



Windham County News

**Windham County
USDA Service Center**
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www.fsa.usda.gov

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

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Program Technician
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*George is in Windham Co.
Every 2nd & 4th Tuesday of the
month or by appointment*

County Committee
Charles Robb Jr., Chair
Peter Barrett, Vice Chair

*County Committee meets
2nd Thursday of the Month*

NRCS Staff
Charles Armstrong x101
Chuck.Armstrong@vt.usda.gov

NRC District Staff
Jolene Hamilton, Mgr.x104
Sylvia Harris x105



Julie's Notes

- Now is a great time to consider the CRP program, as erosion and invasive species make themselves known! Please read further in this newsletter for more info about the program and call the office with any questions or to have us visit to determine if we can help!
- Acreage reporting is around the corner. Producers, please remember to let us know what you're planting where.
- Census workers will be out this summer. I encourage all producers to provide them with info if you haven't already filled out your census forms. Programs and allocation dollars for Vermont's agricultural community are based on data derived from census reporting!
- Farm Storage Facility Loan Program if you are considering using the FSFL to build a new storage facility for cold-storage (like apples), hay etc. & related equipment this fall, please think about getting your paperwork together soon, as it will take a few months to complete.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Continuous Sign-Up

The Continuous Conservation Reserve Program is an environmental improvement program that allows participants to enroll acreages in conservation practices that will reduce soil erosion, improve water and soil quality, and provide wildlife habitat and food sources.

Continuous CRP program participation is voluntary. Eligible landowners/producers may enter into contracts that range from 10 to 15 years in length. In return, they receive annual rental and maintenance payments, incentive payments for certain activities such as animal trails, invasive species control, tree and shrub plantings etc., and cost shares for establishment of these activities.

Please call the FSA office if you have any questions or would like more information.

ELAP Loss Filing Extended to May 5th

Producers now have an extension to submit claims for losses under the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP). A claim for loss must be filed by May 5, 2010.

Producers are eligible to file claims due to adverse weather conditions for the physical loss of honeybees in excess of normal honeybee mortality or colony collapse disorder (CCD), various livestock, or farm-raised bait or game fish. Payments are based on 60 percent of the average fair market value, as determined by FSA.

Claims filed may be for losses that occurred in 2008 and/or 2009. Acceptable documentation of loss is required. Please call the FSA office with any questions.

Sign-Up Underway for DCP & ACRE Programs – Deadline June 1st

Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program (DCP)

FSA computes DCP program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices.

For 2010, producers may request to receive advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment for each commodity associated with the farm.

ACRE Program – A Different Approach

The optional ACRE Program provides a safety net based on state revenue losses and acts in place of the price-based safety net of counter-cyclical payments under DCP.

Under ACRE, a producer's payment is based on a revenue guarantee calculated using a five-year average state yield and the most recent two-year

UPCOMING EVENTS & WORKSHOPS

5/13/10

Farm Safety for the Growing Season Webinar, 7-8pm

This is an on-line course with VT AgrAbility's Farm Safety Education Officer Alexandra Jump.

Newcomers to online learning are welcome. All you need to participate is internet access and a computer that you can hear sound through. To participate, please go to <http://tinyurl.com/2ant2xu> at about 6:45 pm Eastern time.

For more information call 802-223-2389 x203 or newfarmer@uvm.edu

If you require accommodations to participate in this program, please contact Mary Peabody by May 6 at 802-223-2389 or 1-866-860-1382 (toll-free in VT) or mary.peabody@uvm.edu so we may assist you.

5/18/10

Keyline Plowing Workshop & Training

Beidler Family Farm Randolph Center, VT
Learn about Keyline plowing techniques.

Contact:

Jennifer Colby
VT Pasture Network
Outreach Coordinator
(802) 656-0858
jcolby@uvm.edu



national price for each eligible commodity, as opposed to a standardized national yield as used in DCP calculations. For 2010, the two-year price average will be based on the 2008 and 2009 crop years.

An ACRE payment is issued when both the state and the farm have incurred a revenue loss. If enrolled in ACRE instead of DCP, a farm's direct payment is reduced by 20% and marketing assistance loan rates are reduced by 30%.

If you choose to sign up for this program, you do not have to enroll all of your farms. Once a farm is enrolled in ACRE, though, it will remain enrolled for that initial crop year and through the 2012 crop year. Additionally, the owner of the farm and all producers on the farm must agree to enroll in ACRE.

The sign-up deadline for both DCP and ACRE programs is June 1, 2010.

Acreage Reporting to Begin!

The annual requirement of reporting to the FSA office can be referred to as crop reporting, acreage reporting or crop certification. Filing an accurate and timely report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent loss of benefits for a variety of FSA programs. All cropland on the farm must be reported to receive benefits from DCP, ACRE, SURE and ELAP disaster programs etc., several conservation programs such as CRP, insurance programs like NAP, and newer programs authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill.

The certification form FSA-578, Report of Acreage, must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. The producer certification deadline is **June 30th for small grains** and **July 15th for all other crops**.

Planting Dates – Please keep track of your planting dates as these are needed when you certify your crop acreage. Those dates are helpful to you in the event of a disaster program. Planting dates are required for farmers enrolled in NAP and crop insurance.

CRP, GRP & NAP Certification - Conservation and Grassland Reserve Program acreage must be reported to receive annual rental pay-

ments. And, crop acreage for Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) must also be reported.

Prevented Planting - Prevented planting is to be reported no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date.

Failed Acreage - Reports of failed acreage must be filed before disposition of the crop, and producers must be able to establish to the satisfaction of the county committee that the crop failed and was prevented from being replanted through the normal planting period because of natural disaster conditions.

AGI Verification Forms Due to IRS June 15, 2010

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, 2010 to avoid interruption of program benefits. Forms may be obtained from the FSA/NRCS office or online at: <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainseivlet>

Please call the USDA Service Center if you have any questions at (802) 254-9766.



The People's Garden Initiative: Windham County FSA teams with UVM Extension and the VT Foodbank

The People's Garden Initiative (PGI) is an Obama administration and USDA-led initiative to help others nurture, maintain and protect a healthy landscape. Some of the activities undertaken for the PGI include: helping to develop or volunteer time in a community garden, planting trees, pollinator and butterfly gardens, creating rain gardens, holding educational events, and assisting in food donation efforts to needy populations.

The Windham County FSA office is involved in two activities for this important initiative:

1. We have partnered with UVM Extension and their Youth Agriculture Project to plant perennial fruit shrubs & trees at their 1-acre garden site in Brattleboro. The youth will learn about soil amendments, planting techniques, pruning, harvesting etc.

FSA and the other agencies here at our USDA Service Center will also volunteer time to plant, weed and work on various other projects in the garden.

More info about the Youth Ag. Program is here: <http://www.uvm.edu/extension/youth/>

2. We are coordinating with the Vermont Foodbank to connect farmers with the Foodbank's donation programs. Agricultural donations can be made through direct contribution of harvested produce or other products, and/or by allowing supervised volunteers to pick excess fruits and vegetables via the VT Foodbank's Gleaning Program ("gleaning" is reaping after the harvest any excess/unsalable product).

By working with the Foodbank, farms can ensure that none of their labor is wasted on products that are never consumed, and Vermonters who would ordinarily go without have access to this source of nourishment. In 2009 Vermont farmers contributed more than 409,000 pounds of fresh whole foods.

For more info about the VT Foodbank's programs and how to donate, visit

www.vtfoodbank.org or contact Theresa Snow, Program Director of Ag. Resources, at: (802) 477-4114 or tsnow@vtfoodbank.org.

For more information about FSA's involvement in either of these partnerships, please contact Dana at the FSA office at ex. 100.

Stipends and Scholarships for VT Farm Women

The Vermont Farm Women's Fund (VFWF) is offering its next round of grants to help women farmers improve their businesses or become more involved in agricultural policy development. Grants are for a maximum amount of \$750.

Since its first round of funding in May 2008, the fund has awarded stipends to fifteen women. Farmers have used their awards to help research and develop new products; conduct feasibility studies; and to attend workshops, conferences and classes to learn new marketing, business management and value-added production skills and knowledge.

Women account for a growing share of Vermont farmers. The most recent USDA Census of Agriculture showed that the number of female principal farm operators in Vermont increased by 50 percent, from 967 to 1466 between 2002 and 2007. The data also show that women typically operate smaller farms and have lower farm earnings than their male counterparts.

The University of Vermont Extension, through the Women's Agricultural Network (WAgN), serves as the fiscal agent for the fund and administers the grant award process. A panel of Vermont farm women makes award decisions.

The deadline for submitting grant applications is May 15, 2010.

For more information on this program, visit: <http://www.uvm.edu/~vfwf>

Click on the "Upcoming Deadlines and Applications" link on the left to get to the online application form. Or, you can request an application package by calling Grant Administrator, Libby McDonald at 802-999-4506.

DATES TO REMEMBER

5/5/10 ELAP filing deadline

5/15/10 Proposal deadline for VFWF grants

6/15/10 AGI verification forms due to IRS

6/1/10 Sign-up deadline for DCP program

6/1/10 Sign-up deadline for ACRE program

6/30/10 Crop reporting deadline for small grains

7/15/10 Crop reporting deadline for all other crops

Ongoing

Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL)

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) sign-up

Loans for Beginning and Youth Farmers

Loan Assistance for annual operating costs, livestock, equipment, bridge loans for projects etc.

Windham County FSA Office
28 Vernon St., STE 331
Brattleboro, VT 05301



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HORSE MANURE COMPOST BINS

Manure Happens - Call now to find out how you can get the lumber cut to size for a 20'x10', 2 stall compost bin plus free technical assistance, with just a \$100 donation to the Windham County Natural Resources Conservation District!

CONTACT

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Brattleboro, VT 05301

- ▶ Compost for Clean Water
- ▶ Compost for Horse Health
- ▶ Compost for Fly Control
- ▶ Compost to Save Money

MAY Interest Rates

Farm Operating – Direct.....	2.8750%
Farm Ownership – Direct.....	5.000%
Farm Ownership – Direct, Joint Financing.....	5.000%
Farm Ownership – Down Payment.....	1.500%
Emergency Loan – Amount of Actual Loss.....	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility Loan CCC-185 (As of 4/1)	
7 year.....	3.125%
10 year.....	3.625%
12 year.....	4.000%
Crop Year Commodity Loans	1.375%



Visit FSA's web site at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/>

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