

**Ruland/Bennington
County FSA**

170 S Main St STE4
Rutland, VT 05701-4559
802-775-8034
800-300-6927 (VT)
802-773-4177 (FAX)
802-253-0191 (TDD)
802-388-6748 (Loans)

Hours

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

County Committee

Mark Lourie, Chair
Cliff Cressy, Vice Chair
Cash Ruane
Richard Sheldon
Henry Strohmaier

Minority Advisor

Cristine Carabeau

Staff

Diane Heleba, PT
Marge Christy, PT

Loan Officers

David Girard
Jill Cioffi-Thomas

Farm Loan Manager

Gary Braman

Co. Executive Director

Phyllis L Torrey

*Farm Loan Staff is in
the Rutland Service
Center **Wednesdays***



**EMERGENCY
FINANCING
COULD BECOME
AVAILABLE**

Do your farm buildings have structural or roof damage, have blown down trees caused physical damage to structures, equipment or loss of livestock? Farms which have suffered damage from Monday, April 16, 2007 high winds and rain are being asked to report these to the Rutland/Bennington County Farm Service Agency (FSA) at 802 775-8034 or 1-800-300-6927.

This information is being gathered by FSA to provide support a request for a disaster designation. If a disaster designation is made by USDA, farmers in the counties of Rutland and Bennington and adjoining counties could be eligible for emergency loans and emergency conservation program to assist with costs of repairs for physical losses on their farms.

April 2007

Rutland/Bennington County News

**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 August 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 September 30, 2007. Those producers failing to sign up by August 3, 2007, but before September 30, will pay a late-file fee of \$100.

Enrollment in DCP for the 2007 contract period began October 1, 2006, and was scheduled to end 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.

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 in ineligibility for payments for all years affected.

The following payments 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. 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 of \$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.

Dates to Remember

May 14	Deadline to apply for EM Loans for 2006
May 28	Office closed - Memorial Day
June 30	Small grain acreage reports deadline
July 4	Office closed - Independence Day
July 16	Acreage Reports deadline
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loans
Continues	Conservation Reserve Program & CREP

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

**Heavy Snow Load Collapse a Roof?
EM Loans Available**

USDA (FSA) has designated eight counties in Vermont eligible for emergency loans for physical losses caused by heavy snow, high winds, and blizzard conditions that occurred on February 14, 2007. These counties include Addison, Caledonia, Chittenden, Franklin, Lamoille, Orleans, Rutland, and Washington. Five contiguous counties are also included. These are Bennington, Essex, Grand Isle, Orange and Windsor. Also eligible because they are contiguous are the counties of Grafton in NH and Clinton, Essex, and Washington in NY.

Interested farmers may contact their local FSA office or Dale Thompson in the FSA State Office located at 356 Mountain View Drive, Colchester, VT 05446 @ 802-658-2803 Extension 253 for further information on eligibility requirements and application procedures for these and other loans and programs. Additional information is also available online at:

<http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov>

FSA will be accepting applications for the emergency loans through October 29, 2007.

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.

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.

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 and www.nrcs.usda.gov

Remember Conservation When Making Planting Decisions

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Vermont reminds you to check your conservation plan before making final planting decisions this spring to stay eligible for USDA programs.

With high corn prices, some farmers are planting more corn. Anyone who plans to participate in USDA programs now or in the future should check with NRCS before planting land to corn that has not been in corn and before changing the crop rotation on highly erodible land.

USDA program participants are responsible for ensuring that their conservation plan or system is applied and maintained in order to remain eligible for USDA program benefits. The local NRCS office can review your current plan and discuss possible options. Rutland NRCS – 802 775-8034 Ext 3 or Bennington NRCS -802 442-2275

The EZ Makes It Easy

The CCC-633 EZ is a two-part loan deficiency payment request that allows producers to (1) indicate their intentions to receive LDP benefits *before* losing beneficial interest in the eligible commodity, and (2) submit a request for an LDP at any time during the loan/LDP availability period before or after losing beneficial interest.

Once the first page of the form has been signed and submitted, the producer can submit an LDP request by completing page 2 for all harvested commodities, **such as corn**; or page 4 for **wool, mohair and unshorn pelts**.

All producers are encouraged to submit page 1 of the EZ for each crop year whether or not they plan to subsequently request a loan or LDP.

Highly Erodible Land & Wetlands Reminder

Reminder: Farmers are still responsible for maintaining compliance with the Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation provisions of the Farm Bill. To ensure your continued eligibility for USDA programs and payments, you need to follow an approved crop rotation on any field designated HEL, and not make crop production possible on any areas considered to be wetland.

If you are making plans to plant annual crops on land where annual crops have not previously been planted, or planning to change approved crop rotations, please visit the Farm Service Agency (FSA) or Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office in your area to discuss your plans.

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. It is important that any changes in producer's account such as type account, bank mergers, routing number or account numbers, be provided to the county office promptly to avoid possible payment delay.

