



# NEWSLETTER



## Rutland Service Center

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  
Karl Strohmaier, Vice Chair  
Richard Sheldon  
Richard P Browe  
David Parker

### Minority Advisor

Cristine Carabeau

### 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

1-888-408-3783

Gary Braman, Manager  
David Girard, Loan Officer  
Jill-Thomas, Loan Officer

### NRCS Staff

Jennifer Varin, DC X 14  
Jeannie Skalka 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 802 287-8339

### Bennington NRCD

Shelly Stiles 802 442-2275

### VACD- CREP Planner

Elizabeth "Liz" Brock X 22



## Emergency Conservation Program

### Approved for Maple Cleanup

February 15 – March 18, 2011

The USDA's Farm Service Agency has approved Rutland and Bennington Counties' request to implement the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) to help clean up maple sugar orchards damaged by the December 1, 2010 severe wind storm. Under the ECP, participants are generally reimbursed up to 75% of the costs, not to exceed an amount determined by the local FSA County Committee, to repair or restore farmland damaged by natural disasters. Sugar bushes must have sustained a minimum of \$1,000 of eligible damages to qualify and an on-site inspection by an FSA employee must be performed.

Currently, no cost sharing funding is available for this clean up. However, applicants may begin restoration work now to prepare for the 2011 sugaring season provided that they file an application first. Those who already started clean up or have finished and have not filed an application, must file an application with the county FSA office within 30 days of this announcement to be considered for cost sharing.

If funding is approved for the program, applicants will be reimbursed for eligible expenses providing they keep and submit written records of hours and dates worked during the clean up. The deadline to apply in Rutland/Bennington County is **March 18, 2011**. Contact the County FSA Office at 775-8034 or 1-800-300-6927 to apply for ECP assistance or to obtain more information.

## Conservation Loan Program

The Conservation Loan (CL) Program provides farmers with the funding necessary to implement conservation measures on their land. The available limit for a direct CL is \$300,000, and the limit for a guaranteed CL is \$1,119,000.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will work with applicants to develop a conservation plan containing approved conservation practices. Examples of some conservation practices are: water conservation structures, forest cover, permanent pastures, manure digesters, and other installations.

For more information on a potential Conservation Loan, call 1-888-408-3783 (the Middlebury FSA office) and make an appointment with a loan officer.

## New Improved Crop Insurance Policy for the 2011 Crop Year

There is a brand new insurance policy that becomes available for spring planted crops of corn (silage and grain), soybeans, and grain sorghum. It's referred to as COMBO, or combination, because it includes three insurance plans (APH yield and two revenue plans). Key advantages of the new policy are: common language, all prices are based on futures market prices similar to CRC in the past, insurance unit options will include enterprise units for all plans, which can result in about 50% premium discount. The standardization of the basics between different plans makes it easier for producers to make side-by-side comparisons of features, performance, and premium costs between the different insurance plans and unit options. To view a Power Point presentation detailing these changes for spring crops, visit:

<http://cropins.aers.psu.edu/Presentations.htm>. Current policyholders will automatically receive a new replacement 2011 policy with similar benefits as they chose for their 2010 policy. You can still have most of the features of your previous plan by checking one of three boxes in the new policy when you sign up through a crop insurance agent. Insurance agents will be prepared to help you fine tune your new policies to help you better meet your needs for 2011. The spring seeded crop **enrollment/policy change deadlines for most crops is March 15 for 2011 protection.**

### Dates to Remember

February 15	Maple Sap Production Report Due
February 16	COC Meeting 10:30 AM
February 21	Presidents' Day, USDA Offices Closed
March 1	FAP Deadline (See insert)
March 7	<i>Soil &amp; Phosphorous Workshop -GMC</i>
March 15	NAP Fees Due – <b>Spring-seeded crops</b> , incl. vegetables
March 15	Crop Insurance (Corn & sweet corn)
March 16	COC Meeting 10:30 AM
March 22	2 <sup>nd</sup> Annual Farmer Resource Fair - GMC
June 1	DCP/ACRE Signup
July 15	Crop Acreage Reports due 2010 Harvested Production Due
July 29	2009 SURE Deadline
Ongoing	Conservation Reserve Program/ CREP
	Farm Storage Facility Loan
	Milk Income Loss Contract

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

### WEATHER PROBLEMS

If severe weather strikes your farm and causes significant property loss, please contact our office. Your notification informs us of problems and we can submit a disaster report to Washington through the Governor's office. This doesn't guarantee you any kind of help, but usually it results in a designation for emergency loans and alerts policy makers of the weather problems.

### Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)

Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) is available for losses of commercial livestock for barn roof collapses or other losses from recent snow storms. LIP is intended to help producers recover from livestock deaths that are beyond normal mortality rates. For livestock death losses to be eligible, producers must file a notice of loss with the County office within 30 calendar days from when the loss is apparent to the producer. It is important to document the number, kind and size of livestock that have died as a direct result of the storms. Fact sheets for this program can be found at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>. For more information call the county office at 802 775-8034 or 1-800-300-6927.

### Report Production for NAP

Farmers who had 2010 NAP coverage for mixed forage are asked to report total harvested production as soon as possible to the county office. A memo from your feed consultant is encouraged, although self certification is acceptable. All types of production whether it was put up as haylage, baleage or dry bales, is required and due by **July 15, 2011**.

Maintain your copy of this report for a period of not less than 3 years following the year of certification.

### Soil and Phosphorous Workshop

Southern VT Nutrient Management Program and Poultney Mettowee Conservation District are sponsoring a Soil and Phosphorous Workshop on March 7 at 9:30 – 3:00 at Green Mountain College. Cost is \$10 (includes lunch). RSVP by February 25 to Jennifer Alexander 802-558-6470 or Marli Rupe 802-287-8339. Topics include Aerator Research results, soil biology, phosphorous sources and more. Guest speakers will be Wendy Sue Harper and Heather Darby.

## Adjusted Gross Income

USDA has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Internal Revenue Service to establish an electronic information exchange process for verifying compliance with the adjusted gross income (AGI) provisions for farm programs. Written consent will be required from each producer or payment recipient for the tax review process. No actual tax data will be included in the report that IRS sends to USDA.

The agreement ensures that payments are not issued to producers whose AGI exceeds certain limits. The limits set in the 2008 Farm Bill are \$500,000 nonfarm average AGI for commodity and disaster programs; \$750,000 farm average AGI for direct payments; and \$1 million nonfarm average AGI for conservation programs.

Participants in CCC programs subject to average AGI rules must submit form CCC-927 (Individual) and/or CCC-928 (Legal Entity) to the Internal Revenue Service by June 15. These forms may be obtained from local FSA and NRCS offices or online at: <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainse/vlet>.

## 1099-G

Producers who have received payments from FSA should have received a CCC-1099-G. A CCC-1099-G is a report to the Internal Revenue Service about FSA payments made to producers during the previous calendar year. 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.

When the CCC-1099-G is received, it should be checked with 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 an eAuthentication user ID and password may 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 county FSA office for assistance locating the correct payment data.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Farmers Resource Fair

On Tuesday, March 22nd, farmers are invited to the Rutland Area Farm and Food Link's 6th Annual Farmers' Gathering. This annual event is co-sponsored by Green Mountain College and Poultney Mettowee Natural Resource Conservation District and provides a forum for the region to discuss relevant agricultural issues. These gatherings guide RAFFL's work and serve as a networking opportunity among farmers, buyers and regional agricultural service providers.

### **This year's Farmers' Gathering will include:**

**Farmer Workshops** from 1:00 to 5:30 pm

**Farmer Resource Fair** from 4:30 to 7:00 pm

**Local Food Feast** at 7:00 pm

**Farm to Plate Strategic Plan** presentation by Ellen Kahler, Executive Director of the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund following the meal

Workshops topics will include food safety plans for farms, hiring farm employees, on-farm composting, scaling up farm operations to reach Farm to Plate plan goals and the needs of institutional buyers of local food.

The Resource Fair provides an opportunity for farmers to learn about the many services and programs that are available to help with farm management and agricultural development. Local, state and federal organizations and agencies will staff displays with information on subjects including conservation programs, agricultural promotion and development, nutrient management, farm financing, home and farm stress management, energy and vocational rehabilitation and more.

Workshop descriptions and times, a full list of displays and organizations, and registration links for workshop attendance are available at [www.rutlandfarmandfood.org](http://www.rutlandfarmandfood.org). Check back often for updated information!

Are you an agricultural organization that would like to participate in the Resource Fair? Visit [www.rutlandfarmandfood.org](http://www.rutlandfarmandfood.org) or call Garland Mason, Local Link Coordinator at 802-287-2940.

Join us for a time of education, sharing and discussion. For further information, contact India Burnett Farmer at [india@rutlandfarmandfood.org](mailto:india@rutlandfarmandfood.org).

## **Farm Agronomic Practices (FAP) Program Update**

### **2011 Spring Practices:**

We are asking that applications for spring practices be received by **March 1, 2011**. Applications received after March 1 may be approved at reduced program rates. The practices must be implemented by June 30, 2011 to be eligible. Below are the available practices and brief practice descriptions:

- **Conservation Crop Rotation** (up to \$25/acre): Land is eligible for this practice at the time of seeding from an annual crop to perennial forage.
- **Strip Cropping** (up to \$25/acre): Row crops, forages, small grains, or fallow land in a systematic arrangement of equal width strips across a field.
- **Cross-Slope Tillage** (up to \$10/acre): Tillage and crop planting conducted by following the contours of the land on slopes equal to or greater than 5%.
- **Zone-Till** (up to \$12/acre): a strip no greater than ten inches wide is created in existing residue and the crop is planted within the strip.
- **No-Till** (up to \$12/acre): soil is left undisturbed from harvest to planting and crops are planted directly into the existing residue.
- **Mulch-Till** (up to \$12/acre): minimum of 30 percent of the soil surface is covered by plant residue immediately following planting of the crop.
- **Aeration Tillage** (up to \$12/acre): aeration tillage followed by conventional liquid manure application on perennial forage cropland.
- **Alternative Manure Incorporation** (up to \$25/acre): manure injection, aeration done at the same time as a low level splash plate manure application, and aeration prior to drag line low level splash plate manure application.
- **Nurse Crop Cover Cropping** (up to \$25 per acre): ex. oats in a perennial forage seed blend.

### **Winter Cover Cropping:**

We are still accepting applications if producers seeded cover crops by the October 15 deadline, but the practice rate has been lowered to **\$15/acre**. Funding is available on a first come first serve basis at the reduced rate.

### **Additional program information and notes:**

- Claims for payment for summer and fall practices must be received by December 31, 2010.
- There is a program maximum of \$5,000 per farm each fiscal year (July 1 – June 30).
- Please remember that if you receive funding from NRCS or any other organization for the practice(s) you are applying for you may not be eligible to receive state funding.
- It is important that applications are received prior to the practices being implemented. This will allow us to let you know whether or not funds are available before you implement the practice. If you implement a practice before you are approved for funding you may not receive funding.

### **FAP applications and additional program information available at:**

<http://www.vermontagriculture.com/ARMES/awq/FAP.html>

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