

September 2007

Orleans County News



Farm Service Agency

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

County Committee

Scott Birch, Chair
Brad Maxwell, Vice Chair
Doug Lawson, Voting Member
Donna Hammond, Minority Advisor

COC meets 2nd Wednesday of each month.

NRCS District

Karen O'Donnell, Clerk X18
Marybeth Whitten, ARS X22
Dee Nault
Paul Daniels, Chair
Betsy Inkel, Vice Chair
Richard Delfavero, Treasurer
Burton Strong
William Ryan
Darryl Mongeon

NRCS Staff

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Loan Staff

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Dorcas McAllister, FLO X15
Cheryl Smith, PT X13
Angela Goodridge, PT X12
Meghan DuBois, FLOT X17

Program Staff

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Laurie Locke, PT X16
Brock Columbia, PT X26



Land Changes

If you have added or dropped land, please contact the office to update your information. This will assist us in preparing for crop reporting.



SIGN-UP DATES FOR NEW LIVESTOCK AND CROP DISASTER PROGRAMS

Sign-up dates for the new Livestock Compensation Program, Livestock Indemnity Program and Crop Disaster Program have been announced. Eligible ranchers and other livestock producers can apply to receive benefits under the Livestock Compensation Program (LCP) and Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) starting **September 10, 2007**. Eligible farmers can sign-up for the Crop Disaster Program (CDP) beginning **October 15, 2007**, if they suffered quantity losses to their crops. USDA will announce and conduct CDP sign-up for quality losses at a later date but as soon as possible.

LCP compensates livestock producers for pasture losses and LIP for livestock losses occurring between Jan. 1, 2005, and Feb. 28, 2007, due to a natural disaster. Producers in primary counties declared secretarial disaster areas or certain counties declared presidential disaster areas between Jan. 1, 2005, and Feb. 28, 2007, are eligible as are producers located in counties contiguous to those counties.

CDP provides benefits to farmers who suffered quantity and quality losses to 2005, 2006, or 2007 crops from natural disasters 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. Producers may apply for benefits for losses to 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. Contact the FSA county office for more details.

Loans Available for Beginning Farmers, Socially Disadvantaged

FSA is authorized to assist beginning farmers and or members of socially disadvantaged groups to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person whom:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA

Reasonable Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If special accommodations are required, please call the Farm Service Agency county office staff, and we will be happy to make any arrangements that are necessary.

MILC-X Program Continues

On May 25, 2007, the President signed legislation that provides, among other things, the continuation of MILCX program benefits through September 30, 2007.

The Farm Service Agency's Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC) compensates dairy producers when domestic milk prices fall below a specified level, and the extended program period is called MILCX.

Eligible dairy producers are those who, beginning Dec. 1, 2001, through Sept. 30, 2007: Commercially produced and marketed cow milk in the United States; or produced milk in the United States and commercially marketed the milk outside the U.S.

The minor programmatic change required by the May legislation will **not** require another sign-up. The price shortfall percentage for the payment calculation increased from 0 to 34 percent, which makes the Sept. 2007 payment rate calculation consistent for all other months in FY06 and FY07. MILCX payments to program participants with an approved CCC-580X will continue from the designated production start month selected by the dairy operator, and run through September 30, 2007. All other program provisions remain the same.

Boston Class I payment rates for August of \$25.01 and September of \$25.16 are well above the trigger for MILCX payments so no payments will be issued for either month.

SELECTING A NEW ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

With today's farming operations covering more than one county, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) wants to inform producers they have the option to combine their farm records in the FSA office of their choice for convenience purposes. Selecting a new administrative FSA office is an option available to producers for the ease of servicing FSA program participation on farms in multiple counties.

Ordinarily Farm Service Agency procedure dictated that farm units were administered in the county office where the land was physically located. That restriction created the following problems:

- Producers had to visit two or more FSA offices for each task they wished to complete.
- Producers needed to keep production separate for LDP purposes, potentially leading to problems and lost benefits.
- Duplication of some tasks by the affected FSA offices and delayed payments as paperwork was transmitted between counties.

Changing to a new administrative office allows a producer to transfer farm records to a neighboring county office if they can document to FSA that the change would be "significantly" more convenient. Examples of significantly more convenient would be working in the town, or doing most other farming business in the town. Other reasons may exist.

Transferring farm records to a new administrative county office for convenience is a one time selection for the current operator and land owner. The operator and land owner must agree to do business in the new administrative county once the records are transferred. However, a new operator would have the option of transferring the land to another county in the future.

Additional information on transferring farm records is available at any FSA office.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

ECP Sign-Up Announced

The County Committee (COC) **announces a sign-up period** for the July 11, 2007 localized severe thunderstorms and flash flooding disaster. If you sustained significant damage due to this storm, please contact the FSA office to file a claim for disaster assistance. **The sign-up period will be from August 27, 2007 through September 21, 2007.** There is no funding at this time but we are authorized to accept applications during the sign-up period. Should funding become available at a later date, applicants will be notified.

ECP provides emergency funding and technical assistance for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters and for carrying out emergency water conservation measures in periods of severe drought.

- Each County Committee will determine land eligibility based on on-site inspections of damage, taking into account the type and extent of damage.
- For land to be eligible, the natural disaster must create new conservation problems that, if untreated, would:
 1. impair or endanger the land;
 2. materially affect the land's productive capacity;
 3. represent unusual damage which, except for wind erosion, is not the type likely to recur frequently in the same area; and
 4. be so costly to repair that Federal assistance is or will be required to return the land to productive agricultural use.
- Producers should check with county office staff regarding ECP sign-up periods, which are set by the County Committee.
- ECP funding is subject to Adjusted Gross Income provisions.

Organic Dairy Production & Transition Workshops

Monday, Sept 24th -- Applecheek farm, Hyde Park, VT

Tuesday, Sept 25th --Brattleboro H.S. Career Center, Brattleboro, VT

Consumer demand for organic dairy products and markets for organic milk are expanding each year. If you are interested in learning how to become an organic dairy producer, come to this workshop for an in-depth look at organic dairying.

Workshop Highlights:

- Become familiar with National Organic Standards for dairy and livestock production.
- Become informed about how to transition to organic milk production.
- Hear from organic dairy farmers about their practices & experiences.
- Learn about market trends for organic milk and organic livestock grains.
- Meet organic service providers, suppliers and dealers.
- Discover more about marketing and processing organic milk.



For information, registration & directions to workshop locations, contact:

NOFA-VT

P.O. Box 697 Richmond, VT 05477

802-434-4122; info@nofavt.org

Farm Storage Facility Loans

Low cost loans for storage facilities are available for producers to build or remodel farm storage facilities for a variety of commodities, including wheat, rice, soybeans and corn.

The seven-year Farm Storage Facility Loans are available for the purchase and installation of eligible storage facilities, permanently affixed drying or handling equipment, or remodeling existing facilities. Eligible facilities include new conventional-type cribs or bins, new and remanufactured oxygen-limiting, other upright silo-type structures and bunker type silo structures.

All farm storage facility loans are secured by a promissory note and security agreement. The maximum amount that may be borrowed is 85 percent of the net cost of the storage or handling equipment, up to \$100,000 for each borrower. A minimum down payment is also required. For details, contact the county office staff.

CREP—Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

Is CREP Right for You?

CREP is an incentive-based voluntary program that aims to improve water quality in streams and lakes. This is accomplished by helping agricultural landowners to install vegetative and riparian buffers along streams which filter runoff by trapping sediment, fertilizers and pesticides, help to stabilize streambanks, and improve in-stream and terrestrial wildlife habitat. Since this riparian land is often very productive and vital to an agricultural operation, landowners are compensated for the loss of productive agricultural land through upfront incentive payments and annual rental payments based on the total acreage dedicated to forested buffer or vegetated filter strips. Contracts can either be 15 or 30 years, during which time the buffers must be maintained by the contracted individual.

Federal cost-share and incentive payments are available to cover 90% of the implementation costs associated with permanent fencing, alternative water systems, stream crossings and vegetative buffer establishment. In some instances the costs may be covered 100%. Riparian buffers are a low cost and effective method to significantly improve water quality. Contact the FSA office for more information.