



November/December 2008

# PIERCE COUNTY FSA NEWS

## FSA County Committee Election

**VOTE** for the candidate of your choice! Ballots will be sent out on November 3 to eligible voters in LAA# 2. If you do not receive a ballot and you think you should, please contact the Pierce FSA office and we will check the eligible voters list for you.

To have your vote count, all instructions on the ballot must be followed exactly as prescribed. Do not send two or more ballots back in one envelope. And, don't forget to **sign your ballot**. All ballots must be received in the Pierce County FSA Office by December 1, 2008.

## Disaster Assistance Programs

The 2008 Farm Bill created new disaster assistance programs, made others permanent, and made changes to current programs. Most importantly, Congress tied all disaster assistance eligibility to producers obtaining a minimum CAT level of crop insurance or NAP coverage for uninsurable crops for all crops on all of a producer's farms.

New programs include: Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE), Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), Tree Assistance Program (TAP), Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP). A fifth new disaster program, the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) is exempt from the crop insurance/NAP requirement. All programs cover losses due to natural disasters only.

SURE covers crop losses on the whole farm when the county receives a Secretarial Disaster Designation or losses exceed 50% of the farm's total production. Payments are made on 60% of the difference between the SURE guarantee and total farm revenue. LFP provides a payment to ranchers who suffer losses due to drought or fire. TAP provides compensation to orchardists and nursery producers to replant trees and vines. ELAP addresses unique disasters not covered by any other program. LIP provides payment for loss of livestock.

**For 2009 crops-** the NAP application closing date for most perennial and fall planted crops has been extended to December 1, 2008. For insurable crops, the standard crop insurance deadlines and purchase rules are in effect. Remember, all future disaster assistance eligibility is subject to producers obtaining a minimum CAT level of crop insurance or NAP coverage for uninsurable crops, for all crops on all of a producer's farms. Contact our office for more information.

## Emergency Loans

**Disaster Relief Available for Farmers and Ranchers** who suffered losses due to freezing temperatures last spring in Chelan and Yakima counties or contiguous counties **King & Pierce** may be eligible for low-interest emergency loans to help repair damages. A recently announced Secretary of Agriculture disaster designation triggered the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency Emergency Loan Program according to Mark S. Turner, FSA Farm Loan Manager in Lynden.

Family farmers who suffered losses in the designated areas may contact the following offices: Pierce County FSA (253) 845-9272 or the FSA loan staff in the Whatcom County office at (360) 354-5658 or Lewis County office at (360) 748 0084 for further information on eligibility requirements and application procedures for emergency loans and other programs. Additional information is also available online at: <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov/fsa.asp>.

## Annual Reminders

**Direct Deposit:** Every year we issue several payments to bank accounts that have been terminated or changed. This often occurs when banks restructure, causing account numbers or routing numbers to change. Please keep us posted on these changes so your payment goes to your account.

### Pierce County FSA

1011 E. Main #107  
Puyallup, WA. 98372-6738  
(253) 845 9272  
Fax (253) 445 9934

### Office Hours

Monday – Friday  
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

### County Committee

Lucy Cerqui, Chair  
Harry Petersen, V-Chair  
John Kingsbury, Member  
Cindy Stolz, Member  
Faith Sasaki, Advisor

### Office Staff

George Jaquish, CED  
Kathy Modin, PT

### Farm Loan Staff

Mark Turner, FLM  
(360) 354-5658  
Jeff Peterson, FLO  
(360) 748-0084

### COC Meeting Schedule

November 6, 2008  
December 4, 200

### Holiday Closures:

Veterans Day Nov. 11  
Thanksgiving, Nov 27  
Christmas, Dec 25  
New Years, Jan 1

### Web Sites

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

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wa/> - WA State FSA

<http://www.usda.gov> - USDA

South Sound Farm Forestry Association (360) 705-1888

### Handicapped

**Accommodations:** Special accommodations will be arranged for those persons with a physical, vision, or hearing impaired disability. If special accommodations are needed, please contact our office



2008 Producer Earnings Statements: Form CCC-1099G; Reports of Producer Payments will be mailed in January to all producers earning a program payment from FSA. This information is also mailed to the Internal Revenue Service. Should you find a discrepancy, or if you do not receive a form, please contact your local FSA office.

Farm Divisions and Reconstitutions: Any land divisions or additions on your farm impacts your acreage bases. For program purposes, FSA adheres to a landowner designation of dividing bases in the manner agreed to by the parent farm owner and purchaser or transferee. This method of dividing the bases may be used when any part of a farm or tract is sold or ownership is transferred, an entire tract or farm is sold to two or more persons, or farm or tract ownership is transferred to two or more persons. The land sold or transferred must have been owned for at least three years unless the County Committee approves a waiver of this requirement.

Signature Authority For Spouses: Spouses may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation programs in which either has an interest unless written notification denying a spouse this authority has been provided to the county office. A spouse may not, however, sign a Power of Attorney on behalf of the spouse, nor may they sign on behalf of the other as an authorized signatory for entities. Spouses must also have a Power of Attorney on file to sign for claim settlements such as promissory notes.

## New Terminology for Farm Programs

The 2008 Farm Bill grants exceptions to certain program rules for beginning, socially disadvantaged and limited resource farmers/ranchers. This statutory terminology is not new to FSA's loan programs but it is new for most other programs. Definitions may differ slightly depending on the program.

A beginning farmer/rancher is an individual or an entity who has operated a farm for 10 years or less and who participates substantially in the farm/ranch operation. For loan purposes of purchasing a farm, the farm must be no more than 30 percent of the median size farm in the county. All members of an entity must meet the definition for the entity to be considered a beginning farmer or rancher. This definition applies to waiver of risk management purchase requirements for SURE, ELAP, TAP, and CRP.

A socially disadvantaged farmer/rancher is a member of a demographic group whose members have historically been subjected to racial, ethnic, or for some programs, gender prejudice. Groups include: American Indians, Alaska Natives, Asians, Blacks or African Americans, Pacific Islanders, and Hispanics/Latinos. This definition applies to waiver of risk management purchase requirements for SURE, ELAP, TAP and CRP. For DCP, ACRE and farm loans, women meet the socially disadvantaged definition.

A limited resource farmer/rancher is an individual who, in the previous two years, has had gross farm sales of not more than \$100,000 (base year 2004) adjusted for inflation. Additionally, the farmer/rancher must have a total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of four or less than 50% of county median household income. A tool that adjusts for inflation and county can be found at <http://www.lrfstool.sc.egov.usda.gov/tool.asp> or ask for assistance at our office. The limited resource definition applies to DCP, ACRE, CRP, SURE, ELAP, TAP, ECP, NAP and farm loans.



County Executive Director