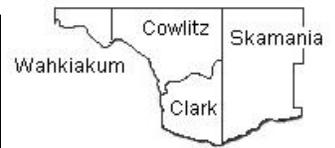




November 2009

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 (LAA #2):

Gary Boldt, Member
Carol Hoffman, Minority Advisor

CLARK/COWLITZ (LAA #1):

George Thoeny, Chairman
Raymond Table, Alternate

COWLITZ (LAA #5):

Joe Shulke, Member

SKAMANIA (LAA #3):

Ken Bajema, Vice Chair

WAHKIAKUM (LAA#4):

Gordon Calvert, Member

Office Staff

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

Wes Taylor
Program Technician

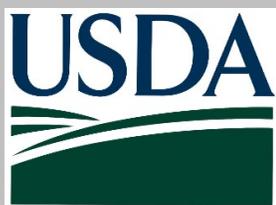
Next COC Meeting

December 10, 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 ELECTION - BALLOTS DUE DECEMBER 7, 2009

The Lower Columbia Area FSA Committee election ballots have been sent to all eligible producers. In order to be counted for this year's election, ballots must be post-marked by December 7, 2009, and election results will be tallied on December 10, 2009 in the USDA Service Center located in Brush Prairie, WA. Eligible voters who reside in one of these two LAA's are encouraged to vote for or write in the candidate of their choice. **Please remember to sign your ballot return envelope!** Voters are to seal the ballot envelope in two locations on the envelope. The first seals the envelope containing the FSA-669 ballot and the second seals the flap to the outside of the ballot envelope to protect the signed label

2009 Candidates for the Lower Columbia Area Farm Service Agency Committee

LAA #2 Clark County:

Gary Boldt has been nominated in LAA #2, Clark County to serve as a Committee member for three years beginning in 2010. Gary is currently serving his third year as a FSA Committee member and is an active member and the president of the Clark and Cowlitz County Farm Bureau. Gary has lived in Clark County since 1950, and is married and has raised three children there. Gary was in the dairy business from 1971 until 2005 and now raises beef cows; grows a few hundred acres of grass hay; and twelve acres of vegetable crops. In addition, Gary hauls freight east of the mountains and brings hay back to Clark County for sale.

LAA #5 Cowlitz County:

Dirk Muyskens has been nominated in LAA#5, Cowlitz County to serve as a Committee member for three years beginning in 2010. Dirk previously represented agricultural producers in Cowlitz County as a FSA Committee member between 1992 and 1994. Dirk retired from the FBI in 1988 and with his wife owns and operates tree farms on several different parcels of land in Cowlitz County. In addition, Dirk operates an orchard and grows 40 different kinds of fruit.

Joe Shulke has been nominated in LAA #5, Cowlitz County to serve as a Committee member for three years beginning in 2010. Joe is currently serving his sixth year as a FSA Committee member and is a board member for the Cowlitz Conservation District. Joe was born and raised in Cowlitz County, where he went to school, married his high school sweetheart, and raised five children. Currently, Joe raises both chickens and cattle, he has been a logger in the past and in addition to the agricultural lands where Joe operates his chicken and cattle operation, Joe's family owns timber land as well,

Greetings from the New State Executive Director – Judy Olson

Hello from the Farm Service Agency's state office. Since starting as Washington's State Executive Director in August, I have traveled to county offices throughout the state to meet employees and your representatives on the FSA county committees. Like you, I have experienced FSA from the producer perspective for many years. My husband and I have farmed in Whitman County, where I grew up on a farm.

Knowing the challenges and hard work involved in farming, I have great respect for Washington's agricultural producers and I'm proud of the diverse and productive agriculture in the state. The Farm Service Agency has helped many a farmer get started in the business or survive difficult financial times. I'm pleased to be part of an organization that supports agriculture.

The 2008 Farm Bill introduced new financial risk management tools and some of these new programs we are still bringing online. The complexity and number of the programs have created challenges for the agency and our employees. I am grateful for your patience as we implement the new programs. I realize the current economy and tight credit for sectors of agriculture are also challenging for you. The situation makes these programs all that much more important. Our commitment to Washington state producers is to provide you the best service possible.

Emergency Assistance For Livestock, Honeybees, And Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP)

FSA is currently accepting applications for the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP). The program provides financial relief to eligible producers of livestock,

Livestock Indemnity Program Deadline Approaches

Ranchers who lost livestock in 2009 as a result of natural disasters have until January 30, 2010 to apply for financial relief under the Farm Service Agency's Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP). Livestock must have been maintained as part of a commercial farming or ranching operation. Eligible livestock include: alpacas, beef cattle, buffalo and beefalo, dairy cattle, deer, elk, emus, equine, goats, llamas, poultry, reindeer, sheep and swine.

Remember that even though you have until January 30, 2010 to apply for **payment** on 2009 losses, you must notify our office of the loss within 30 calendar days of when the loss becomes apparent.

NOTICE TO FOREIGN INVESTORS

Foreign owners of US Agricultural land are required by law to report land holdings, acquisitions, leases of 10 years or more, and land use changes within 90 days of these transactions. Report these changes to the local FSA office. Failure to report these changes can result in a civil penalty of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of your interest in agricultural land.

honeybees and farm-raised fish that have losses due to disease, adverse weather or other conditions, including blizzards and wildfires. Losses could have occurred as far back as January 1, 2008.

Assistance for producers through ELAP is for losses not covered under other Supplemental Agricultural Disaster Assistance programs established by the 2008 Farm Bill. These include the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE). ELAP is being implemented to help fill the gap and provide assistance under other eligibility conditions determined to be appropriate.

Eligible livestock include beef cattle, alpacas, buffalo, beefalo, dairy cattle, deer, elk, emus, equine, goats, llamas, poultry, reindeer, sheep and swine in addition to honeybees and farm-raised fish. Prior purchase of crop insurance or Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage is required for LFP and ELAP eligibility.

Due to a program funding cap, ELAP payments may be pro-rated depending on the number of applications. Individuals or entities are ineligible for payment under ELAP or LFP for 2008 if their average Adjusted Gross Income for 2005, 2006 and 2007 exceeds \$2.5 million. For 2009, an average adjusted gross nonfarm income limitation of \$500,000 applies. Payment limitations for all disaster programs are \$100,000.

FSA has set a December 10, 2009 notice of loss deadline for losses that occurred between January 1, 2008 and September 10, 2009. In the future, a notice of loss is due 30 days after damage is apparent.

Payment Problems

Producers are encouraged to closely monitor your farm program payments for fiscal year 2009. FSA has been transitioning from an old computer system to online software systems to make payments. The old system is obsolete, and soon the agency will no longer be able to maintain it. The transition to the new systems has created temporary problems for issuing payments, as some of you may have experienced.

Final 2009 DCP and ACRE direct payments were issued in full this October, although not everyone will have seen their annual payments yet due to the problems referenced above. Individual payment amounts may look different than you expect, but the total of all your payments should be similar to previous years, if nothing has changed.

Please know that we are trying to issue your payments as quickly as possible. Transaction statements are mailed directly from our Financial Services Center in Kansas City and may reach you after your payment is deposited into your bank account. If the total of all your payments is not what you expect, let us know.

Biomass Crop Assistance Program

BCAP will provide financial assistance to owners of eligible material who deliver the material to qualified biomass conversion facilities that use biomass to produce heat, power, biobased products or advanced biofuels. Eligible material owners may be eligible for a matching payment which would pay at a rate of \$1 for \$1 per dry-ton equivalent received from a qualified biomass conversions facility, not to exceed \$45 per dry ton equivalent. An eligible material owner may receive payments for a period of two years.