

May 2009

New Haven - Middlesex County Farm Service Agency News



**New Haven/Middlesex
County USDA Service
Center**

**New Haven/Middlesex
County FSA**
900 Northrop Road
Suite# A
Wallingford, CT 06492
203-269-6665 (phone)
203-294-9741(fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/ct

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

County Committee
Bill Weed
Chairman

Nelson Cecarelli
Vice-Chairman

Richard Brock
Regular Member

Joyce Werbiski
Minority Advisor

**Next County Commit-
tee meeting:**
Monday June 15th at
7:00PM

Staff
Ann Marie McCard
Program Technician

Teresa Peavey
Program Technician

Nancy Welsh
County Executive Direc-
tor



**2009 COC Election Informa-
tion**

One of FSA's responsibilities is to conduct County Committee elections in an open manner that ensures accountability. County FSA Offices will provide local organizations representing socially disadvantaged groups with detailed information about the COC election process. FSA is reaching out to agricultural communities to get equitable representation on their county committees.

Groups representing socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, will be actively solicited for COC election candidates, and encouraged to fill out a nomination form (FSA-669A). Under represented farmers and ranchers are encouraged to step up and participate in their county's COC election process. COC election fact sheets can be found online at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA> under the News & Events tab on the FSA homepage.

Reporting Crop Acreage

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 Farm Service Agency programs. All cropland on the farm must be reported to receive benefits from the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, marketing assistance loans and Loan Deficiency Payments.

Conservation Reserve Program acreage must be reported to receive annual rental payments. And, crop acreage for Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) must also be reported. Crop reports, form FSA-578, Report of Acreage, must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. Producers need to file their acreage reports by Wednesday July 15th for all crops.

Prevented Planting:

Prevented planting needs 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.

Measurement Service

Farmers who would like a guarantee on their crop plantings and land use acreages can make it official by using the FSA measurement service. Producers must file a request with the county office staff and pay the cost of a field visit to have stake and referencing done on the farm. Measurement service is available using digital imagery and where an on-site visit is not required are charged at a reduced rate.

Incorrect acreage self-certification can result in reduced program payments, penalty, or loss of eligibility.



Producers can request ortho-imagery and CLU covering their land (commonly referred to as a clip) at no charge. This would provide the acreage of an entire field.

Sodbuster Regulations

The term “sodbusting” is used to identify the plowing up of erosion-prone grasslands for use as cropland. Sodbuster violations are unauthorized tillage practices on highly erodible lands that converted native vegetation such as rangeland or woodland, to crop production after Dec. 23, 1985. Farmers and ranchers should be aware that if they use highly erodible land for crop production without proper conservation measures, they risk losing eligibility to participate in Farm Service Agency programs.

Before producers clear, plow or otherwise prepare areas not presently under crop production for planting, they are required to file an AD-1026, indicating the area to be brought into production.

If Natural Resources Conservation Service indicates on a CPA-026 that the area will be highly erodible land, the producer will be required to develop and implement a conservation plan on the affected acreage, before bringing land into production.

In addition, producers and the producer’s affiliates have to file an AD-1026 with the staff in the administrative or control county office before any farm program payments can be made. The AD-1026 is the producer’s signed certification that HELC, as well as wetland conservation, provisions will not be violated.

Preventing Fraud

The Farm Service Agency has joined with the Risk Management Agency to prevent fraud, waste and abuse in the Federal Crop Insurance Program. FSA has been, and will continue to, assist RMA and insurance providers by monitoring crop conditions throughout the growing season. In addition, FSA will refer all suspected cases of fraud, waste and abuse to RMA.

Producers can report suspected cases to the county office staff, RMA office, or the Office of the Inspector General.

Continuous CRP

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

The Continuous CRP program is a voluntary enrollment program. Eligible landowners enter into contracts that range from 10 to 15 years in length. In return, the landowners will receive annual rental and maintenance payments, incentive payments for certain activities, and cost share for establishment. To be eligible for enrollment in the Continuous CRP, participants and acreage must meet certain requirements. Provided the eligibility requirements are met, FSA will automatically accept enrollments of acreage into Continuous CRP. Landowners may enroll in the program at any time during the year. For more information on Continuous CRP enrollments availability, please contact your local FSA office.

Maintaining CRP Cover

CRP cover maintenance is the participant’s responsibility and must be done according to the conservation plan. All CRP maintenance activity, such as mowing, burning and spraying, must be conducted outside the primary nesting season for wildlife and in accordance with the conservation plan. Spot treatment of the acreage may be allowed during the primary nesting season if certain criteria are met.

GIS

As part of a decade long program to digitally map the nation’s farms and fields, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has established the Common Land Unit (CLU) as a standardized GIS (Geographic Information Systems) data layer that has allowed mapping to be integrated easily on a nationwide basis.



The Farm Service Agency manages this CLU data layer through a distributed database environment at more than 2,500 field service centers through out the country.



Transitioning to the GIS environment has made good business sense for FSA for a variety of reasons. For one, CLU certification has improved communication between Service Centers and FSA customers through the use of current ortho-photography or NAIP (National Agricultural Imagery Program). For years, FSA had been using hard copy maps that were 10 years old or more.

During that time span, it was difficult to keep information accurate due to urban development and other land use changes. USDA Service Centers use NAIP in order to maintain the Common Land Unit (CLU) boundaries and assist with a multitude of other farm programs.

Second, using GIS and GPS (Global Positioning System) provides for more consistent and more accurate land measurements, such as field acreage and acreage boundaries of conservation practices, such as riparian buffers. In conjunction with yearly updated high quality digital imagery, new land use changes (farm transfers and land subdivisions) can be easily updated. Maps can be created in either paper or digital format for FSA customers or the public.



Lastly, the GIS environment provides for the incorporation of data from outside sources for business decision making or environmental planning. Some examples of outside data sources include demographic data, satellite imagery, GPS data, elevation data and soil types.

More information about the Common Land Unit and NAIP can be found by visiting on-line, APFO (Aerial Photography Field Office) at www.apfo.usda.gov.

Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency makes loans to rural youths to establish and operate income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups.

Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5000.

Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

- Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) or a legal resident alien
- Be 10 years to 21 years of age
- Live in the open country or in a town of less than 50,000 people
- Must obtain a written recommendation and consent from a parent or guardian if the applicant has not reached the age of majority under state law
- Conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work as outlined above
- Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor. The project supervisor must recommend the project and the loan, along with providing adequate supervision.

Call Ellen Losee for help preparing and processing the application forms. Ellen can help you with questions you may have about any of our loan program. You can reach Ellen Losee at (860)626-8258 ext# 104.



Selected Interest Rates for May 2008	
90-Day Treasury Bill	***
Farm Operating - Direct	***
Farm Ownership - Direct	***
Limited Resource	***
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	***
Emergency	***
Farm Storage Facility	***
Sugar Storage Facility	***
Commodity Loans 1996- Present	***
Tobacco (TTPP) Discount Rate	***

*****If you have any questions about any interest rates or loans, please call Ellen Losee @ 860-626-8258 ext# 104.**

Dates to Remember May 2008	
May 25	Office Closed – Memorial Day Holiday
July 15th	Acreage Reporting Deadline
Aug 14th	DCP Sign-up Extended Deadline Date

Visit our Web site: <http://www.fsa.usda/ct>

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