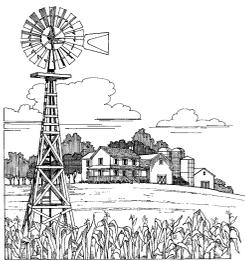


February 2008

Orleans County News



Farm Service Agency

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334-1365-Fax

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
Bill Lawson, Vice Chair
Richard Delfavero, Treasurer
Burton Strong
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Brock Columbia, PT X26



Change in Farming Operations

Producers need to update signature authorization when there are any changes in the ownership/operating structure of their operation. Producers are reminded to contact the office to report any change in the operation on their farm so that records can be kept current. Documents and forms to determine eligibility and payment limitations are reviewed on an annual basis. Entities are required to provide names, addresses & ID #'s of their members as well as operating documents.

2002 Farm Bill Extension

The 2008 catch all spending bill signed by President Bush on Dec. 26, 2007, extends FSA's authority to administer the Conservation Reserve Program and marketing loan benefits for wool and mohair through March 15, 2008. It also allows the Milk Price Support Program (MILCX) to continue operating at current price support levels through March 15, 2008. Under the 2002 Farm Bill, USDA's authority to administer these three programs expired on Dec. 31, 2007. Additionally, the law provides \$3.3 billion in direct and guaranteed loan funds for FSA's Farm Loan Programs.

Disaster Eligibility Date Extended

Eligible farmers and ranchers who suffered livestock, livestock feed and crop losses that occurred before Dec. 31, 2007, can now apply to receive disaster payments.

Sign-up is currently going on for:

CDP—quantity

- Producers must have suffered quantity losses in excess of 35%
- Crop must have been insured during year of loss

LCP – Livestock Compensation Program

- Covers pasture losses and additional feed costs
- Crop year 2006 only
- Livestock must have been owned and on-site as of May 1, 2006

The Dairy Disaster Assistance Payment (DDAP-III) Program,

- Provides benefits to eligible dairy producers for production losses suffered as a result of natural disasters since Jan. 1, 2005 and has been extended to include disasters occurring before Dec. 31, 2007.
- The base period for the disaster year will be the average annual marketed production and average number of dairy cows for the calendar years 2004 and 2004.
- Nationwide, this program will provide \$16 million in benefits.
- DDAP-III program sign-up is expected to resume on Feb 4, 2008.

No deadlines have been announced for any Disaster Program sign-up.

CDP – quality

- Producers must have suffered a minimum loss of 25% of feed quality
- Crop must have been insured during year of loss
- Sign-up scheduled to begin this spring

Kansas City Mails 1099-G

During the last week of January, producers who have received payments from FSA should have also received a CCC-1099-G from the Kansas City office. A CCC-1099-G is a report to the Internal Revenue Service about FSA payments made to you in calendar year 2007. The CCC-1099-G is a service to help participating producers report taxable income. It is not intended to replace the program participant's responsibility to report income to the IRS.

If you received a CCC-1099-G, we recommend that you check the amounts shown with those in your records to see that the amounts are correct. Refunds will no longer be reported on the 1099-G, but will be available online from the FSA Financial Inquiries (FSA-FI) web-based database. Program participants with eAuthentication user ID's and passwords can access their refund information at FSA-FI and select "Inquiry Type 1099/Refund Reports". Refund amounts are displayed on the Producer's Year-to-Date Activity web page.

If you have a question concerning the 1099-G refund information, you may contact your local FSA office for assistance locating the correct payment data. If you choose to visit the office, bring your CCC-1099-G with you.

NAP Coverage Deadline

Producers in need of insurance coverage for crops not covered by federal crop insurance (FCIC) can enroll in FSA's Noninsured Crop Assistance Program (NAP). NAP is a federally funded program that provides coverage to producers for non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory or prevented planting occurs due to natural disasters. Crops eligible for NAP coverage are those for which crop insurance is not available, including fruits and vegetables, aquaculture, pecans, turf grass and forage crops just to name a few. NAP coverage requires a service fee of \$100 per crop, per producer with a \$300 cap per county. Out-of-pocket expenses will not exceed \$900 for any producer, even if production occurs in more than three counties. Service fees may be waived for eligible limited resource producers.

NAP applications for coverage must be filed and service fees paid, by the applicable closing date. Application closing dates vary by crop. Orleans County producers can contact the FSA Office for specific crop application sales closing dates at: 802-334-6090.

More information on NAP and additional disaster assistance programs is available online at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/>

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.

Direct and Guaranteed Loans Available

The Farm Service Agency is committed to providing family farmers with loans to meet their farm credit needs. If you are having trouble getting the credit you need for your farm, or regularly borrow from FSA, direct and guaranteed loans are available now. Ask your lender about an FSA loan guarantee if you've had a setback and your lender is reluctant to extend or renew your loan. Loan funds are available now — applying early is important so that a loan can be processed and funded in a timely manner. Most of our loan programs have special funding available for minority, female and beginning farmers.

Honey Loans Available

Marketing assistance loans and loan deficiency payments for 2007 crop year honey are available until March 31, 2008. The national loan rate for honey is \$0.60 per pound. Market prices currently exceed the loan rate; so LDP's are not available right now. To be eligible for a loan, the producer must have produced honey in the United States during the calendar year for which the loan is requested, and extracted the honey on or before Dec. 31 of the applicable crop year; have continuous beneficial interest in the honey through date of repayment of the loan; and been responsible for the financial risk of keeping the honey. Producers are responsible for maintaining the quality of farm-stored honey during the term of the loan.

The honey must be produced in the United States by an eligible producer, from an approved floral source, and stored in approved containers. The containers must be marked with the producer's name, type of honey, number of container and net weight. Pre-loan inspections are required before the loans can be disbursed.

Honey used as collateral may not be disposed of without approval of the county office staff.

NASS Statistical Surveys

Have you been asked to participate in a survey with USDA's Agriculture Statistics Service?

The Quarterly Agricultural Surveys, conducted by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) provide inventory and production estimates for crops and livestock at state and national levels. Each quarter a list sample of farm operators are contacted by mail, telephone or personal interview for inventory information on the land they operate. Sample segments also screened for farm operators.

Why is it important for producers to participate in these surveys?

Because...

Statistical information on acreage, production, stocks, prices, and income is essential for the smooth operation of Federal farm programs. It is also indispensable for planning and administering related Federal and State programs in such areas as consumer protection, conservation and environmental quality, trade, education, and recreation.

Moreover, the regular updating of information helps to ensure an orderly flow of goods and services among agriculture's producing, processing, and marketing sectors. Reliable, timely, and detailed crop and livestock statistics help to maintain a stable economic climate and minimize the uncertainties and risks associated with the production, marketing, and distribution of commodities.

Resource Guide for New Farmers

There is a great resource guide available on the web entitled "RESOURCE GUIDE FOR VERMONT'S NEW AND ASPIRING FARMERS". The guide contains info on FSA, NRCS, NOA, UVM Extension, Women's Agricultural Network and many more. The guide also contains articles on Access to Capital, Production Knowledge, Skills and Technical Assistance, farm land, and markets and marketing. The web site is: <http://www.vermontagriculture.com/agdev/newfarm.htm>

Conservation Compliance

All participants in USDA programs are required to have a conservation system in place on all the highly erodible land (HEL) that they operate. Several areas where problems can arise with complying with a conservation system are; renting new cropland, purchasing new land, breaking out additional cropland, planting different crops such as soybeans, and changing or removing existing conservation practices.

It is very important that you contact the FSA office before doing any of the above. Also, it is very important that you contact our office before modifying - tiling, draining, dredging, filling, or leveling - any wetland or drainage ditch. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in loss of all Federal payments and eligibility.