

February 2014



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Washington State FSA Updates

Washington State FSA

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Phone: 509-323-3000
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State Executive Director:
Judy Olson

Farm Loan Chief:
Mike Mykines

Farm Program Chief:
Rod Hamilton

Next State Committee Meeting: March 12 at 1:00 pm

County Committee Election Results Announced

County committee elections have concluded. For a list of the newly elected members, click [here](#).

Deadline to Submit Production for NAP Covered Crops

Producers who obtain Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage are required to report annually all production for NAP covered crops. This maintains your compliance with NAP program requirements. Production information can be provided to the county office either by submitting actual production evidence, or certified production supplied verbally. Regardless of how you choose to provide your production information, it must include a signed CCC-452 form.

The deadline to submit a signed CCC-452 is close of business on Monday **July 15, 2014**. Failure to timely report production may negatively affect

future year approved yield calculations for your NAP covered crops.

Farm Bill Update

Congress recently passed a long-anticipated farm bill. However, there will be the usual implementation delay as FSA reviews the law and develops program regulations, operating procedure and computer software. It may be a few months before county staff have information to provide, particularly about any new programs. FSA staff will make every attempt to implement the programs as soon as it is feasible.

Direct Deposit and Other Farm Changes

Farmers and ranchers who have recently updated their direct deposit information with FSA will receive a letter confirming those changes from the Kansas City, MO office. If banking information changes, producers should file a [SF-3881](#) form with their local office to ensure prompt payment from FSA. This includes situations where the bank has been purchased by another company.

Producers should notify their local FSA office of all operational changes as soon as possible so their farm records can be updated timely. These can include changes in: farm structure, leases, deaths, land ownership and/or address. Updating records in a timely manner can help ensure all required participants appear on documents requiring signatures and prevent payment delays. A copy of the applicable recorded deed should be provided to complete any land ownership changes.

Annual Women in Agriculture Conference March 15

The third annual Women in Agriculture Conference – a day of inspiration, knowledge and networking – will be Saturday, March 15, 2014. This year's conference will be held in multiple locations across Washington, Idaho and Oregon. This multiple site conference format brings the best of national and local speakers to easily accessible locations.

Join more than 500 women at 27 locations to hear a national and local speakers offer practical advice on dealing with and initiating change on the farm or ranch. Visit www.WomenInAg.wsu.edu for more information.

Washington locations: Bremerton, Chehalis, Colville, Coupeville, Goldendale, Lopez Island, Lynden, Mount Vernon, Nespalem, Olympia, Port Townsend, Prosser, Pullman, Puyallup, Republic, Rosburg, Snohomish, Spokane, Vancouver, Walla Walla, Wenatchee, Yakima

Idaho locations: Bonners Ferry, Idaho Falls

Oregon locations: Aurora, Corvallis, Medford

Sheryl Hagen-Zakarison appointed to the Farm Service Agency Washington State Committee

Whitman County producer Sheryl Hagen-Zakarison has been appointed to the FSA state committee to replace retiring chair Lennie Davis. Hagen-Zakarison and her husband have a diverse operation, growing wheat, peas, barley and raising sheep and milk goats. Small farming and the next generation of farmers are extremely important to Hagen-Zakarison, and she has been active in a variety of agricultural organizations from Tilth to the Wheat Growers. In addition to her farming experience, she has two bachelor's degrees from Washington State

University and a master's degree from the University of Idaho.

In addition to Hagen-Zakarison's appointment, Donald Olmstead, Jr., has become the State Committee Chair. Olmstead has served on the committee since 2010 and is a third generation fruit grower in Yakima County.

Along with Hagen-Zakarison and Olmstead, the other members of the State Committee are fruit grower Jesus Limon from Chelan County, dairy producer Larry DeHaan from Whatcom County and wheat grower Steve Hair from Walla Walla County.

FSA Continues Microloan Program

FSA is offering more flexible access to credit through our microloan program. The program is an alternative for smaller farming operations like direct market producers and operators of community supported agriculture (CSAs).

Microloans can be used for all approved operating expenses as authorized by the FSA Operating Loan Program, including but not limited to:

- Initial start-up expenses;
- Annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents;
- Marketing and distribution expenses;
- Purchase of livestock, equipment, and other materials essential to farm operations;
- Minor farm improvements such as wells and coolers.
- Hoop houses to extend the growing season.

The application process for microloans is simpler, requiring less paperwork to fill out than traditional loans. Requirements for managerial experience and loan security have been modified to accommodate smaller farm operations, beginning farmers and those with no farm management experience. Applicants will need to have some farm experience. However, FSA will consider an applicant's small business experience as well as any experience with a self-guided apprenticeship as a means to meet the farm management requirement.

Eligible applicants may obtain a microloan for up to \$35,000. Repayment terms may vary and will not exceed seven years. Annual operating loans are repaid within 12 months or when the agricultural commodities produced are sold. Interest rates are based on the regular operating loans rates that are in effect at the time of the microloan approval or microloan closing, whichever is less. Currently the rate is 1.25%.

Wildlife conference in Pasco offers free conservation partnership workshops for producers, landowners

Agricultural producers and landowners can learn about conservation practices and programs, including easements, that benefit both them and wildlife on Feb 5 in Pasco.

Free workshops about wildlife conservation on working private lands -- including Farm Bill basics, real life case studies, and landowner incentive programs for hunter access -- are scheduled on Wednesday, Feb. 5, as part of a week-long annual wildlife professionals' conference with the theme "Enhancing Conservation Program Delivery Among Agricultural and Other Natural Resources Interests."

The conference is at the Red Lion Inn, 2525 N. 20th Avenue in Pasco, where at-the-door free registration is available on Feb. 5 for the workshops.

For more information, contact workshop leader and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Private

Lands Coordinator Don Larsen of Spokane at 509-323-2967 or don.larsen@dfw.wa.gov.

Marketing Assistance Loans Available

Marketing Assistance Loans, also referred to as commodity loans, are available to producers who share in the risk of producing the crop, receive a share of the crop produced, and maintain a beneficial interest in the stored crop.

Commodity loans are a helpful marketing tool which can provide an influx of cash for operating expenses, using the crop as collateral. This allows you to delay sale of the crop until more favorable market conditions emerge, rather than selling the crop soon after harvest when market prices are typically at their lowest. The crop must be located in approved farm or warehouse storage.

If you obtain a farm stored loan, you are required to maintain the quality of the crop held as collateral through the term of the loan. Before the crop is removed from storage for feed use, sale or any other form of disposal, prior written approval must be requested from the FSA county office. Unauthorized removal or disposition of loan collateral without prior written approval is a violation of the loan terms and agreement. Loan violations will result in financial penalties and can affect your ability to obtain a commodity loan in future years. Always call before you move or dispose of any crop under loan.

Commodity loans for crop year 2013 are available through January 31, 2014 for wool and March 31, 2014 for wheat, barley, oats, honey, canola, rapeseed, sesame seed, flaxseed, crambe. Corn, dry peas, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, safflower seed, chickpeas, soybeans and sunflower seeds are available for loan through May 31, 2014.

Commodity loans for 2013 will be reduced by 5.1 percent upon loan disbursement due to budget sequestration. Commodity loans issued by marketing associations and loan servicing agents are also subject to the sequestration reduction.

Ag Agencies Conduct Listening Sessions for Specialty Crop Growers

The FSA, Risk Management Agency and the Washington State Department of Agriculture are holding two listening sessions in February, one in Mount Vernon and one in Wenatchee. USDA and WSDA want to hear from specialty crop growers about federal crop insurance and other USDA insurance programs, their effectiveness, and how they might be improved in the future.

The agencies are encouraging attendees to register which will help them prepare for the types of operations that will be represented. Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in the listening sessions should contact the Farm Service Agency at (509) 323-3000.

Thursday, February 20, 2014 - 9:30 AM to 11:00 AM
WSU Research and Extension Center, 16650 State Route 536
Mount Vernon, WA

Registration: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/specialty-crop-insurance-education-and-listening-sessions-tickets-8216468679>

Monday, February 24, 2014 - 9:30 AM to 11:00 AM
Port of Chelan Confluence Technology Center, 285 Technology Center Way
Wenatchee, WA

Registration: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/specialty-crop-insurance-education-and-listening-session-tickets-9407663575>

NAP Coverage Deadline

March 15 is the last day for producers to apply for Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for spring planted crops. Form CCC-471 Application for Coverage must be completed, along with payment of the NAP fee, and provided to your local FSA county office. The application and service fee must be filed by March 15, 2014 for 2014 spring planted crops.

The service fee is \$250 per crop per county, up to \$750 per producer per county. The fee cannot exceed a total of \$1875 per producer with farming interest in multiple counties. Limited resource producers may request a waiver of service fees.

To qualify, a producer must be a landowner, tenant or sharecropper who shares in the risk of producing an eligible crop. More information about NAP may be found on the FSA website located at www.fsa.usda.gov

Reporting of Foreign Ownership of Agricultural Land

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the United States are required to report the transaction to FSA within 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).