



# Rutland/Bennington County News

## Rutland/Bennington County FSA

170 S Main St STE 4  
Rutland, VT 05701-4559  
802-775-8034  
800-300-6927 (VT)  
802-773-4177 (FAX)  
802-253-0191 (TDD)

### Hours

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

### County Committee

David Seward, Chair  
Richard Sheldon, Vice Chair  
Richard P Browe  
Karl Strohmaier  
Clifton Cressy Sr.

### Minority Advisor

Cristine Carabeau

### Upcoming COC Meeting Dates

September 15, 2010

### Staff

Diane Heleba, PT X 10  
Marge Christy, PT X 12  
Michelle Smith, SCEP X 13

### Co. Executive Director

Phyllis L Torrey X 11

### Farm Loan Staff

802-388-6748 (Middlebury)  
1-888-408-3783 (Loans)

### Farm Loan Manager

Gary Braman

### Loan Officers

David Girard  
Jill Cioffi-Thomas

*Farm Loan Staff is in the Rutland Service Center by appointment* - Ext 22

### NRCS Staff

Jennifer Varin, DC X 14  
Steve Pytlik X 18  
Sally Eugair X 16  
Les Wright X 23  
Corinne Matarese X 21  
Carla Fenner X 26

### Rutland NRCD

Nanci McGuire X 17

### Poultney-Mettowee NRCD

Marli Rupe 287-8339

### Bennington NRCD

Shelly Stiles 442-2275

## CRP General Sign-up 39 now through August 27<sup>th</sup>

General sign-up 39 for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is now open and will continue through August 27, 2010. During the sign-up period, farmers and ranchers may offer eligible land for CRP's competitive general sign-up. FSA will accept offers only during the sign-up period.

CRP provides conservation practices that preserve the soil, clean water, and restore wildlife habitat. Producers enrolling in CRP plant long-term, resource-conserving covers in exchange for annual rental payments, cost-share, and technical assistance. Participants voluntarily remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production by entering into long-term contracts for 10 to 15 years.

FSA will rank offers according to the Environmental Benefits Index (EBI). FSA collects data (primarily based on location, soils information and desired conservation practice) on environmental indices for the land offered. Each eligible offer is ranked in comparison to all other offers and selects from that ranking. After the sign-up ends, the Secretary will decide where to make the EBI cutoff. Producers may consult with local FSA and NRCS staff on how to maximize EBI points and increase the likelihood that their offer will be accepted.

## Reminder to Report Disasters and Adverse Weather Conditions

One of the responsibilities of the COC is to *document weather conditions, occurrences, and cropping progression* throughout the area at their regularly scheduled monthly meetings. This documentation becomes an *official record* that can be used to justify requests for disaster declaration and may lead to eligibility for various disaster programs.

The best source of local information is you, the producer. If there is an adverse weather event in your area or your crops are suffering, we would appreciate it if you would take the time to let us know.

Those with NAP coverage, don't forget to timely report all covered losses. If you feel there is a problem brewing, report it! *Be proactive and communicate your observations and situations; it can only help!*

## SURE Program – 2008 Application Deadline Sept 30, 2010

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters that occurred in crop years 2008 through 2011. **September 30, 2010 is the application deadline for 2008 SURE program.**

*Here are some specifics*--All your crops in all counties must have been insured (either through RMA or NAP). At least one crop of economic significance must have suffered a 10% production loss due to an eligible disaster condition.

Call the office to see if you meet the quality loss factors and what you need to provide for production records.

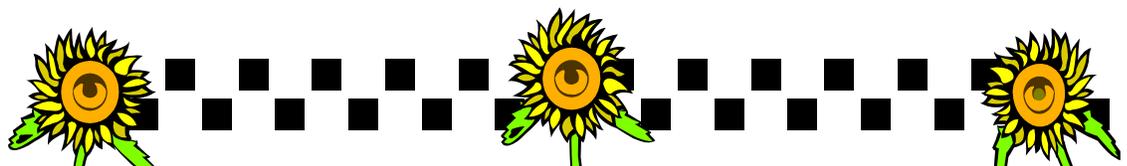
## Debt for Nature Program (DFN)

The Debt for Nature Program (DFN), also known as the Debt Cancellation Conservation Contract Program, is a unique program for eligible landowners that protects important natural resources and other sensitive areas while providing a debt management tool.

Debt for Nature is available to persons with Farm Service Agency (FSA) direct loans secured by real estate. These individuals may qualify for cancellation of a portion of their FSA indebtedness in exchange for a conservation contract with a term of 50, 30, or 10 years. The conservation contract is a voluntary legal agreement that restricts the type and amount of development that may take place on portions of the landowner's property. Contracts may be established on marginal cropland and other environmentally sensitive lands for conservation, recreation, and wildlife purposes.

By participating in this program, direct loan customers may reduce their Farm Service Agency debt, thereby improving their overall financial stability.

For more information contact the Middlebury FSA loan Office at 802 388-6748 or 1-888-408-3783



Dates to Remember	
August 27	GRP General sign up 39 ends
September 1	ACRE Production Due
September 6	Labor Day – Office Closed
September 30	2008 SURE Sign-up Ends
November 20	NAP Fees Due –2011 Mixed Forage & Perennials
November 20	Forage Production due
Ongoing	Conservation Reserve Program/ CREP
	Farm Storage Facility Loan
	Milk Income Loss Contract

### Wetland Compliance

Producers renting or purchasing land that may have a converted wetland status need to check with the county office to learn if there are restrictions.

Farm Bill regulations provide that, unless exempt, persons are ineligible for benefits under certain programs administered by USDA if they

- plant an agricultural commodity on wetland that was converted after December 23, 1985
- convert a wetland after November 28, 1990

FSA may not approve any loan or loan guarantee to drain, dredge, fill, level or otherwise manipulate a wetland, or to engage in any activity that results in impairing or reducing the flow, circulation or reach of water except in the case of activity related to the maintenance of previously converted wetlands.

The following provides permitted uses and restrictions of certain wetlands for compliance with Wetland compliance provisions:

- wetlands can be farmed under natural conditions, but not converted
- wetlands converted before November 28, 1990, cannot be planted to an agricultural commodity and retain
- eligibility for benefits
- wetlands converted after Nov. 28, 1990, must either be restored to wetland status or mitigated to regain eligibility for program benefits.
- wetlands that can be farmed under natural conditions cannot be manipulated in any way, unless the Natural Resources Conservation Service determines the work would have a minimal effect on the wetland values
- wetlands converted before December 23, 1985, can be farmed and maintained
- Additional information about wetlands is available at the USDA Service Center.

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

### Crop Insurance Buy-Up Policies Eligible for Partial Reimbursement

Financial Assistance Program (FAP) funding will be provided to producers in Vermont who purchase buy-up insurance policies (except for CAT policies) for the 2010 crop year with acreage reporting dates prior to September 30.

Risk Management Agency (RMA) will provide a fixed premium reduction of \$150 per crop policy for eligible producers. If the total producer-paid premium per cop policy is less than \$150, the amount of premium reduction will be capped at 100% of premium.

RMA is making \$3.5 million available for this initiative. If participation in FAP exceeds this amount, RMA will determine a pro-ration factor . Approved Insurance Providers (AIPs) will reduce the amount of financial assistance using this factor.

Additional information is available from your crop insurance agent or by visiting RMA website at <http://www.rma.usda.gov>.