



Words of Windham

January 2008

A Newsletter For People Who Care About Agriculture

LAA-1 Community Elections

The Community representatives have cast their votes and *Charles "Tim" Tyler* was elected for a (3) year term to serve on the Windham County Committee and *Nancy MacGlaflin* as first alternate. Congratulations and best wishes! We all look forward to working with you both.



2007 Farm Bill Update

Per a release from the USDA Press Office; The 2007 Farm Bill proposals spend approximately \$10 billion less than the cost of the 2002 farm bill over the past five years (excluding ad-hoc disaster aid) and uphold the Presidents plan to eliminate the deficit in five years. These proposals authorize approximately \$5 billion more than the projected spending if the 2002 farm bill were extended. The 2007 Farm Bill proposal represents a reform-minded and fiscally responsible approach to supporting America's Farmers and Ranchers. This bill will move forward with a program that is market-oriented and considers more than commodity prices alone when determining the appropriate level of government support. There is a focus on a commitment to increase conservation programs that protect our natural resources and focus support on renewable energy that will lead us to the Presidents goal of reducing annual gasoline use by 20 percent in ten years. There is still ongoing debate in Congress regarding the passage of this bill.

USDA Announces Commodity Credit Corporation Interest Rate Approved for December 2007

The interest rate for farm storage facility loans approved for December 2007 is 4.125%, down from 4.375% in November 2007.

USDA Offers On-Farm Storage Solution

The Farm Service Agency offers seven-year, low-interest loans to producers to build new or upgrade existing storage facilities and related essential, permanently affixed drying or handling equipment for crops that you grow. Loans must be approved prior to site preparation, equipment purchase or construction, must be secured by a promissory note and security agreement. Special provisions apply for loans exceeding \$50,000.00. The maximum loan amount will be 85 percent of the net cost of the applicant's needed storage or handling equipment, not to exceed \$100,000.00 per borrower. A minimum down payment to the supplier or contractor is required to bridge the gap between the net cost of the storage facility and the loan amount. Loan opportunities include, but not limited to: New conventional type cribs or bins, oxygen limiting and other upright Silo-type structures, flat type structures, perforated floors, safety equipment, quality improvement equipment, remodeling existing storage to increase capacity, etc. Schedule an appointment to file an application.

Foreign Investors who Hold Agricultural Land (AFIDA)

Foreign investors who buy, sell, or hold a direct or indirect interest in U.S. agricultural land must report their holdings to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. The reporting requirement became law in 1978 when the President signed the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA). This data is periodically reported to the President and Congress concerning the effect of such holdings upon family farms and rural communities. **Who must report:**

- Individuals who are not U.S. citizens or citizens of the Northern Mariana Islands or the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.
- Individuals who are not lawfully admitted to the U.S. for permanent residence or who are not paroled into the U.S. under the Immigration and Nationality Act.
- Any organization created under the laws of a foreign government or which has located its principal place of business outside the U.S.
- Any U.S. organization in which a significant interest or substantial control is directly or indirectly held by foreign individuals, organizations or governments.
- any foreign governments.

What to report:

- Each tract of agricultural land in the U.S., its territories, the Northern Mariana Islands and the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands owned by persons required to report.
- Leaseholds of 10 years or more.

Under the law, the term agricultural land means land used for forestry production and land currently used for farming, ranching or timber production if tracts are more than 10 acres in size in the aggregate.*

**Land used for forestry production means land exceeding 10 acres in which 10 percent is stocked by trees of any size including land that formerly had such tree cover and will be naturally or artificially regenerated. It does not matter whether the owner ever intends to cut and sell the trees. Ownership of tracts totaling 10 acres or less in the aggregate which produce annual gross receipts in excess of \$1,000 from the sale of the farm, ranch, forestry or timber products must also be reported. Land which is currently idle, but last used within the past 5 years for farming, ranching or timber production must also be reported. For more details on this program or if you need to report, please contact our office at 774-8397, ext. 1.*

Dairy Disaster Assistance Program (DDAP III)

Under the proposed rules, DDAP-III will provide \$16 million in financial assistance to producers who suffered dairy production losses because of natural disasters. A producers operation must be in a county designated a major disaster or emergency area by the President or declared a natural disaster area by the Secretary of Agriculture between Jan. 1, 2005 and Feb. 28, 2007. Producers in counties declared disasters by the President may be eligible, even though agricultural loss was not covered by the declaration, if there has been a FSA Administrator's Physical Loss Notice covering such losses. Dairy producers may contact our office for eligibility requirements, more details about the program and may apply to receive DDAP-III benefits beginning Dec. 3, 2007.



Rural Development Energy Programs

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (the Farm Bill) established the **Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvements Program under Title IX, Section 9006**. This section directs the Secretary of Agriculture to make loans, loan guarantees, and grants to farmers, ranchers and rural small businesses to purchase renewable energy systems and make energy efficiency improvements.

The USDA anticipates that this program will help farmers, ranchers and rural small businesses reduce energy costs and consumption and help the nation meet its energy needs. This program will also help support and stimulate rural economic development by helping agricultural producers and rural small businesses create new sources of income, to create new jobs, and to create new uses for agricultural products and wastes. ***Some key provisions of the program are as follows:***

- Applicants may qualify for a grant, guaranteed loan, or a combination of both.
- Grant request must not exceed 25 percent of the eligible project costs. Renewable energy grants can range from \$2,500 to \$500,000. Energy Efficiency grants can range from \$1,500 to \$250,000.
- Projects under \$200,000 total project costs qualify for a simplified application process.
- Loan guarantees can be for up to 50% of total eligible project costs. Guarantees can range from \$5,000 to \$10,000,000 per project.
- Projects can qualify for combined grant and loan guarantee, but the grant portion is still subject to the above limits and combined funding assistance cannot exceed 50% of total eligible project costs.

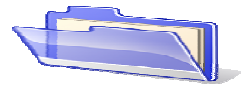
USDA Rural Development Value-Added Producer Grants: “Building a stronger rural economy through value added business”. As producers of crops and livestock, American farmers and ranchers receive only what the market pays for a raw commodity. When the producer is able to perform further processing themselves, they can reap far greater rewards—money that otherwise go to other “middlemen”, often in distant locations. Examples of Producers adding value themselves could include a co-op, or other group of wheat growers processing their own grain to bread or pizza crusts, or corn growers processing their grain into ethanol. Value added efforts help producers keep more of their profits derived from their efforts.

Eligibility: You must be in a rural area, an agricultural producer, a small business and have demonstrated a financial need. Must be a citizen of the U.S. or reside in the U.S. after being legally admitted permanent residence.

For more details about these programs, eligibility, and applying:

Please contact the Southern New England Rural Development Office located at 238 West Town Street, Norwich, CT, Phone: 860-859-5218, ext. 3004 or email Johan.Strandson@ct.usda.gov.

Farm Ownership & Records



If you have made any changes to your farm operation such as partners, producer shares, how the entity operates, etc. , please be sure to set an appointment with us to come in and we can update your records. Your participation in USDA programs is based on the type of farm operation and information that we have on file.



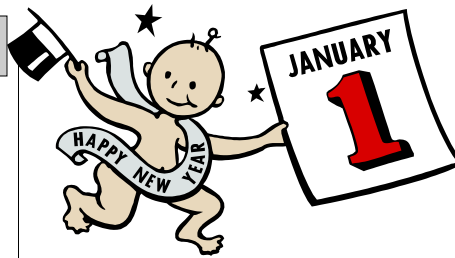
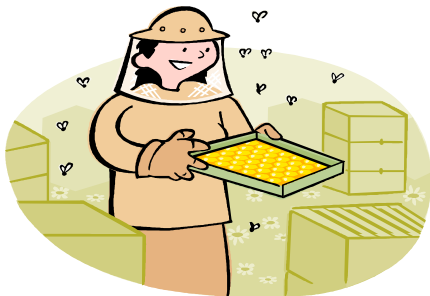
SIGN UP FOR THE FARM LOAN PROGRAM WITH RON CLARK @ 860-887-3604, X105, For your credit needs; apply for an emergency loan or loans to obtain land, feed, equipment, improvements, livestock and supplies.

PERMIT NO. 25
MAILED FROM ZIP CODE 06234
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PRESORTED STANDARD

USDA
Windham County FSA
P.O. Box 399
Brooklyn, CT 06234-0399

Beekeeping Course

“From Zero to Beekeeping—2008”; Presented by CT Beekeepers Assoc. Courses held January 31st, Feb. 7th, 14th & 21st. 6:30 p.m. till 9:30 pm each night. University of CT, W.B. Young Bldg., School of Agriculture, Classroom #101, Storrs, CT. Contact Adam Fuller (860) 455-1296 or Bill Paluska (860) 871-1303. Cost \$50.00 including reference book and materials.



Energy Estimator Website

This Energy Estimator will assist you in determining diesel fuel usage for tillage, animal housing energy costs, irrigation and nitrogen information. This website provided by the USDA/NCRS can be located at: www.usda.gov browse by audience, drop down and select agribusiness, and under “spotlights” select Energy Estimator for Tillage. Once at the site you can select animal housing, irrigation and nitrogen as well.

January Events

- 1st New Year's Day**
- 24th Ct Small Fruit & Vegetable Conference (860) 875-3331**
- 31st “From Zero to Beekeeping 2008 course” Begins.**

Ongoing Signup
Dairy Disaster Program III
Crop Disaster Program
Livestock Compensation Program
Conservation Reserve Program

Wishing everyone good health, happiness and successful farming in 2008

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Maureen B. Fontneau, Program Technician x110
Office Hours: 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Ron Clark, Farm Loan Manager
860-887-3604 x 105

COUNTY COMMITTEE:

Harold Bishop
Betsy Molodich
Charles Tyler