

### Franklin-Grand Isle County FSA

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Suite 2  
St. Albans, VT 05478

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[www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)

#### Hours

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

### Farm Service Agency County Committee

Maurice Fortin, Chairperson  
Madonne Rainville, Vice-Chairperson  
Dwight Bullis, Member  
Andrew Brouillette, Member  
Diane McGarry, Member

**NOTE: COC meets 3<sup>rd</sup>**

**Thursday each month at 11:00**

### County Executive Director

Brenda Ladue (ext. 106)

### Staff

Carolyn Church, P.T. (ext. 109)  
George Godin, P.T. (ext. 107)  
Luc Dupuis, P.T. (ext. 105)  
Tracy Derry, P.T. (ext. 124)  
Marguerite Noel, P.T. (ext. 100)  
Dorothy Perkins, P.T. (ext. 113)

### Loan Manager

Dirk Reith (ext. 110)

### Loan Officers

Brad Parker (ext. 112)  
Liz Vesosky (ext. 111)

### Natural Resources

#### Conservation Service

Angela L. Biggs, D.C. (ext. 118)  
Joanne Yousten, S.C. (ext. 115)  
Sarah Larose, S.C. (ext. 127)  
Diane Ladue, C.T. (ext. 121)  
Diane Forey, P.A. (ext. 101)  
Roslyn Odum, Ag. Eng. (ext. 128)  
Ann Lansberry, C. E.T. (116)

### Natural Resources

#### Conservation District

Renae Masse, Manager (ext. 119)  
Agricultural Land Treatment &  
Conservation Planners:  
Carla Fenner (ext. 117)  
Trevor Lewis (ext. 120)  
Mark Marsh (ext. 126)

### Vermont Agency of Ag. Staff

Ben Gabos, CREP Planner,  
(ext. 122)  
Greg Bouchard, Civil Engineer,  
(ext. 114)

### Dates to Remember

#### MILC Extended Phase Signup

Jan. 22, 2009 – Sept. 20, 2012

#### Office Closed Presidents Day

Feb. 16, 2009

#### CDP Signup Deadline

Feb. 27, 2009

#### ECP Signup Deadline

Feb. 27, 2009

#### DCP Signup Deadline

June 1, 2009

### County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Diane McGarry and Madonne Rainville. Diane is from Enosburg Falls and was elected to represent farmers from Berkshire, Enosburg Falls, Franklin, Montgomery, and Richford of the Local Administrative Area 2 (LAA) on the County Committee. The first alternate for LAA 2 is Lawrence Gervais. Madonne Rainville was reelected to represent LAA 1, Fairfax, Georgia, Highgate, St. Albans City, St. Albans Town, and Swanton. The first alternate for LAA 1 is Richard Noel. The second alternate for LAA 1 is Paul Bourbeau.

The committee members held their organizational meeting January 22 and elected Maurice Fortin to serve as County Committee Chairperson and Madonne Rainville was elected to serve as Vice-chairperson.

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation. Thanks go out to the voters and the County Committee members.



### Crop Disaster Program Sign-Up Ends February 27, 2009

Signup for Quantity and Quality Losses under the Crop Disaster Program (CDP) provides benefits to farmers who suffered quantity and/or quality losses in 2005, 2006 or 2007. Only producers who obtained crop insurance coverage or coverage under NAP for the year of loss will be eligible for CDP benefits. **The Crop Disaster Program (CDP) signup period will end Feb. 27, 2009.** The ending date of Feb. 27 applies to the receipt of a signed and completed FSA-840 application along with ALL supporting documentation, consultant letters and required forms at the applicable county FSA office. **Late filed applications will not be approved after the Feb. 27 deadline.**

Please submit your information to the office ASAP. For further questions about CDP and the signup deadline, please contact the county FSA office.

### ECP Tornado Damage Signup Period Ends February 27, 2009

Straight line winds gust that occurred on July 18, 2008 (NWS reported tornado force winds up to 100 mph) caused severe damage in parts of Franklin County, VT. Farms, including sugar bush operations that suffered severe damage may be eligible for assistance under the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP). To be eligible for assistance, practices must not be started until ALL the following are met:

- **APPLICATION HAS BEEN FILED REQUESTING COST SHARE ASSISTANCE**
- **AN FSA REPRESENTATIVE HAS PERFORMED AN ONSITE VISIT TO INSPECT DAMAGED AREA**

For more information please contact the Franklin-Grand Isle FSA Office.



### Foreign Buyers Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA.

Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, Realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.



### Controlled Substance

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium, poppies and other drug producing plants.

### Special Accommodations

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the county FSA office staff directly or by phone.

### MILC Program Sign-Up Continues

Sign-up for the Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC) is underway and will continue through the program's expiration date, Sept. 30, 2012.



**The New Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack Lays Out Priorities, Extends Comment Period for Payment Limitations Rule**

2009 Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced as of January 26, 2009 he will extend the comment period for the 2008 Farm Bill Farm Program Payment Limitation and Payment Eligibility rulemaking process. See the December, 2008 issue of the Franklin/Grand Isle FSA Newsletter for detail or contact the local FSA office if you still have questions.

**Applications for FSA Loans**

Farmers and ranchers who intend to apply to the Farm Service Agency for loan assistance for the upcoming crop year are encouraged to file their applications as early as possible. Filing early will help ensure that your loan is processed and approved as early as possible so that planting decisions can be made. Failure to apply early can result in a delay in processing loans due to the volume of applications that must be processed in date order. Contact your local FSA farm loan manager or officer for more details and assistance in applying.



**Farm Loan Program Interest Rates as of February, 2009**

Program	Interest Rates
Farm Operating – Direct	2.125%
Farm Ownership – Direct	3.750%
Farm Ownership – Direct Joint Financing	5.00%
Farm Ownership – Down Payment	1.50%
Emergency Loan – Amount of Actual Loss	3.75%
Emergency	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility	1.875%

**Power of Attorney**

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., FSA has a power of attorney form available that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the office. If you are interested, please contact our office or any Farm Service Agency office near you for more information.

**Appeal Process**

After an FSA official makes a decision on your request for USDA services or application, you will be sent a letter informing you of the decision and options your can pursue if you disagree.

Generally, program participants have three choices — an informal review with the original agency decision-maker, an opportunity for mediation and finally an appeal to the next level of authority within the agency.



**Customer Statement – Services On Line**

January signals the beginning of a new year, and a time to starting thinking about filing taxes. Producers who have signed up for a USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account will be able to access their farm data via their Customer Statement.

The Customer Statement puts a range of USDA services and programs into a single report that’s at your fingertips and available online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It allows USDA customers to view their participation, application and payment status in various commodity and conservation programs; information on farm loans; and conservation plan and land unit information. That site is: <http://customerstatement.usda.gov>.