office of a change in operations on a farm so that records can

be kept current and accurate. For example, Have you created an LLC or formed a partnership?

Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation Compliance

Landowners and operators are reminded that in order to receive payments from USDA, compliance with Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions are required. Farmers with HEL determined soils are reminded of tillage, crop residue, and rotation requirements as specified per their conservation plan.

Producers are to notify the USDA Farm Service Agency prior to conducting land clearing or drainage projects to insure compliance. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in the loss of eligibility and all Federal payments.

Special Accommodations

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the county FSA office staff directly or by phone.

Power of Attorney

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., FSA has a power of attorney form available that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. If you are interested, please contact our office or any FSA office near you for more information.

Bank Account Changes

Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into your bank account. In order for timely payments to be made, *producers need to notify the FSA county office if your account has been changed or if another financial institution purchases your bank.* Payments can be delayed if the FSA office is not aware of updates to your account and routing numbers.

Appeal Process

After an FSA official makes a decision on your request for USDA services or application, you will be sent a letter informing you of the decision and options you can pursue if you disagree.

Generally, program participants have three choices — an informal review with the original agency decision-maker, an opportunity for mediation and finally an appeal to the next level of authority within the agency.

FSA Signature Policy

Husbands and wives may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation programs in which either has an interest. This option is automatically available unless a written request for exclusion is made to the county office staff by either spouse.

There are *exceptions* to the rule, where spouses **may not sign** on behalf of each other for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations or other similar entities.

Individual signatures are also required on certain Farm Loan Program and Farm Storage Facility Loan documents.

For more clarification on spousal signature authority, feel free to contact your local FSA office.

Customer Statement

January signals the beginning of a new year, and a time to starting thinking about filing taxes. Producers who have signed up for a USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account will be able to access their farm data via their Customer Statement.

The Customer Statement puts a range of USDA services and programs into a single report that's at your fingertips and available online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

It allows USDA customers to view their participation, application and payment status in various commodity and

conservation programs; information on farm loans; and conservation plan and land unit information.

Farm Loan Programs

The Farm Service Agency is committed to providing family farmers with loans to meet their farm credit needs. If you are having trouble getting the credit you need for your farm, or regularly borrow from FSA, direct and guaranteed loans are currently available.

Ask your lender about an FSA loan guarantee if you've had a setback and your lender is reluctant to extend or renew your loan.

IRS Form 1099-G

Producers annually receive form CCC-1099-G detailing payments producers have received from the Commodity Credit Corporation. The annual report of program payments on CCC-1099-G is a service intended to help our customers report taxable income. It is not intended to replace the producers' responsibilities to report income to IRS.

FSA staff cannot interpret IRS regulations or advise producers about which payments to report on their income tax returns. However, county office staff can review payments for accuracy.

Controlled Substance

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium, poppies and other drug producing plants



Chittenden/Washington County
 Farm Service Agency Office
 1193 S Brownell Rd STE 35
 Williston, VT 05495-7416
Return Service Requested



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

Selected Interest Rates for January 2011	
Farm Operating - Direct	1.75%
Farm Ownership - Direct	4.125%
Limited Resource	5.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Emergency	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility	2.00%
Farm Storage Facility	2.75%
Farm Storage Facility – 12 year	3.00%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.250%

Dates to Remember	
Jan. 4	COC Organizational Meeting
Jan. 10	2009 SURE Sign-up begins
Feb. 9	COC meeting
Feb. 21	Presidents Day – Office Closed
Mar. 15	NAP Fees Due - Vegetables

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.