



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

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

**Upcoming County
Committee Meeting**

Dates

September 17, 2008
October 15, 2008

Staff

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

Natural Resources

Caroline Alves x203
Tate Jeffrey x19
Michel Lapointe x118
Danny Peet x202
Norman Smith x117

**Winooski Natural
Resources Conservation
District**

Ashley Lidman x104

2008 Crop “Buy-in” for Future Disaster Programs

Colchester, VT, Aug. 15, 2008 – Harvey Smith, State Executive Director for USDA’s Farm Service Agency in Vermont, reminds Vermont crop producers that the deadline to obtain “buy-in” coverage under FSA’s future Disaster Assistance Programs created by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill) is September 16, 2008.

“The 2008 Farm Bill created new disaster programs which require that producers have crop insurance for all insurable crops and/or NAP coverage for noninsurable crops for all farms in all counties in which they have an interest,” said SED Smith. In Vermont, this would include all commercial production of corn, hay, soybeans, maple, fruits, vegetables, tree fruits, etc. Crops produced for livestock feed are considered commercial crops, therefore pastureland grazed by livestock would be included in that requirement. Deadlines for obtaining crop insurance and/or NAP coverage have passed for 2008 crops. However, the Farm Bill provided that producers would be allowed to sign a waiver request and pay a “buy-in” fee to be eligible for the future disaster programs. This fee does not get them actual crop insurance or NAP coverage for 2008, but will allow them to be eligible for the new disaster programs.

With Vermont farmers being affected by disastrous weather this summer and potential losses due to that weather, SED Smith stressed that crop producers need to be aware of the requirements. Because the new disaster program regulations have not been written yet, potential benefits from those programs are difficult to determine.

The following questions are provided to assist a producer in making the decision whether to pay the buy-in fee:

- **Do you anticipate having losses in crop production quantity or quality for 2008?**

If you say “no”, you do not need to

“buy-in”. If you say “yes”, see next question.

- **Do you have crop insurance and/or NAP coverage for ALL crops which you produce commercially?**

If you say “yes”, you do not need to “buy-in”. If you say “no” or you are not sure, see next question.

- **Do you want to have the option of applying for benefits for 2008 losses under the new disaster programs?**

If you say “no”, you do not need to “buy-in”. If you say “yes”, contact your local USDA Service Center to determine what your fee will be.

SED Smith said, “Those who miss this opportunity will not be eligible for disaster assistance.”

The deadline for paying the buy-in fee is September 16, 2008.

2008 DCP

Producers have until September 30, 2008 to sign up in the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) for this fiscal year. Participants can expect their final direct payment to be directly deposited into personal bank accounts sometime during the first few weeks of October.

Producers who did not elect to receive an advance direct payment will receive their entire direct payment for the year in one lump sum after the end of the fiscal year (September 30).

The direct payment for a crop equals 85 percent of the farm’s base acreage *times* (x) the farm’s direct payment yield *times* (x) the direct payment rate.

If there are any unearned payments, Commodity Credit Corporation will automatically subtract those amounts from the final DCP payments a producers is about to receive.





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 2009 coverage on fall seeded crops has been extended to December 1, 2008. In order to be eligible for disaster assistance programs, like SURE, producers are required to timely purchase, at a minimum, CAT coverage for all insurable crops and/or NAP coverage for all non-insurable crops on their entire farm.

NAP coverage for 2009 costs \$250 per crop, but not more than \$750 per producer per county, or not more than \$1875 total per producer for all counties.

Producers who already have coverage on 2008 NAP crops may choose to continue coverage on the same crop or crops for 2009, if the applicable service fee is submitted by the application closing date. A new CCC-471, application for coverage is not required to be signed when applying for continuous coverage of the same crop or crops.

Producers who choose to add a new crop(s) or delete a crop(s) from previous year's coverage or changing crop shares must file a new CCC-471 with signatures and pay the applicable service fee.

Producers with 2008 NAP coverage must remember to complete the following to qualify for benefits:

- Timely file acreage reports and keep track of harvested production using acceptable methods. For example, bale weights or other means of determining quantities of hay are required.
- File a "Notice of Loss" within 15 days of when a loss is apparent, due to drought, hail, etc.

SAFE Conservation Projects

Enrollment in Vermont State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) continues. SAFE is a component of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), tailored to specific watershed areas.

SAFE practices serve to restore wildlife habitat by establishing small blocks of grassland (10-40 acres) and enhancing existing habitats. Certain wildlife species are in decline, and SAFE habitats are designed to help revitalize these populations.

Under CRP, farmers and ranchers enroll eligible land in 10 to 15-year contracts. These plantings help prevent soil and nutrients from running into regional waterways and affecting water quality. The long-term vegetative cover also improves wildlife habitat and soil quality.

In addition to the annual rental payment and cost-share, SAFE may offer participants an up front one-time CRP Signing Incentive Payment (SIP) of \$100 per each SIP-eligible acre and a Practice Incentive Payment when cost share is made.

For more information about potential SAFE projects in your area, contact your local FSA office.

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, 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, please contact your local FSA office.

County Committee Elections

A slate of nominees for your county committee election has been established. The next step in the election process is the mailing of the ballots, which will begin on November 3, 2008. Voters have until December 1, 2008, to return their properly completed ballots to the county office. Elected committee members and alternates take office on Jan. 1, 2008.

Prospective Voter Requirements - Anyone who meets the requirements in either, 1 or 2, as well as item number 3, is eligible to vote for county committee members.

1. Voter is of legal voting age and participates or cooperates in any FSA program, or
2. The voter is not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations on an entire farm.
3. The voter must also be eligible to participate in any FSA program provided by law, regardless of the status of funding.

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.

If you have any questions about your voter eligibility, please contact your county office staff.

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

Succession in Interest

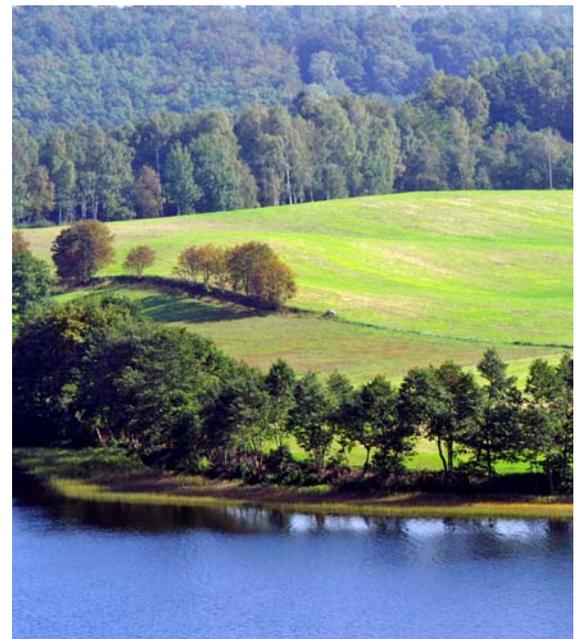
If you have made any changes that affect your interest in base acres since you signed your last Direct and Counter-cyclical Program contract, you must report these ***successions-in-interest*** to the county committee by Sept. 30, so that a final determination can be made on who is program eligible on the property.

Changes that qualify as a succession-in-interest include:

- A sale of land
- A change of operator or producer, including an increase or decrease in the number of partners
- A foreclosure, bankruptcy or involuntary loss of the farm.
- A change in producer shares to reflect changes in the producer's share of the crop(s) that were originally approved on the contract.

If a succession-in-interest has taken place, you, as the "predecessor," are required to refund any advance DCP payments you received for the affected base acres before a payment can be made to the "successor."

Not reporting a succession-in-interest can result in contract termination and a loss of program benefits for all producers involved.





**PRESORTED STANDARD
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Selected Interest Rates for September 2008	
Farm Operating - Direct	3.875%
Farm Ownership - Direct	5.125%
Limited Resource - Farm Operating	5.00%
Limited Resource - Farm Ownership	5.00%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Emergency	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility	3.875%

Dates to Remember	
Sept. 1	Labor Day – Office Closed
Sept. 16	Crop insurance and NAP “Buy-in fee” for 2008 crops due
Sept. 30	2008 DCP Sign Up deadline
Oct. 13	Columbus Day – Office Closed
Continues	Continuous Conservation Reserve program

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

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