



Windham County News

Windham County USDA Service Center

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Hours

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

County Committee

Jill Adams Mancivalano, Chair
Charles Robb Jr., Vice Chair
Arnold Fisher, Member

County Committee meets
2nd Tuesday of the Month

Staff

County Executive Director
Julie Jacque (x107)
Julie.Jacque@vt.usda.gov

Program Technician
Dana Ruppert (x100)
Dana.Ruppert@usda.gov

Farm Loan Staff

George Button, Jr. FLM
802-295-7942 x15
800-789-6713
George.button@vt.usda.gov

George is in Windham Co.
Every 2nd & 4th Tuesday of the
month or by appointment

NRCS Staff

Lance Gorham x101
Lance.gorham@vt.usda.gov

NRC District Staff

Jolene Hamilton, Mgr. x104
Sylvia Harris x105

Julie's Notes

Welcome to the Nov/Dec edition of our newsletter. We have many deadlines approaching and I'd like to remind area producers of a few things:

- AGI forms that were mailed out for MILC program participation must be returned to our office by Nov. 25, 2009. We won't be able to process future MILC payments until we have those forms back!

- Producers can sign up for the 2008 SURE program in mid-November. Windham County producers will also be eligible for 2009 SURE losses due to the recent weather-related disaster designation filing (more info further on). We are also currently administering 2010 SURE. Please note that to be eligible for 2010 SURE, *you must get crop insurance now.*

- If you're thinking about hay storage, cold storage or any commodity storage, and interested in the FSFL loan program - now's a good time of year to plan, prepare and apply. As FSFL is a loan program, it can take some time to process all paperwork etc. so it's best to start the process well in advance.

Please call the office to set up an appointment to discuss any and all programs mentioned, and please enjoy the coming holidays!!

Grant \$\$ for Farmers w/ New Ideas

The Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (NE-SARE) program is a competitive grants program that USDA offers to explore innovations on the farm. Commercial producers are invited to submit proposals for projects that test a new idea, trial or on-farm demonstration.

Projects can explore topics such as: pest management, soil health, cover crops, grazing methods, production techniques and new value-added products. Projects should seek results that other producers can use and must add to the knowledge about effective sustainable practices. Awards are for a maximum of \$15,000. The deadline for applications is December 8, 2009.

Since the program began, more than \$2.3 million has been awarded to producers in the Northeast, and in Vermont, 79 farmers have received grants.

Projects have included: research on pasturing hogs on barley & field peas, mushroom cultivation, downy mildew prevention in cucurbits, and rice as a commercial Northeast crop.

For an application and/or more information, visit www.nesare.org or contact Debra Helba, VT SARE Coordinator, at (802)656-4046 / debra.helba@uvm.edu or Carol Delaney, NE-SARE Farmer Grant Specialist at (802) 656-0697 / carol.delaney@uvm.edu

Emergency Loans Available

A Secretarial Disaster Designation was declared for excessive rain, flooding, hail, abnormally cool temperatures and related plant diseases that occurred beginning May 1, 2009 in parts of the Northeast. This designation makes farm operators in Windham County eligible to be considered for assistance from FSA, including for emergency loans and the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) program (described in the Sept. '09 newsletter.)

Production Losses: Eligible farmers may also use emergency loan funds to recover a portion of losses on growing crops that were destroyed.

Physical Losses: Eligible farmers may use emergency loan funds to repair or rebuild essential farm buildings, clean debris or prepare land for replanting, and/or to replace livestock, supplies and harvested crops on hand or in storage that were lost.

These loans carry an interest rate of 3.75 percent. FSA will consider each application on its own merit by taking into account the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability.

Loan applications for this disaster designation will be accepted through June 1, 2010.

Farm Loan Year-End Reviews

Producers that have a farm loan with FSA are reminded they must provide data for their Year-End Analysis (YEA) to their loan officer each year. Borrowers are urged to provide this information timely so that their files can be maintained.

An FSA loan manager will contact you for the data you will need to provide.



UPCOMING EVENTS & WORKSHOPS

11/12/09

Meat, Poultry Production & Processing in VT UVM Extension Office Brattleboro, VT

Come to learn and meet fellow producers and processors! Windham County Farm Bureau is hosting a free informational Q & A discussion forum. See back page for more info and directions.

Cost: Free

Contact: Katrina Hamilton
(802) 579-9223

11/25/09

Whole Farm Planning Course for Women Farmers

Through funds from a USDA grant, beginning women farmers in Vermont can learn more about whole farm planning including: how to improve a farm business & increase profitability, create a financial plan, and manage land, livestock and infrastructure.

Space is limited for this six session special course offered by the Women's Agricultural Network and Holistic Management International.

Applications are due by November 25, 2009 and classes will begin in January 2010.

Cost: Free

Contact: Mary Peabody
VT Women's Ag. Network
(802) 223-2389 ex. 13 or
Mary.Peabody@uvm.edu



FSA Farm Loan Programs

FSA offers loans for producers to purchase farmland and finance agricultural operations. FSA loan programs are designed to help producers who may be unable to obtain private or commercial credit. In many cases, applicants are beginning farmers who have insufficient net worth to qualify for financing through a commercial lender. In other instances, borrowers might have suffered setbacks from natural disasters or might be persons with limited resources.

Producers that intend to apply for loan assistance are encouraged to file their applications as early as possible. Filing early will help ensure that your loan is processed and approved in a timely manner and that funds are available. FSA receives a high volume of applications that must be processed in date order. If you are in need of loan assistance, or for more information, please contact our office.

Supplemental Disaster Assistance Programs

The 2008 Farm Bill amended the Trade Act of 1974 to create five new disaster programs, collectively referred to as Supplemental Agriculture Disaster Assistance programs. These programs include:

- Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP)
- Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP)
- Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)
- Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE)
- Tree Assistance Program (TAP)

To be eligible for these programs, producers must purchase at least catastrophic risk protection (CAT) level of crop insurance for all insurable crops and/or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for non-insurable crops under SURE, TAP, and ELAP.

Note: producers who meet the definition of a Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource Producer, or Beginning Farmer or Rancher, do not have to meet this risk management purchase requirement.

In the 2008 Farm Bill; in general, the term "farm" means the sum of all crop acreage in all counties that is planted or intended to be planted for harvest by the eligible producer.

In the case of honey, the term "farm" means all bees and beehives in all counties that are intended to be harvested for a honey crop by the eligible producer.



Voting in County Committee Election Begins

Ballots for this year's County Committee (COC) election will be mailed to eligible voters today. This year's COC election is for Local Administrative Area (LAA) #1, which includes the towns of: Athens, Brookline, Grafton, Putney, Townsend, Rockingham and Westminster.

Voters must complete their ballots and return them to the FSA county office by December 7, 2009, or have them be postmarked by this date if mailed.

Peter Barrett of Stoneholm Farm in Putney has been nominated to serve as a COC member. He is currently an active alternate on the committee.

Voter Requirements Persons meeting requirements in **1 or 2, plus 3**, below are eligible to vote:

1. Be of legal voting age and have an interest in a farm or ranch as either of the following:
 - an owner, operator, tenant or sharecropper, *or*
 - a partner in a general partnership or member of a joint venture that has an interest in a farm as an owner, operator, tenant or sharecropper; *or*
2. Not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations on an entire farm; *and*
3. Eligible to participate in any FSA program that is provided by law, regardless of the status of funding.

Eligible voters in LLA #1 who have not received a ballot should contact the FSA county office.

Discrimination Prohibited No person shall be denied the right to vote because of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital or family status.



Emergency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP)

ELAP provides compensation to eligible producers of livestock, honey bees, and farm-raised fish for losses due to disease, adverse weather, or flooding, including losses due to blizzards and wildfires. ELAP is for losses that are not covered by Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), or Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE).

Eligible producers under ELAP may receive assistance for losses that occur on or after January 1, 2008, and before October 1, 2011, during the calendar year in which the loss occurs. Eligible losses include feed losses, physical losses and additional costs incurred in providing feed to eligible livestock.

There are two parts to the ELAP application process:

1. A notice of loss
2. Application for payment

Note: An application for payment cannot be filed without a notice of loss filing.

Signup, for producers with eligible losses during 2008 and 2009, began September 14, 2009. Producers who suffered losses in calendar year 2008 must provide a notice of loss and application for payment in their administrative county office **no later than December 10, 2009.**

There are no late filed provisions for ELAP. Producers with eligible losses must timely file an acreage report on grazing land acres, honey bee colonies and farm-raised fish pond acres.

Eligible physical losses of honey bees and honey bee hives, lost due to adverse weather or loss conditions are eligible under ELAP. Producers will be required to provide documentation of beginning and ending inventory of honey bee colonies when claiming a physical loss of honey bees or honey bee hives. Physical losses will be compensated at 60 percent of the actual replacement cost of the honey bees or honey bee hives.

Additional information about ELAP is available at FSA county offices or on the FSA website at: www.fsa.usda.gov

Can You Participate in the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP)?

Facilities, such as schools, mills or any other facility that uses biomass to heat/power its operation, are being qualified in Vermont and other states to become Biomass Conversion Facilities (BCF) to participate in the BCAP program. BCAP was authorized as part of the 2008 Farm Bill and is designed to help increase the production of renewable energy.

Once a facility becomes a qualified BCF, eligible material owners or producers who deliver biomass to these facilities may be eligible to receive matching payments for that material.

Through the matching payment component of BCAP, FSA will provide financial assistance for what is called the: collection, harvest, storage and transport (CHST) of eligible materials. Eligible material owners/producers will be provided CHST matching payments at a rate of \$1 for each \$1 per dry ton of material delivered to a qualified BCF, not to exceed \$45 per dry ton. The CHST matching payments will be available for a period of two years.

Here's an example of how it works:

1. A facility that runs its boiler on wood chips submits an application to FSA to become a *qualified* BCF, able to accept biomass that will be eligible for CHST matching payments.
2. The qualified BCF then contracts with a producer /owner of eligible material to pay \$35 per dry ton for biomass.
3. The material producer/owner submits an application to FSA to receive CHST matching payments, receives approval from FSA, and then begins delivery of eligible material to the qualified BCF.
4. The material owner/producer submits proof to FSA that the material was delivered, and then FSA approves a matching payment to the producer/owner of \$35 per dry ton.

If you have questions about this program and if you may qualify, please call the office!

November Interest Rates

Farm Operating – Direct.....	2.875%
Farm Ownership – Direct.....	4.750%
Farm Ownership – Direct, Joint Financing.....	5.000%
Farm Ownership – Down Payment.....	1.500%
Emergency Loan – Amount of Actual Loss.....	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility Loan CCC-185 (as of 10/19/09)	
7 year.....	3.000%
10 year.....	3.375%
12 year.....	3.750%

DATES TO REMEMBER

11/6/09 County Committee ballots mailed to eligible voters

11/11/09 Veteran's Day Holiday – Office closed

11/14/09 Last day to modify MILC contract start date to December 2009

11/20/09 2010 Forage & Perennial coverage closing date for NAP (mixed hay, alfalfa & pastures; berries; asparagus; rhubarb etc)

11/25/09 Applications due for Whole Farm Planning Course for Women Farmers

11/26/09 Thanksgiving Day – Office closed

12/7/09 COC ballots due in office or postmarked

12/8/09 Applications due for NE- SARE research grants

12/10/09 ELAP notice of loss filing due

12/25/09 Christmas Day – Office closed

12/31/09 2010 Maple Sap and honey coverage closing date for NAP

Ongoing
Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL)

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) sign-up

Loan Assistance for annual operating costs, livestock, equipment, bridge loans for projects etc.

Windham County FSA Office
28 Vernon St., STE 331
Brattleboro, VT 05301



PRESORTED STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Brattleboro, VT 05301
PERMIT #100

Return Service Requested

Portable Skidder Bridges for Rent

- Easy to Install
- Minimize Potential for Soil Erosion
- In Compliance with Vermont's AMP's
- Reduce Logging Costs Associated with Temporary Stream Crossings

Interested loggers and consulting foresters in Windham County should contact:

Iolene Hamilton
(802) 254-5323, ext. 104

Meat and Poultry Production & Processing in VT A Question and Answer Forum

Come to learn and meet fellow producers and processors! Windham County Farm Bureau is hosting a free informational discussion at the UVM Extension Office in Brattleboro, VT on Thursday, November 12, 2009. The guest speaker is Randy Quenneville from the VT Department of Agriculture. Randy is the section chief of the meat inspection and licensing division. Randy will be available to answer all of your meat production, processing and marketing questions. There will be refreshments available and an open door policy, so if you can't make it at 3pm feel free to show up later. All are welcome! To **RSVP** or for more information contact Katrina Hamilton at 579-9223 or Chip Hellus at 254-3601.

Date: November 12, 2009 **Time:** 3:00pm – 6:00pm **Location:** UVM Extension Office
Directions: From Rte 91 take Exit 1 in Brattleboro. Follow Rte 5/Canal Street and turn right at the first set of lights onto Fairground Road. Turn right onto South Main Street/Old Guilford Rd. The UVM Extension conference room is housed within a group of red buildings just before Fort Dummer State Park.



Visit our web site at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/VT>

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