

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

Farm Service Agency  
Oregon State FSA Office  
Tualatin, Oregon 97062

**OR NOTICE PM - 414**

**FOR: COUNTY OFFICES**

**Job Announcement - County Operations Trainee Position**

**APPROVED BY:** Acting State Executive Director *Gary A. Frey*  
LEF:mac

**1 Overview**

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**Purpose**

To forward a Job Opportunity Announcement concerning the County Operations Trainee (COT) program.

**2 Eligible Candidates**

This announcement is being sent to various minority and women's groups, state employment offices, college and universities, and county FSA offices in the State. Any applicants who meet the qualifications are eligible to apply.

**3 Placement**

COT's successfully completing training must sign an agreement to accept placement in any county in the state of Oregon.

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<b>DISPOSAL</b> August 01, 2002	<b>DISTRIBUTION</b> COF's, STO, DD's
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## OR Notice PM - 414

### 4 Action

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- County Office Actions**
- County Executive Directors shall:
- Advise all county office employees of the contents of this notice and announcement
  - Post the job opportunity announcement on your bulletin board
  - Refer to the announcement for information on the application filing period, the training program and the final referral for consideration for CED vacancies.
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United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Farm Service Agency  
Oregon State FSA Office

7620 SW Mohawk  
Tualatin, Oregon 97062-1300  
Telephone: (503) 692-6830  
FAX: (503) 692-8139

## VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

**OR Announcement No. OR 2002-01**

**Opening Date: February 19, 2002**

**Closing Date: March 13, 2002**

**Position: County Operations Trainee (COT)**

**Grade: CO-5/7/9 (level depending on qualifications of the applicant.)**

**Full Performance: County Executive Director - CO 12 (\$54,275-\$70,555)**

**Location: Statewide Oregon**

**Area Of Consideration: Open to all qualified persons statewide.**

**Qualified candidates are currently being recruited for employment consideration for the County Operations Trainee Program in Oregon. Entry level is CO-5, \$21,947 or CO-7, \$27,185 with potential to CO-12, 48,223. (Above salary, rates do not include Locality Rates)**

### **Minimum Qualifications**

**1. General Requirements: All candidates must:**

- Be citizens of the United States
- Be high school graduates
- Have knowledge of farming practices and customs.

**2. CO-5 Qualifications: All candidates for CO-5 must have one of the following sets of qualifications:**

**a. Six years of experience as a county office employee in which the employee has served as a permanent or temporary FT/PT (full credit) or a temporary intermittent (pay status days only). Combinations of this experience may be used to meet the qualification requirement.**

- 1. At least 2 years of this experience shall have been at the grade CO-4.**
- 2. Employee shall have demonstrated managerial aptitude.**

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**Minimum Qualifications**, *Continued*

- b. Six years of agricultural or related experience in which the applicant has demonstrated:
    - 1. The ability to function in a responsible and effective manner.
    - 2. Managerial aptitude as an employee, supervisor, manager, or owner.
  - c. A combination of experience described in subparagraphs a and b. In these cases, study towards the bachelor's degree described in paragraph 3 may be substituted on the basis of 30 semester hours or 45 hours per year of academic study for 9 months of the work experience described in subparagraphs a and b.
3. **CO-7 Qualifications:** All candidates for CO-7 must meet the necessary qualifications for CO-5, plus any of the following:
- a. Six years of agricultural or related experience, 1 year of which must be managerial or supervisory experience at a level comparable to CED.
  - b. Six years of County FSA Office experience with 2 years at CO-6 or above.
  - c. A 4-year degree in one of the following areas: Economics, Agricultural Economics, Agricultural Education, Conservation, Business Administration, Animal Husbandry, Agronomy, Soil Science, or related curriculum dealing with the production and distribution of farm products.
4. **CO-9 Qualifications:** All candidates for CO-9 must meet the necessary qualifications for CO-07, plus meet the sets of qualifications listed below:
- a. Six years of Non-Federal County Office experience with at least 1 year of experience at a grade CO-9 or above
  - b. Six years of Federal agriculture or farm credit experience with at least 1 year of experience at grade GS-9 or above.
  - c. Combination of education or experience described in a and b. Study of curriculum listed above can be substituted for experience listed in a or b. Substitution is based on 30 semester hours of 45 quarter hours per year of academic study for 9 months of work experience.

**Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs)**

Eligible candidates will be screened on the following knowledge, skills, and abilities: **Attach Supplemental Statement's that address the KSA's on plain bond paper;**

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**Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs), Continued**

**KSA Supplemental Statements may not be more than 1 single-spaced pages per KSA**

- 1. Knowledge of FSA Farm programs, practices and customs.**
- 2. Ability to communicate both orally and in writing.**
- 3. Ability to interpret and apply written regulations.**
- 4. Ability to identify and solve problems.**
- 5. Ability to plan work and make decisions independently.**
- 6. Leadership abilities.**

**Training Program**

**Candidate will be responsible for learning to direct and manage programs and administrative operations of one or more County FSA Offices. Will be trained to carry out authorized commodity production, price support, farm loan, conservation, environmental quality, indemnity, disaster, emergency, defense, and related programs. Candidate will learn to review applications for Farm Loan Programs assistance, making preliminary inquiries to ascertain eligibility of applicants, and work closely with local committees in making eligibility determinations.**

**Training will consist of evaluating financial situations, feasibility of loans and credit. Learn to analyze farm, home, family, and community situations; and provide professional advice to applicants and borrowers on the selection, expansion and use of farms, land development, improvements, family budgets, organizations of farm enterprises, and other related matters.**

- 1. Appointment**
  - a. Each COT shall sign an agreement (FSA-227) to accept training assignments anywhere in the Nation.**
- 2. Duration of Training**
  - a. First Phase. All trainees will undergo a 52-week training period.**
    - 1. All County Operations Trainees who do not successfully complete the required training shall be separated without prejudice.**
    - 2. At the end of the 52-week period, the Training Coordinator will evaluate the trainee's performance with concurrence of the State Executive Director. Based on the review, the trainee will be continued as either CO-5, CO-7 or CO-9, or be terminated.**

**Note: COT, CO-5, who successfully complete 6 months of the training program shall be promoted to COT, CO-7 if evaluated to have CED potential.**
  - b. Second Phase. A County Operations Trainee, remaining at CO-5, shall undergo any necessary additional training to qualify the trainee for a permanent county office position or a County Operations Trainee, CO-7. This additional training for reconsideration at CO-7 shall not exceed 1 month.**

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**Training Program,** *Continued*

- c. **CO-7 County Operations Trainees shall undergo any necessary additional training to qualify the trainee for a regular county office position or to be retained as a CO-7 trainee.**
  1. **At the end of the additional training, the state office shall make a further evaluation. This will determine whether the County Operations Trainee should be placed on the Program Technician list for selection by a CED for a vacant Program Technician position at the county office level.**
  2. **Two weeks of national managerial training is included in the COT program. After completion of the first week of this training and the 52 weeks of COT training, the COT will be evaluated to determine whether the COT should be placed on the STC Register of Eligible Candidates for CED positions. County Executive Directors are responsible to the County Committee for effective management and administration of the assigned programs and activities for which the county office is responsible.**

**Basis of Rating**

**No written test is required. Applications received will be screened to determine which candidates are best qualified based on the information contained in their applications. The State FSA Committee and State Executive Director will serve as an interview panel and will evaluate best-qualified candidates using the following criteria to arrive at final selection:**

1. **Interview**
2. **Application forms**
3. **KSA Statements**
4. **Reference checks on background and suitability**
5. **Recency of any previous work experience and relation of this experience to a CED position**
6. **Relevance of the college degree to the type of work characteristic of the COT trainee position**
7. **Experience**

**Other Information:**

**Before being hired, you will be required to sign and certify the accuracy of the information in your application if you have not done this using an application form.**

**This Agency provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities. The decision on granting reasonable accommodation will be on a case by case basis. If hired and successfully completing this training, you become eligible to apply for a County Executive Director position. Full performance level is a CO-11 or CO-12.**

**Forms to File**

1. **Form FSA-675, Application of FSA County Employment must address and show evidence of the above knowledge and abilities. An addendum sheet may be used.**
2. **Certified copy of college transcript (if applicable).**

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**OR Announcement No. OR 2002-01**

**How to Apply:**

**Interested applicants who meet the basic eligibility requirements may apply for consideration by sending the following information to the address indicated below:**

- 1. Form FSA-675, Application for FSA County Employment (Forms may be obtained from local County FSA Offices.)**
- 2. Certified copy of college transcript (if applicable).**
- 3. Supplemental Statement that addresses the KSAs on plain bond paper; KSA Supplemental Statements may not be more than 1 single-spaced pages per KSA**

**Submit To: USDA - Farm Service Agency  
Oregon State Office  
Attention: Administrative Officer  
7620 SW Mohawk  
Tualatin, Oregon 97062 - 1300**

**Only applications postmarked by the closing date will be accepted.**

**Relocation Expenses:**

**Relocation expenses for current permanent employees may be authorized in accordance with applicable procedures.**

**Equal Employment Opportunity**

**Candidates will be considered without discrimination for any non-merit reason such as race, color, religion, sex, national origin, political affiliation, marital status, mental or physical disability, age, or membership or non-membership in any employee organization.**