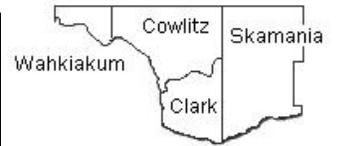




January 2009

Lower Columbia Area FSA NEWS



Lower Columbia Area Farm Service Agency

11104 NE 149th Street, C-500
Brush Prairie, WA 98606
(360) 883-1987 ext 2
(360) 885-2284

Office Hours

Monday – Friday
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

County Committee

Representing the following counties:

CLARK:

Gary Boldt, Member
Carol Hoffman, Minority Advisor

CLARK/COWLITZ:

George Thoeny, Chair

COWLITZ:

Joe Shulke, Member

SKAMANIA:

Ken Bajema, Vice Chair

WAHIAKUM:

Gordon Calvert, Member

Office Staff

Taylor Murray
County Executive Director
Taylor.Murray@wa.usda.gov

Wes Taylor
Program Technician

Farm Loan Staff
Mark Turner (360)354-5658

Next COC Meeting

February 26, 2009

FSA Web Sites

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

National- <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>



This newsletter can also be accessed on the web at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/>
From the top green menu bar, Click "State Offices", click on Washington State on the map, and then click "newsletters" in the Browse by subject box.

FSA County Committee Election update.

Thanks to everyone who voted in the Lower Columbia Area Committee elections that took place December 1, 2008. FSA Committee's are a unique arrangement that allow local guidance for federal farm programs. Committee members are a critical component in ensuring that FSA agricultural programs serve the needs of local producers.

A total of 148 votes were cast for both Local Administrative Area positions whose terms expired 12/31/2008.

- **George Thoeny was re-elected** to represent Clark County farms east of I-5 as well as the Woodland bottoms area in Cowlitz County.
- **Gordon Calvert was elected** as a new member to represent farms located in Wahkiakum County. We welcome Gordon as a new committee member!

We thank Fred Aegerter who has served farmers and ranchers of Wahkiakum County for a total of 25 years as an elected FSA Committee member, and most recently, as the elected Chair of the Committee.



The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) signup is available to eligible agricultural producers

CREP is a voluntary land retirement program that helps agricultural producers protect environmentally sensitive land, decrease erosion, restore wildlife habitat, and safeguard ground and surface water. The program exists through a partnership between producers, the USDA Farm Service Agency, and the County Conservation Districts.

For the landowner, CREP is a cost effective way to address environmental problems and meet regulatory requirements and can increase farm income as well. Financial incentives are available to encourage producers to sign up, and producers will receive an annual rental payment for the acreage enrolled in CREP.

To be eligible, a landowner's property must contain a stream or tributary that has been identified on the Conservation

District's CREP Stream Map as one that provides habitat for salmon. In addition, land must be owned or leased for at least a year to be eligible.

For more information on the program requirements or producer eligibility, please contact us.

2009 DCP/ACRE Signup Status

Producers have from **December 22, 2008**, through **June 1, 2009**, to file a CCC-509 contract in order to participate in the DCP program. Enrollment **will not** be permitted after June 1, 2009. Additionally, CCC-509 will **not** be approved unless **all producers** sharing in base acres with more than a zero share have signed and submitted all applicable documentation.

USDA's Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC)

compensates dairy producers when domestic milk prices fall below a specified level. The 2008 Farm Bill authorized MILC through Sept. 30, 2012.

Sign-up

Sign-up for the program began on Dec. 22, 2008, and extends through Sept. 30, 2012. Eligible dairy producers can apply for program benefits anytime during sign-up. The production start-month for each fiscal year must be designated on the CCC-580 form and has to be selected on or before the 14th of the month preceding the selected MILC production start-month, and prior to the public announcement of the selected month's Boston Class I fluid price.

If non-farm income exceeds \$500,000 the dairy operation and the dairy producer are not eligible for MILC benefits.

Please contact the Lower Columbia Area office if you are interested in signing up for this program.

2008 Farm Bill Update:

With the finalization of the 2008 Farm Bill, new programs have been authorized while others have been revamped. In addition, many of you who participate in FSA programs will be sent new forms that we are required to have on file in order for you to be in compliance with the new regulations found in the 2008 Bill. If you have any questions about these new forms, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will assist you with them.

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 - Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE)
 - Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP)
 - Tree Assistance Program (TAP)
 - Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)
 - Average Crop Revenue Election Program (ACRE)
2. Wool, Mohair 2008 Benefits
3. Loans available

IMPORTANT Message concerning the recent weather events:

Please report storm-related damages to our office as soon as possible. If you were affected by the recent heavy snow or flooding and experienced a loss to livestock, contact this office to file a notice of loss.

The new Farm Bill programs are as follows:

- **Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE):** Covers crop revenue losses from quantity or quality deficiencies in disaster declared counties, contiguous counties, or in cases where the overall production loss exceeds 50%.

SURE covers crop losses on the whole farm when the county receives a disaster designation or when 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.

- **Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP):** Compensates livestock owners for forage losses due to drought.
- **Tree Assistance Program (TAP):** Provides for partial reimbursement for replanting, salvage, pruning, debris removal and land preparation for orchardists and nursery tree growers if losses exceed 15%.
- **Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP):** Compensates producers for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality. This is the only disaster program that does not require crop insurance or NAP coverage.

PLEASE NOTE:

All future disaster assistance eligibility is subject to producers having obtained a minimum CAT level of crop insurance or NAP coverage in the case of uninsurable crops, for all crops on all of a producer's farms. Please contact our office for more information.

- **Average Crop Revenue Election Program. (ACRE):** Producers will have the opportunity to participate in the ACRE program instead of the Direct Counter-Cyclical Program, as early as spring of 2009. ACRE "trades" the counter-cyclical portion of your DCP payment, 20% of your direct payments and a 30% reduction in marketing loan assistance loan values in exchange for potential ACRE payments that are based on your current year's actual plantings, and 12 month national average prices.

Generally, payments are triggered under ACRE when state actual prices/yields are less than normal, and the actual yields of individual farms and national prices are below their expected yield and the ACRE guaranteed price.



Wool, Mohair 2008 Benefits: There is still time to apply for price support benefits for your wool and/or mohair. Producers can request benefits any time **up until January 31, 2009** as long as you have not sold your wool and/or mohair before you sign the application with our office.
Note: The CCC-633EZ form page 1 must be received by the office before you sell in order to be eligible for a payment.

BANK CHANGES?

If you have a direct deposit request on file with our office, please remember to let us know if you change banks or account numbers. Sending funds to a closed account will delay your payments.

LOANS AVAILABLE

FSA has direct and guaranteed loan programs available for family-sized farm businesses. FSA's loan programs are designed to help farmers who are temporarily unable to obtain private commercial credit.