



# NEWSLETTER



## April, May & June 2013

### Windham County FSA Office

71 Westcott Road  
Danielson, CT  
06331-1229

Office Hours:  
Monday – Friday  
8 am to 4:30 pm

860-779-0557 x 1

Fax:  
860-779-0667

**Staff**  
Dawn S. Pindell  
County Executive  
Director

Ronald Clark  
Farm Loan  
Manager  
860-887-3604 x  
105

[www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)

## Hispanic and Women Farmers and Ranchers Claims Process Extended

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack has announced the extension of the voluntary claims process for Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who allege discrimination by the USDA in past decades. All claims must now be filed by **May 1, 2013**.

Register for a claim package at:  
1-888-508-4429

Completed forms and documentation must be received by 11:59 pm PDT on May 1<sup>st</sup>.  
Info at: [www.farmerclaims.gov](http://www.farmerclaims.gov).

## Acreage Reporting

Filing an annual acreage report keeps your farm eligible for a variety of USDA programs. **Report by July 10, 2013.**

Report:

- Planting dates
- Types of crops
- Location of crop

USDA Disaster programs like NAP, SURE, and Crop Insurance require an accurate and timely acreage report.

Prevented planted and failed acres must be reported no later than 15 days after the date of loss or acreage reporting date.

## Farm Record Changes

If you are changing your operation entity type, or adding members to your farm operation; be sure to file revised entity information by June 1<sup>st</sup> to update your records.

*USDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.*

## NRCS Funding Deadline

Apply by April 19<sup>th</sup> for funds (\$) for conservation + projects with NRCS.  
860-779-0557 x 2.

## Microloans are Cultivating Big Dreams on a Small Scale

Microloans are helping small, niche and beginning farms with their goals. The more simplified loan process provides up to \$35,000 to pay for initial start-up expenses, such as hoop houses, essential tools, irrigation, delivery, vehicles and annual expenses like seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents, marketing and distribution expenses.

Contact Ronald Clark, Farm Loan Manager, for a microloan application at 860-887-3604 x 105.

## DCP/ACRE Sign-up

Sign-up for ACRE until June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Participants in DCP can sign up until August 2<sup>nd</sup> for land they operate that has a history of corn base acres.

Deadlines/Events	
April 19 <sup>th</sup>	NRCS Programs
April 22 <sup>nd</sup> & 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Healthy Soils Workshop (reg. by 4/5)
May 1 <sup>st</sup>	HWFRC
June 1 <sup>st</sup>	Farm Records
June 7 <sup>th</sup>	SURE
June 14 <sup>th</sup>	CRP
July 10 <sup>th</sup>	Acreage Reporting
August 2 <sup>nd</sup>	DCP

## **MBAg**

Fourteen farms have finished the ten week pilot course to help create a Farm Business Plan to determine what pays the bills on the farm.

Paula Stahl and Joe Bonelli created the course made possible through grant funds from The Last Green Valley, USDA, with matching hours from UConn College of Ag&NR/CES.

An advanced MBAg course is now taking place.

If you are interested in participating or a future MBAg course; contact Paula Stahl at 860-486-1215 or [paula.stahl@uconn.edu](mailto:paula.stahl@uconn.edu)

## **4-H Auction May 3 & 4th**

326 Taft Pond Road, Pomfret

860-974-3379  
(To donate)

## **Farm Safety**

The crop year is just beginning. Take a few moments to be sure equipment is properly maintained and that all operators know the proper handling and safety aspects of farming.

## **The Economics of Healthy Soils and Cover Crops**

A conference and field trip will be held on April 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> to share insight and actions that will help unlock the secrets of healthy soils. Raymond Covino, NRCS District Conservationist, can be contacted at 860-779-0557 x 102. The agenda is at [www.easternrcd-ct.org](http://www.easternrcd-ct.org) and you can register for \$20. CEU can be credited. RSVP by April 5<sup>th</sup>.

## **Adjusted Gross Income**

Participants in USDA programs cannot exceed established income levels of \$500,000 to \$1 million. Form CCC-933 is filed annually to show compliance with these levels. USDA and IRS verify AGI. No actual tax or income data is reported to FSA; only that a farm and the members are in compliance with AGI provisions.

## **Rural Youth Loans**

FSA loans for rural youth can help 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 is \$5,000.

## **Guaranteed Loan Program**

The loan limit for this program has increased to \$1,302,000. The one-time loan origination fee charged on guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans is 1.5% of the guaranteed portion of the loan. A guaranteed loan is made through a qualified bank or a lender like Farm Credit East.

## **Farm Storage Facility Loans**

If you need storage for crops you grow, the FSFL program offers low interest rates to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities. March rates were 1.4% to 2% for loans ranging from 7, 10 or 12 years.

An application and \$100 fee must be submitted and the loan approved before any work begins. A 15% down payment is required.

A 50% partial disbursement can be made after a portion of the construction is done. Final loan disbursement is made upon completion.

We've made loans in Windham County for bunker silos for corn silage; haylage and earlage; a hay barn for dry hay, and cold storage for apples.

Contact Dawn Pindell if you'd like to learn more or want to visit a structure.

## **AGvocate Program**

The AGvocate program is now entering the fourth year. John Guskowski, Director, is a resource to the 14 initial towns and is working with new towns interested in agriculture commissions. A 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference was held in February.

Some of the activities towns are doing to support and enhance agriculture are:

- Farm Brochures
- Radio talk shows
- Farm tours; talks, walks and events
- Interacting with community leaders
- Enhancing Farmers Market

For more information contact John at 860-455-8251 or [AGvocate@outlook.com](mailto:AGvocate@outlook.com)

Also visit [www.thelastgreenvalley.org](http://www.thelastgreenvalley.org) and click on AgInfo then click on AGvocate Program.

Be sure to sign-up for Walktober by **April 4<sup>th</sup>** if you'd like to share your farm through a great month of awesome walks in The Last Green Valley.