



May 2008

Words of Windham

A Newsletter For People Who Care About Agriculture

Towns of Windham County— Highlights of an Agricultural Town and a local Farmer in Brooklyn, Connecticut

“No where does my body or spirit go more joyfully than to Brooklyn” as quoted from William Lloyd Garrison, US Abolitionist and Reformer who founded the journal “The Liberator”. He was an outspoken opponent of slavery and later campaigned for the rights of women and Native Americans. Another famous American who resided in Brooklyn was Israel Putnam who as a young man crawled into a wolf’s den and shot a wolf that was killing the townspeople’s livestock. He then became a war hero in the French-and-Indian War and later led the Connecticut contingent as General-in-Chief at the Battle of Bunker Hill. He rallied his colonial soldiers and his famous quote from the Battle of Bunker Hill was “Don’t fire until you see the whites of their eyes.” Two days after the American’s victory over the British, Gen. Washington commissioned Putnam as Major General in the American Continental Army. Upon his return to Brooklyn, he married and always had visitors to entertain and opened his home to the general public for accommodations. His tavern then known as General Wolf’s Tavern became a popular gathering place in Eastern Connecticut.

The Town of Brooklyn was incorporated in 1786 and in 1819 became the county seat. Originally the lands that are now Brooklyn were claimed by the Mohegan Chief, Uncas. The land, deeded in 1680 to Capt. James Fitch, was sold to the first local settlers in 1703. It was settled as part of the towns of Canterbury and Pomfret with the northeastern third having separate existence as the manorial estate of Mortlake. The area of Mortlake served as a refuge for Puritans who were forced out of England and was included in the community in 1752. Brooklyn was a very prominent area and today we can still enjoy the beautifully restored historical homes, churches and town hall.

Brooklyn is home to one of the oldest agricultural fairs in the country. The Agricultural Association was formed in 1820 and the “Brooklyn Fair” is still a popular attraction for visitors each August. Today Brooklyn is the home to approximately 7,700 people. The historical center of Brooklyn has been preserved and is still an agricultural community with so many interesting places for visitors to enjoy.

(Information provided by the Town of Brooklyn website)

One such place to visit in Brooklyn is **Creamery Brook Farm**, owned and operated by Austin and Deborah Tanner, located at 19 Purvis Road. They are also well known as **Creamery Brook Bison**. They have been raising buffalo for meat since 1990. Their buffalo have plenty of pastures to roam freely and are fed only grass and silage. The Tanners only sell meat that has been raised on their own farm and they do not feed any hormones or antibiotics to their herd.

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The Tanners have a store on the farm where you can purchase buffalo meat, which has been described as the “original health food” with fewer calories and less cholesterol than beef, chicken and turkey. On Saturdays during July, August and September, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. you can stop by and enjoy a tasty, healthful buffalo burger fresh from the grill. They also have an ice cream shop and by reservation you can enjoy guided walks or wagon tours of the farm. You may visit their website for more detailed information at <http://creamerybrookbison.net> or contact (860) 779-0837.

Deborah Tanner is also involved with a group of local producers in organizing a small farmer’s market at the Brooklyn Fair in August. The area will be set up for the producers to have booths to showcase their own locally grown and/or prepared products. The farmer’s market will be called “Back to Our Roots.” We can all look forward to shopping for fresh produce and locally prepared products at the Fair!

There are many other local producers in Brooklyn to visit such as:

Allen Hill Farm, LLC: 542 Allen Hill Road, Christmas trees; hayrides

Hart’s Greenhouse & Florist: 151 Providence Road, nursery and florist

Ingalls Tree Farm: 47 Brown Road, cut and pre-cut Christmas trees

Meadow Stone Farm: 199 Hartford Road, goats milk, cheeses, honey, berries, skincare products

Mik-Ran’s Sugarhouse: 86 Stetson Road, maple syrup, maple sugar products and gifts

Quackin Grass Nursery: 16 Laurel Hill Road, rare and unusual plants the world over

Remember to buy local, buy fresh, and support our farmers

***Congratulations Lucas Young— Winner of
Connecticut’s Outstanding Young Farmer Award for 2008***

On March 19, 2008, Lucas Young and Angela Young attended AG Day at the State Capitol and during a noontime ceremony Lucas was presented with an award for Connecticut’s Outstanding Young Farmer. Lucas is from a farming family with nearly 200 years on their Valleyside Farm in Woodstock. He has worked on the farm alongside his Dad since he could barely walk. He is carrying on his family tradition and is now a partner in the business. He graduated with honors from SUNY Cobleskill in 1999 with an Associates Degree in Agricultural Engineering. He was placed in the top ten in a Nationwide Engineering Competition while attending SUNY Cobleskill. He is now focused on needed changes in farming practices to ensure the family tradition of farming continues for generations to come. His responsibilities include planning and budgeting, increased efficiency and exploring environmentally friendly cost cutting practices. Soil and water conservation plays a major role in their farming practices. They use a vertical tillage method of tilling to benefit the soil and they are in the process of installing a manure storage facility to eliminate rainwater contamination. They have also focused on nutrient management systems to keep their soils balanced.

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In addition to farming, Lucas is also a member of the Woodstock Volunteer Fire Department since 1997. He attends weekly meetings, drills and has served on various committees. He currently serves as Lieutenant and oversees operations of the Departments ladder truck. In 2007 Valleyside Farm received the Green Pastures Award for the State of Connecticut. They have also been awarded the Dairy Farm of Distinction as well as numerous production and quality honors from various companies including Agri-Mark, DHIA, and Genex. Congratulations to Lucas and his family. We wish you continued success for generations to come.

FSA Signature Requirements

Proper signatures on Farm Service Agency contracts, applications and forms must be submitted before the document will be considered as filed. All entities, including revocable and irrevocable trusts, corporations, partnerships, estates, etc., must provide evidence of signature authority stipulating those individuals who are authorized to represent the entity. FSA cannot accept signatures without such documentation on file. Examples of acceptable evidence include trust agreements, corporate charters or resolutions, partnership agreements and court orders of appointment. Spouses can sign for one another on most program documents unless written notification denying a spouse this authority has been provided to the county office staff. For more information about appropriate signature authority, please contact us at (860) 774-8397, ext. 1.

Conservation Compliance

All participants in USDA programs are required to have a conservation system in place on all the highly erodible land (HEL) that they operate. Several areas where problems can arise with complying with a conservation system are; renting new cropland, purchasing new land, breaking out additional cropland, planting different crops such as soybeans, and changing or removing existing conservation practices.

It is very important that you contact the FSA office before doing any of the above. Also, it is very important that you contact our office before modifying— tiling, draining, dredging, filling, or leveling—any wetland or drainage ditch. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in loss of all USDA payments and eligibility.

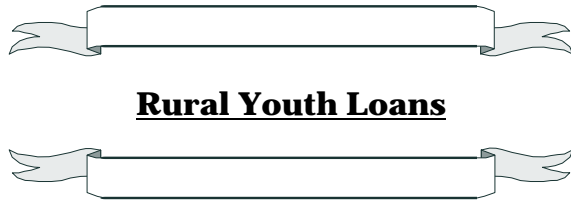
Have you made any Banking Changes?

If you have changed banks and not notified FSA, your payment could be delayed. Payments are electronically transferred into your bank account, if we are not aware of changes to your account and routing numbers, there could be problems. In order to make timely payments, you need to notify the office if you close your account or if another financial institution purchases your bank. It is important that any changes in producer's account such as type of account, bank mergers, routing number or account numbers, be provided to the county office promptly to avoid possible payment delay.

Thanks to all our Speakers and Attendee's our Renewable Energy "How Can you Make it Happen?" Seminar was a great success on Friday, April 4th. We will be planning a summer renewable energy tour. If you are interested in participating either by attending or if you have installed any renewable energy sources/systems please contact us and we will add you to our list. Contact: FSA at 860-774-8397, ext. 1

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Rural Youth Loans

The USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to establish and operate producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and initiated, developed, carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organizations or with a vocational teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and operated with assistance of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. For more information: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov> or contact Ron Clark, Farm Loan Manager at (860) 887-9941, ext. 105.

May Events

May 2nd and 3rd: 54th Annual Windham County 4-H Auction and Tag Sale: 326 Taft Pond Rd., Pomfret, New Goods-Used Goods—Gift Certificates. Hours: Starts at noon Friday & Saturday. To donate please call 974-3379 and leave a message to arrange the pick up of donated items or to schedule a delivery. Items will be accepted at camp beginning April 12th. Donations are tax deductible.

Saturday, May 3rd: "Habitat Based Mgmt. of Open Space Land's Workshop: 8:00 a.m.—4:00 pm., Cooperative Ext. Brooklyn Agricultural Center, 139 Wolf Den Rd. For more information email: Calendar@thelastgreenvalley.org

Saturday, May 3rd: Farm Day at Waldo House: 10:00 a.m.-4:00 pm, Scotland, CT. For more information contact: (860) 456-0081.

Monday, May 5th: DDAP III—Dairy Disaster Assistance Program Deadline.

Tuesday, May 13th: County Committee Meeting: 7:30 p.m., Brooklyn Agricultural Center, 139 Wolf Den Road.

Acres Reporting Reminder: Please keep records of planting dates to bring with you at acres reporting time. We will send appointment reminder letters.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



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Ron Clark, Farm Loan Manager
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COUNTY COMMITTEE:

Harold Bishop, Chairman
Betsy Molodich,
Vice-Chairman
Charles Tyler, Regular
Member