

June 2008

FSA UPDATES



**Chittenden/Washington
County
USDA Service Center**

**Chittenden/Washington
County FSA**

802 865-7895 x3
800 910-2035 x3
802 865-7947 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/VT

Hours

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

County Committee

Richard Parizo LAA-1
Claude Lapierre LAA-2
Deborah Conant LAA-3
Elwin Neill, Jr. LAA-4
Michelle Gardner LAA-2

**Upcoming County
County Committee**

Meeting Dates

June 25, 2008
July 16, 2008

Staff

Caitlin Cooper x101
Bradford Parker x103
Lawrence Parker x102
Eileen Powers x106
Pearl Wells x100

Natural Resources

Conservation Service

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

Disaster Signup Continues

Eligible farmers and ranchers who suffered livestock losses, feed losses, or crop loss damage before Dec. 31, 2007, can still apply to receive disaster assistance.

FSA has announced a **July 18, 2008 deadline for sign up under the Livestock Compensation Program (LCP)**. LCP provides aid to eligible livestock producers who suffered livestock feed losses between January 1, 2005 and December 30, 2007 due to natural disaster. For Vermont producers, the eligible program year is 2006, when continual excessive rains caused losses in pastures and in harvested feed. You are entitled to benefits by certifying to pasture loss or if you can provide documentation for increased feed costs or other feed losses. Eligible feed expenses include atypical purchases of feed stuffs to either extend or improve your TMR, increased volume of grains purchased, increases in grain costs due to higher protein or energy needs, or purchases of feed that you normally produce yourself in adequate volumes. Additional feed costs must have been incurred from May 15, 2006 through May 14, 2007. Other rules do apply, so please contact this office for more details.

For more disaster program information go online at: <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov>

Crop Reporting

The annual requirement of reporting to the FSA office can be referred to as crop reporting, acreage reporting, or crop certification. Filing an accurate and timely report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent loss of benefits for a variety of Farm Service Agency programs. All cropland on the farm must be reported to receive benefits from the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, marketing assistance loans and Loan Deficiency Payments.

The certification form FSA-578, Report of Acreage, must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. The producer certification deadline for *all crops* has been extended until Aug. 15, 2008. **Don't wait until the last minute-call for an appointment today!**

CRP & NAP Certification

Conservation Reserve Program acreage must be reported to receive annual rental payments. And, crop acreage for Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) must also be reported.

Prevented Planting:

Prevented planting is to be reported no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date.

Failed Acreage:

Reports of failed acreage must be filed before disposition of the crop, and producers must be able to establish to the satisfaction of the county committee that the crop failed and was prevented from being replanted through the normal planting period because of natural disaster conditions.

2008 Compliance

Compliance and spot checks will once again be utilized during the 2008 crop year. Instead of locally selecting farms, contracts, deficiency loans, etc. for spot check and review, a nationwide selection of producers is used to achieve a statistical sampling of participating producers. Spot check selections are to be conducted based on a producer's participation in Conservation Reserve Program, Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, Loan Deficiency Program, etc.

State and County Offices shall view and print their producer spot check lists as posted on the designated web site. If an entity is selected from the national database that is no longer farming or participating in the 2008 crop year, a notation shall be made on the spot check list. For more information about the new spot



check selection procedure, feel free to contact your local Farm Service Agency office for additional clarification.

Controlled Substances

Program participants convicted under federal or state law of any planting, cultivating, growing, producing, harvesting or storing a controlled substance are ineligible for program payments and benefits.

If convicted of one of these offenses, the program participant shall be ineligible during that crop year and the four succeeding crop years for direct and counter-cyclical payments, price support loans, loan deficiency payments, market loan gains, storage payments, farm facility loans, Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program payments or disaster payments.

Program participants convicted of any federal or state offense consisting of the distribution (trafficking) of a controlled substance shall, at the discretion of the court, be ineligible for any or all program payments and benefits:

- for up to 5 years after the first conviction
- for up to 10 years after the second conviction
- permanently for a third or subsequent conviction.

Program participants convicted of federal or state offense for the possession of a controlled substance shall be ineligible, at the discretion of the court, for any or all program benefits, as follows:

- up to 1 year upon the first conviction
- up to 5 years after a second or subsequent conviction.

Continuous CRP

The Continuous Conservation Reserve Program is a private lands environmental improvement program that allows participants the opportunity to enroll environmentally sensitive 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, in

centive payments for certain activities, and cost

share for the establishment of eligible practices.

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.

Power of Attorney

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., FSA has a power of attorney form available that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. If you are interested, please contact our office or any Farm Service Agency office near you for more information. If you want a crop loan, a power of attorney form will need to be completed for husband and wife, if both do not come into the office to sign the forms on the day the loan is disbursed.

Online Services

Producers, if you have Internet access you can electronically log on, fill out and print a variety of FSA paper forms in the comfort of your home as your schedule allows. You can also register for secure electronic access that will allow you to electronically sign and transmit some forms directly to the county office staff. If you are new to the website, first you will want to obtain a Level 2 USDA Service Center Customer ID and password at: <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/> and then click on "Create an Account Page" link.

USDA eAuthentication is the system used by USDA agencies to enable customers to obtain accounts that will allow them to access USDA Web applications and services via the Internet. This includes things such as submitting forms electronically, completing surveys online, and checking the status of your USDA accounts.

If you already have a Customer ID and password, then click on the following eForms website at:

<http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainserverlet> and then click on the "Sign In" button. A disclaimer window will open and after you read the "Warning message" click on the "Continue" button.



Then the USDA Web services page will open to the eAuthentication login page. Enter your login User ID and password and then click on the "Login" button. To sign and transmit forms electronically, you must sign-up and get a User ID and password.

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

Special 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.

Measurement Service

Farmers who would like a guarantee on their crop plantings and land use acreages can make it official by using the FSA measurement service. Producers must file a request with the county office staff and pay the cost of a field visit to have stake and referencing done on the farm.

Incorrect acreage self-certification can result in reduced program payments, penalty, or loss of eligibility.

Producers can request computerized data files of aerial photography and farm & field boundaries at no charge. Maps are also available showing acreage for all crop fields at the producer's request.



Crop Disaster Program (CDP)

Sign-up continues for the *quantity* part of the Crop Disaster Program (CDP). An ending date has not yet been announced. CDP-quantity provides benefits to farmers who suffered quantity losses to 2005, 2006 or 2007 crops from natural disasters and related conditions. Producers who incurred qualifying losses must choose only one year to receive benefits. Producers may apply for benefits for losses to multiple crops as long as the losses occurred in the same crop year.

****Producers must have suffered quantity losses in excess of 35 percent to be eligible for CDP.****

Only producers who obtained crop insurance coverage or coverage under the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the year of loss will be eligible for CDP benefits.

Software for County Offices to process CDP-*quality loss* applications will be released in late June. Sign-up for the Quality portion of CDP can occur before then. As we learn more about the program parameters and what documentation is required, we will be better able to convey to you what you will need to provide.

UVM Extension and Vermont Center for Independent Living Programs

Rural & Agricultural VocRehab (RAVR) -- Provides support for health evaluation, counseling, and assistance in job maintenance or placement for people with disabilities who reside in rural parts of Vermont and/or are employed in some form of agriculture. Contact information for RAVR: Rutland 802-773-3349 or 1-800-281-6977, St. Albans 802-524-6501 or 1-800-639-2130, St. Johnsbury 802-751-8307 or 1-800-545-8920

Vermont AgrAbility Project -- Their no cost services include information and referral, on-site and technical assistance, secondary injury prevention, peer support, training and education. Farmers eligible for Vermont AgrAbility services may have any type of acquired or traumatic disability--physical, cognitive or sensory. Contact information for



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Vermont AgriAbility Project: William Snow, 802-223-2389, 866-860-1382, or via e-mail: william.snow@uvm.edu One or both of these programs could help with the following (to list a few examples): Personal Employment Plans; Counseling and Guidance; Job Training; Worksite/Homesite modifications; Machinery/Homesite Adaptations. These programs could help producers who have arthritis, Parkinson's, repetitive use problems, hearing loss as well as providing assisted technology solutions, etc.

Dates to Remember	
June 15	Candidate nominations for the FSA county committee begin
July 4	Independence Day – Office Closed
July 18	LCP signup closes
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve program
August 15	Crop Reporting Deadline

Selected Interest Rates for June 2008	
Farm Operating - Direct	3.125%
Farm Ownership - Direct	4.875%
Limited Resource - Farm Operating	5.00%
Limited Resource - Farm Ownership	5.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment Beginning Farmer or Rancher	4.00%

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

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