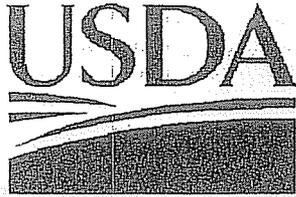


Full Mailings 2/12/08



# FRANKLIN-GRAND ISLE CO. FARM SERVICE AGENCY NEWS/PROGRAM UPDATES

February 2008

Franklin-Grand Isle County  
FSA  
27 Fisher Pond Rd.,  
Suite 2  
St. Albans, VT 05478

Phone: (802) 527-1296  
(800) 717-8637  
Fax: (802) 524-4575  
[www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)  
Hours  
Monday - Friday  
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**County Committee**  
Darlene Wright, Chairperson  
Maurice Fortin, Vice Chair  
Madonne Rainville, Member  
Dwight Bullis, Member  
Andrew Brouillette, Member  
**NOTE: COC meets 3<sup>rd</sup>**

**Thursday each month at 11:00**

#### Staff

Carolyn Church (ext. 109)  
George Godin (ext. 107)  
Luc Dupuis (ext. 105)  
Tracy Derry (ext. 124)  
John Maille (ext. 100)

#### Loan Officers

Brad Parker (ext. 112)  
Liz Vesosky (ext. 111)

#### Loan Manager

Dirk Reith (ext. 110)

#### County Executive Director

Brenda Ladue (ext. 106)



#### **DATES TO REMEMBER:**

Feb 18 Office Closed for  
George Washing-  
ton's Birthday  
March 15 Crop insurance &  
Noninsured Crop  
Disaster Assistance  
Program NAP (an-  
nual crops)  
application dead-  
line

#### **County Committee Election Results**

##### **FOR LAA-3 & LAA-4:**

Congratulations to Andrew Brouillette and Dwight Bullis. Andrew and Dwight were elected to the County Committee to represent farmers from their Local Administrative Areas (LAA) #3 and #4.

- Andrew represents LAA-3 which includes the towns of: Sheldon, Fairfield, Bakersfield, Fletcher. Jerry Yates was elected as First Alternate in LAA-3.
- Dwight represents LAA-4, which includes the towns of: Grand Isle and South Hero.

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

The County Committee held their Organizational Meeting in January to determine: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Member positions. The results are listed in the left hand column of this newsletter under **County Committee**.

#### **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.

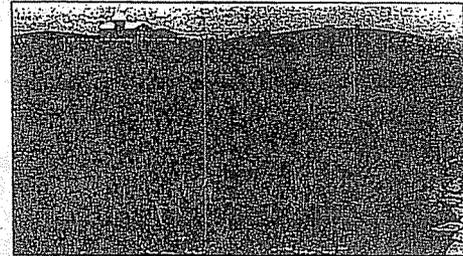
#### **Special Accommodations**

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact their FSA County Office.

#### **Complaint Process**

Any person, class or group of persons may file a discrimination complaint within 180 days of an alleged discriminatory action. Complaints may be filed in writing or orally with the agency head, any designated agency official or the Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Assistance in filing a complaint can be obtained by calling or visiting any FSA office.

#### **Year End Reviews**



#### **Disaster Eligibility Date Extended:**

Eligible farmers who suffered livestock, livestock feed, and/or crop losses during 2005, 2006, or 2007 (2007 cut off date extended until Dec. 31, 2007), can now apply to receive disaster payments.

#### **Crop Disaster Program (CDP) Quantity Loss Program:**

- Producers must have suffered quantity losses in excess of 35 percent to be eligible.
- Sign-Up has begun.
- Crop must have been insured during year of loss
- No End Date established at this time.

#### **Crop Disaster Program (CDP) Quality Loss Program:**

- Producers must have suffered a minimum loss of 25 percent of feed quality.
- Crop must have been insured during year of loss
- No Sign-Up Date set at this time

#### **Livestock Compensation Program (LCP):**

- Covers pasture losses and additional feed cost
- Crop year 2006 only
- Livestock must have been owned and on-site as of May 1, 2006

#### **The Dairy Disaster Assistance Payment (DDAP-III) Program**

which provides benefits to eligible dairy producers for production losses suffered as a result of natural disasters occurring during Jan. 1, 2005, through Dec. 31, 2007. Eligible years determined for Vermont are 2006 and 2007, based on disaster designation.

The base period for the disaster year will be the average annual marketed production of calendar years 2003 and 2004. Nationwide, this program will provide \$16 million in benefits. DDAP-III sign-up began Dec. 3, 2007 and was

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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### **Power of Attorney**

If you're too busy getting work done around the farm to come into your local FSA office to conduct business and complete your paperwork, here's a solution. Retain an agent to act on your behalf for programs and transactions authorized under the 2002 Farm Bill and most other FSA administered programs. This can be done by completing form FSA-211, Power of Attorney. The form is available at your local USDA Service Center or on-line at <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov>. Forms obtained and completed outside USDA Service Center offices must be notarized. To find out more, call the office.

### **Spousal Signatures**

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.

### **Attention Producers, Landowners!**

*\*Do you intend to clear timber areas to create or to expand existing crop areas? \*Are you converting a pasture field into a crop field? \*Are there any areas on your farm(s) that you are considering cropping that have not been cropped in recent years? \*Is there a wet spot in a field that you want to drain to make cropping easier? \*Are you disturbing a wild-life habitat area of any type?*

*These are Highly Erodible and Wetlands provision questions that need to be considered each year by producers to assure that they may remain eligible for USDA benefits. Please contact your NRCS representative before you begin.*

### **Direct Deposit and Bank Account Changes**

As of January 1, 1999, all FSA payments are supposed to be electronically transferred into your bank account. Forms are available at the FSA office to sign up for direct deposit if you haven't yet. 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's very important that you realize you have the responsibility to notify FSA and NRCS individually of any change to your direct deposit account. Even though we are in the same office, each section has different rules and protocols that apply to direct deposits and electronic funds transfers.** Payments can be delayed if we are not aware of changes to your account and routing numbers.

### **Change in Farming Operations**

Producers need to update signature authorization when there are any changes in the ownership/operating structure of their operation. As well, producers are reminded to contact the office to report any change in the operation on their farm so that records can be kept current. Documents and forms to determine eligibility and limitations are reviewed on an annual basis. In addition, entities such as corporations, limited partnerships, trusts, and estates are required to provide names, addresses, ID numbers of their members and operating documents.

### **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program**

Farmers are able to take advantage of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) by signing up until March 15, 2008. After that date, continuous sign up is still expected to be available but there maybe some delay if passage of the new farm bill is delayed or the current farm bill is not extended. CREP will reimburse farmers for retiring cropland or pastureland adjacent to streams and rivers by establishing buffers. Program participants will receive annual rental payments, cost-share assistance, and other financial incentives under 15 year contracts for installing and maintaining forested riparian buffers or grass filter strips. Eligible cropland must have been *considered* row cropped 4 of the 6 years between 1996 and 2001. Pastures adjacent to waters do not carry this requirement. Annual rental payments vary from \$120/ac to \$244/acre.

For more information about CREP, contact Ben Gabos at 524-6505 (ext. 122) or Tracy Derry at 527-1296 (ext. 124).

### **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. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA. Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA within 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25% 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 requirements.