



## FSA UPDATES

# Addison Agriculture



**Addison County FSA**  
68 Catamount Park  
Middlebury, VT 05753

Phone: (802) 388-6748

Fax: (802) 388-3709

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

#### Hours

Monday - Friday

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

#### County Committee

Thomas Audet,  
Phyllis Bowdish  
Curt Estey  
COC meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday  
of each month

#### County Executive Director

Craig Miner (EXT15)  
Craig.Miner@vt.usda.gov

#### Program Staff

Lisa Gaboriault, PT (X11)  
Billie Jo Forgues, PT (X10)

#### Farm Loan Manager

Gary Braman, FLM (x18)  
Gary.Braman@vt.usda.gov

#### Farm Loan Staff

David Girard, FLO (x20)  
Jill Thomas, FLO (x17)  
Mari Quesnel, PT (x28)

#### Wool/Mohair/Unshorn Pelt LDPs

*For crop year 2008—*

**February 2, 2009** is the final deadline to apply for a 2008 crop wool/ mohair/unshorn pelt Loan Deficiency Payment (LDP). **You must apply and provide documentation by this date! Call for further information.**

#### 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 their files can be maintained.

#### Report of Payments to Producers

A summary of all earned payments and/or refunds during the previous calendar year, will be mailed to producers during the last week of January. Form CCC 1099-G will be mailed from KCMO

#### County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Phyllis Bowdish. Phyllis was elected to represent farmers from LAA #2, which represents the towns of Addison, Cornwall, Goshen, Granville, Hancock, Middlebury, Panton, and Weybridge on the county committee. Phyllis was elected to her 2nd consecutive term.

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

The committee members held their organizational meeting and have elected Tom Audet to serve as the county committee chairperson and Phyllis Bowdish to serve as the vice-chairperson. Curt Estey continues to serve as regular member.

#### Disaster Signup Continues – Quality payments now available- Deadline set for February 27, 2009

*The County office needs consultant documentation by February 13, 2009 for each applicant since we need time to process applications for producer signatures by the February 27, 2009 deadline.* Signup for Quantity and Quality Losses under the Crop Disaster Program (CDP) continues. CDP provides benefits to farmers who suffered quantity and/or quality losses in 2005, 2006 or 2007. Only producers who obtained crop insurance coverage or coverage under NAP for the year of loss will be eligible for CDP benefits.

Please submit your information to the office ASAP  
Call the FSA Office for more information

#### 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.

#### 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 most recent Farm Bill and most other FSA administered programs. This can be done by completing an FSA-211, Power of Attorney. The form is available at your local USDA Service Center or online 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.

#### Special Accommodations

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the county FSA office directly or by phone.

#### MILC Sign Up Underway –

Signup for the Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC) is underway and will continue through the program's expiration date, Sept. 30, 2012. The 2008 Farm Bill reauthorized the MILC Program.

Under the new regulations for the Program, the per-operation limit is modified for the period from October, 2008 through August, 2012 to a maximum of 2.985 million pounds of milk per fiscal year. In addition, a "feed cost adjuster" will be included in the calculation of the monthly MILC payment rate. It will adjust the \$16.94 per hundredweight benchmark price upward depending on the cost of feed rations as determined by NASS in the National Average Dairy Feed Ration Cost. MILC payments will be authorized on a monthly basis when the adjusted target price exceeds the Boston Class I price for that month.

#### Applications for FSA Loans

Farmers and ranchers that intend to apply to the Farm Service Agency for loan assistance for the upcoming crop year are encouraged to file their applications as early as possible. Filing early will help ensure that your loan is processed and approved as early as possible so that planting decisions can be made. Failure to apply early can result in a delay in processing loans due to the volume of applications that must be processed in date order. Contact our farm loan team for more details and assistance in applying.

#### Appeal Process

After an FSA official makes a decision on your request for USDA services or application, you will be sent a letter informing you of the decision and options you can pursue if you disagree.

Generally, program participants have four choices – an informal review with the original agency decision-maker, an opportunity for mediation, appeal to State Committee and appeal to the USDA National Appeal Division (NAD).

#### Civil Rights 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.

#### Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment (DCP) program Sign-Up Begins

Enrollment for the 2009 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment (DCP) Program for farms with base acres continues through June 1, 2009. The June 1, 2009 deadline is mandatory for all participants. USDA will not accept any late-filed applications.

For 2009, eligible producers may request to receive advance direct payments of 22 percent of the total payment for each commodity associated with the farm. USDA will be able to issue advance direct payments once a producer has applied and met all eligibility requirements.

Addison County Farm Service Agency  
68 Catamount Park Suite A  
Middlebury, VT 05753-1292



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### **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.*

### **There are Known 2008 Local Bank Changes \*\*\* See Below for Bank Account Changes**

Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into your bank account. Forms are available at the FSA office to sign up for direct deposit. 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 of any change to your direct deposit account.** Payments can be delayed if we are not aware of changes to your account and routing #'s.

### **USDA Enacts Changes to Payment Limitations, Income Qualifications, and begins Direct Attribution**

USDA recently published an interim final regulation in the Federal Register announcing changes to both Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) qualifications, program payment limitations, and direct attribution for FSA and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs, which became effective in accordance with the 2008 Farm Bill.

For commodity and disaster programs, the AGI limitation was reduced from \$2.5 million AGI from all sources to a three-year average non-farm AGI of \$500,000 such that a person or entity shall not be eligible for such programs if the non-farm AGI exceeds \$500,000. Also, under the new regulations, an individual or entity must have a 3-year average AGI less than or equal to \$750,000 per year from farm income in order to qualify for direct payments issued under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program. More info to come.

### **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program**

Farmers are able to take advantage of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) by signing up under continuous sign up provisions. CREP will reimburse farmers for retiring cropland or pastureland adjacent to streams, ponds and rivers by establishing buffers and similar conservation practices. Program participants will receive annual rental payments, cost-share assistance, and other financial incentives for either 10, 15 or 30 year contracts for installing and maintaining forested riparian buffers or grass filter strips. The buffers and filter strips are narrow in width so contract acreage is minimal, BUT, payments are substantial to provide attractive incentive. Annual rental payments vary from \$58/ac to \$206/ac and sign up bonuses vary from \$100/ac to \$2055/ac. For more information about CREP call 388-6748, ext 15 or stop by the FSA office.

### **Foreign Buyers Notification**

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act 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 percent 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 reporting requirements.

### **Youth Loans**

Remember FSA makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to establish and operate income producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be initiated, developed, carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organization or with a vocational teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and operated with the assistance of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. Contact your local FSA office for more details.