

November 2007



FSA UPDATES

Chittenden/Washington
County
USDA Service Center

**Chittenden/Washington
County FSA**

802 865-7895 x4
800 910-2035 x4 (VT only)
802 865-7947 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/VT

Hours

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

County Committee

John Rowley, Jr. LAA-1
Claude Lapierre LAA-2
Deborah Conant LAA-3
Elwin Neill, Jr. LAA-4
Michelle Gardner LAA-5

**Upcoming County
Committee Meeting**

Dates

December 10, 2007
January 16, 2007

Staff

Lawrence Parker x102
Eileen Powers x106
Pearl Wells x100
Bradford Parker x103

**Natural Resources
Conservation Service**

Caroline Alves x203
Tate Jeffrey x119
Michel Lapointe x118
Danny Peet x202
Norman Smith x117

**Winooski Natural
Resources Conservation
District**

Jessica Andreoletti x104
Anna Farmer x204

CDP Signup Starts – LIP and LCP Continue

The Crop Disaster Program (CDP) provides benefits to farmers who suffered quantity and quality losses to 2005, 2006, or 2007 crops. **CDP signup** for quantity loss **began October 15, 2007.**

Losses from natural disasters may qualify for financial assistance if the crop was planted before Feb. 28, 2007, or, in the case of prevented plantings, for crops that would have been planted before Feb. 28, 2007. Producers who incurred qualifying losses in 2005, 2006 or 2007 must choose **only one year** to apply for benefits. Participants may apply for loss benefits on multiple commodities as long as the losses occurred in the same crop year.

Only producers who obtained crop insurance coverage or coverage under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the year of loss will be eligible for CDP benefits. Producers must have suffered quantity losses in excess of 35 percent to be eligible for CDP.

Ranchers and other livestock producers can also apply to receive benefits under the Livestock Compensation Program (LCP) and Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP). LCP compensates livestock producers for feed losses occurring between Jan.1, 2005, and Feb. 28, 2007, due to a natural disaster. LIP compensates livestock producers for livestock losses during that same time period. For more information on these and other programs simply contact the nearest USDA Farm Service Agency office.

Voting for County Committee Begins

Ballots for this year's county committee election were mailed to eligible voters on November 2, 2007. Voters must complete their ballots and return them to the Farm Service Agency county office by the close of business on December 3, 2007. ***If mailed, ballots must be postmarked by midnight December 3rd.***

The only LAA electing members this year is LAA #1 in Chittenden County. The towns served in this LAA are Burlington, Colchester, Essex, Milton, S. Burlington, Westford and Winooski. The candidates to serve as a committee member in this year's election are: ***Richard Parizo*** and ***Donald Pouliot.*** Parizo is a dairy farmer who resides in Milton. Pouliot is a dairy farmer who resides in Westford.

Eligible voters in local administrative area #1 who ***have not*** received a ballot should contact the FSA County Office staff. 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. *Participate or cooperate* in any FSA program that is provided for by law.

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.

Census Gives Farmers a Voice In Their Future



America's farmers and ranchers will soon have the opportunity to participate in shaping the future of agriculture. The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will begin distribution of the 2007 Census of Agriculture next month.

According to NASS, the Census of Agriculture provides information that is not available anywhere else – information that benefits agricultural producers and their communities in many ways. Policy-makers use Census data for decisions concerning agricultural and rural programs. Community planners use Census information to target delivery of local services. Companies rely on Census data when determining where to locate their operations. And farmers themselves look at Census data when deciding to make changes in their production strategies.

Conducted every five years by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Census is a complete count of the nation's farms and ranches and the people who operate them. The Census looks at land use and ownership, operator characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures and other topics. It provides the only source of uniform, comprehensive agricultural data for every county in the nation.

NASS will mail out Census forms on December 28, 2007 to collect data for the 2007 calendar year. Completed forms are due by February 4, 2008. Producers can return their forms by mail or, for the first time, they have the convenient option of filling out the Census online via a secure web site at <http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/>.

e-Forms Available

Producers with Internet access can fill out and print a variety of FSA paper forms at home.

Producers are encouraged to register for secure electronic access that will allow them to

e-file (electronically sign and transmit) some forms directly to the county office staff. To sign and transmit forms electronically, you must sign up and get a user name and password. To sign up in person, visit the county office and complete form AD-2016. The staff will verify your identity and enter your information into the system. You will receive a letter with your temporary ID. You will be sent a second letter with your temporary password and instructions on how to activate your account. You then go to the Activation Web site and select a permanent ID and password.

Submitting an e-Form is convenient. You can access information anytime day or night seven days a week. It's also faster. Forms and applications can be submitted and received in the county office in a matter of minutes, not days or weeks.

Changing Banks

Almost all Farm Service Agency payments are made electronically using Direct Deposit. This innovation has cut down on the number of missing and late payments and reduced the time required to move funds. It has been determined that the chance of having a problem with a payment is 20 times greater with checks than with Direct Deposit. Another benefit is that Direct Deposit to your account can be made within 48 hours.

To keep the system running smoothly, it's critical to keep the county office staff up to date on changes you might make in your financial institutions.

If you have changed accounts or institutions that might affect the direct deposit of your FSA payments, contact the FSA county office so we can update our files to insure continued uninterrupted service.

Selling Land

If you're planning to sell farmland, there may be some program consequences you should be aware of. For example, if you're planning to sell land that's enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program, the buyer must agree to continue the enrollment. If the buyer doesn't want to continue the CRP contract, you might have to refund all of the payments you've received to date.



Reviewing program implications with your local Farm Service Agency staff before completing a sale of farmland is always a prudent precaution.

Continuous CRP

The Continuous Conservation Reserve Program is a private lands environmental improvement program that allows participants the opportunity to enroll acreages in conservation practices that will reduce soil erosion, improve water and soil quality and provide wildlife habitat and food sources.

The Continuous CRP program is a voluntary enrollment program. Eligible landowners enter into contracts that range from 10 to 15 years in length. In return, the landowners will receive annual rental and maintenance payments, incentive payments for certain activities, and cost share for establishment.

To be eligible for enrollment in the Continuous CRP, participants and acreage must meet certain requirements. Provided the eligibility requirements are met, FSA will automatically accept enrollments of acreage into Continuous CRP. Landowners may enroll in the program at any time during the year.

For more information on Continuous CRP enrollments or local Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) availability, please contact your local FSA office or visit <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/publications/facts/html/crpcont03.htm>.



Reasonable Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment to attend or participate in meetings or events sponsored by the Farm Service Agency. If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in one of our events, please call the FSA county office and we will be happy to make any needed arrangements.

Farm Reconstitutions

In program terminology, farms are *constituted* to group all tracts having the same owner and the same operator under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation

take place, a farm *reconstitution* is necessary. The reconstitution — or recon — is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. The following are the different methods used when doing a farm recon. Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by Aug. 1 for farms enrolled in the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program.

Estate Method — the division of bases, allotments and quotas for a parent farm among heirs in settling an estate;

Designation of Landowner Method — may be used when:

- ▶ part of a farm is sold or ownership is transferred;
- ▶ an entire farm is sold to two or more persons;
- ▶ farm ownership is transferred to two or more persons;
- ▶ part of a tract is sold or ownership is transferred;
- ▶ a tract is sold to two or more persons; or
- ▶ tract ownership is transferred to two or more persons. In order to use this method the land sold must have been owned for at least three years, or a waiver granted, and the buyer and seller must sign a Memorandum of Understanding;

DCP Cropland Method — the division of bases in the same proportion that the DCP cropland for each resulting tract relates to the DCP cropland on the parent tract;

Default Method — the division of bases for a parent farm with each tract maintaining the bases attributed to the tract level when the reconstitution is initiated in the system.

If DCP direct payments have already been issued on a particular farm, the reconstitution will be effective for the next year, unless the payments are refunded.



Selected Interest Rates for November 2007	
90-Day Treasury Bill	4.125%
Farm Operating - Direct	4.75%
Farm Ownership - Direct	5.375%
Limited Resource	5.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	4.00%
Emergency	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility	4.375%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	5.125%

Dates to Remember	
Nov 12 th	Office Closed for Federal Holiday – Veterans Day
Nov 20 th	NAP Application Deadline for Selected Crops
Nov 22 nd	Office Closed for Federal Holiday – Thanksgiving Day
Dec 3 rd	Last day to return County Committee Elections ballots
Dec 25 th	Office Closed for Federal Holiday – Christmas Day
Continues	Continuous CRP
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loans

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

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