



October 2010

# Windsor/Orange County FSA Newsletter

**USDA**  
**Windsor/Orange FSA**  
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White River, Jct., VT 05001

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

## County Staff

Christine Lary,  
County Executive Director  
Ext. 13

George Button Jr.,  
Farm Loan Manager  
Ext. 15

## County Committee

Paul Doton, Chair  
Heidi Dolloff, Vice Chair  
Mike Emerson, member  
Agnes Spaulding, member  
Sandy Whitney, member

## County Committee Elections

Be watching your mailbox for your official county office committee election ballot starting early next month. Ballots will be mailed to all eligible voters starting on November 5, 2010. If, for some reason, you don't receive a ballot, feel free to notify the county FSA office.

Completed and signed ballots will be due back in the county office by the close of business on December 6, 2010.

## Paper Check Conversion (PCC)

Over the next year, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) is moving toward an electronic method for processing producers' checks. This will allow FSA/CCC to process collections faster.

When producers present checks, either in person or through the mail, the checks will be converted into an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). The funds will be debited from the producer's account, usually within 24 hours of receipt.

## FSA Conservation Loan Program

The Farm Service Agency makes and guarantees conservation loans on farms and ranches to help conserve our natural resources. The Conservation Loan (CL) Program provides farmers with the credit necessary to implement conservation measures on their land.

The direct CLs loan limit is up to \$300,000 and guaranteed CLs up to \$1,119,000 (amount adjusted for inflation), may be available by applying with lenders working with FSA to obtain a guarantee.

Applicants will work with Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS) Staff to develop a conservation plan. Conservation practices must be approved by NRCS before FSA can provide financing. Examples of conservation practices include installation of conservation structures; establishment of forest cover; installation of water conservation measures; establishment or improvement of permanent pastures; transitioning to organic production; manure management, including manure digestion systems; etc.

## Foreign Landowner 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 with 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property.

County government offices, real estate agents, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

## Rural Youth Loans

FSA makes loans to rural youths to establish and operate income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5000.

### Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

- Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) or a legal resident alien
- be 10 years to 20 years of age
- Comply with FSA's general eligibility requirements
- Reside in a rural area, city or town with a population of 50,000 or fewer people
- Be unable to get a loan from other sources
- Conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work as outlined above
- Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor. The project supervisor must recommend the project and the loan, along with providing adequate supervision.

Stop by the county office for help preparing and processing the application forms. The FSA staff can help you with questions you may have about a particular program.



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## NRCS Conservation Payment Opportunities

Do you need to install soil erosion practices on your forest or agricultural land or address a waste storage or silage leachate issue? Would your operation benefit from a seasonal high tunnel system or do you need to increase the efficiency of your existing irrigation system by installing more efficient irrigation pipeline, for one? Are you interesting in enhancing wildlife habitat on your farm or forest land? Would you like to further enhance resources that have already been addressed on your land? The NRCS offers voluntary conservation programs to agricultural and forest landowners for addressing identified resource concerns and for further enhancing resources that have already been addressed. Sign up for NRCS conservation programs is on a continuous basis, however, the deadline to apply for the initial round of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) is October 1. These programs benefit soil and water quality and wildlife habitat. The deadline to sign up for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) is October 30. This program provides payments to landowners for further enhancing the resources on their land. Applications for all conservation programs can be obtained at your local NRCS office or on the web. Vermont NRCS County office locations can be found at: <http://www.vt.nrcs.usda.gov/> and then by clicking on 'Find a Service Center' at the bottom, left side of the web page.

## NAP Coverage

The Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) was designed to reduce financial losses that occur when natural disasters cause a catastrophic loss of production or prevented planting of an eligible crop by providing coverage equivalent to catastrophic (CAT) insurance. Statute limits NAP to each commercial crop or agricultural commodity, except livestock, for which CAT is not available.

The application deadline date for the 2011 NAP coverage for mixed forage grass crops is November 20, 2010.

## Help Available to Stressed Farmers

Recently, the economy, inclement weather, and other factors have hurt some farming operations around the country. These events can push a producer to the emotional breaking point. Watching your livelihood being threatened is difficult for farmers and ranchers, especially for those whose income is solely dependent on agriculture.

The National Suicide Prevention Hotline is available to help. If you know a farmer or rancher who is under stress and is reluctant to ask for help, or if you just need to talk to someone, call 1-800-273-TALK (8255). Your call will be routed to the crisis center nearest you, where trained staffers are available 24/7. This nationwide service is free and confidential. Help is just a phone call away.

For more information, go to <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>. This service is not affiliated with the US Department of Agriculture.

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202)-720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."