



Lower Columbia Area Farm Service Agency

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Brush Prairie, WA 98606
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(360) 885-2284 - fax

Office Hours

Monday – Friday
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Area Committee Representing the following counties:

CLARK (LAA #2):

Gary Boldt
Carol Hoffman, Committee
Advisor

CLARK/COWLITZ (LAA #1):

George Thoeny
Raymond Table, Alternate

COWLITZ (LAA #5):

Joe Shulke

SKAMANIA (LAA #3):

Ken Bajema

WAHAKIYAKUM (LAA#4):

Gordon Calvert

Office Staff

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

Wes Taylor
Program Technician

Next COC Meeting

December 9, 2010

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.

COC Election Notice

The nomination period for persons to serve on the Lower Columbian Area Committee representing LAA #3, which represents all of Skamania County, was recently completed, with one valid petition received.

Ken Bajema was nominated to represent producers who reside in Skamania County. Ken has previously served for one three-year term on the Lower Columbia Area Committee and with his wife, Dee, raises Belted Galloway cattle and operates a holly farm in Western Skamania County.

Thank you to Ken for his willingness to serve on the committee if elected. Ballots will be sent in early November, and must be returned to the County office, or postmarked by Monday, December 6, 2010 to be valid.

Ballots will be counted at the Area Committee meeting on Thursday, December 9, 2010, beginning at 10:00 a.m. during the regular session, which is open to anyone from the public interested in attending. **Write in candidates are acceptable.**

Accessibility

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in any meeting, event or function should contact the county office. FSA is committed to making programs accessible to all customers.

Deadlines for Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program

The application closing date to purchase coverage for the 2011 crop year for perennial crops; including honey, berries, and fruit trees under the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) is November 20, 2010.

To apply for NAP coverage, the application fee is \$250 per crop, up to a \$750 cap per county. The maximum for multiple crops in more than one county is \$1,875 per crop year. In return, the crop is covered from catastrophic loss of production or prevented planting due to natural disaster conditions.

To be eligible for NAP benefits, production loss must be attributed to adverse weather conditions. Losses must be reported to FSA within 15 days after the adverse weather event or when the loss becomes evident. You may receive a payment if all eligibility requirements have been met and the crop suffers greater than a 50% production loss for weather related damages.

Some of the basic eligibility requirements include annual reporting of crop acreages, providing actual production evidence on a yearly basis, obtaining a loss adjustor appraisal if the damaged crop will be destroyed or left unharvested.

Contact the county office if you would

like more information or are interested in applying for NAP coverage.

SURE Program

SURE provides crop disaster assistance payments to eligible producers on farms that have incurred crop production or crop quality losses. The program takes into consideration crop losses on all crops grown by a producer nationwide. SURE provides assistance in an amount equal to 60 percent of the difference between the SURE farm guarantee and total farm revenue. The farm guarantee is based on the amount of crop insurance and Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage on the farm. Total farm revenue takes into account the actual value of production on the farm as well as insurance indemnities and certain farm program payments.

Producers with a farming interest physically located in a county that was declared a primary disaster county or contiguous county by the Agriculture Secretary must have suffered at least a 10 percent production loss on a crop of economic significance.

Producers must meet the risk management purchase requirement by either obtaining a policy or plan of insurance, under the Federal Crop Insurance Act or NAP coverage, for all economically significant crops.

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.

Rural Youth Loans

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA) makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to establish and operate income producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be initiated, developed, carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organization or with a vocational teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and operated with the assistance of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. *Contact your local FSA office for more details.*

Paper Check Conversion – Over the Counter (PCC – OTC)

Over the next year, FSA/CCC is moving toward an electronic method for processing producers' checks. This will allow FSA/CCC to process collections faster. When producers present checks, either in person or through the mail, the checks will be converted into an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). The funds will be debited from the producer's account, usually within 24 hours of receipt.

Producers considered socially disadvantaged, a beginning farmer or rancher, or a limited resource farmer may be eligible for SURE without a policy or plan of insurance or NAP coverage.

If there is no Secretarial Disaster Designation, individual producers may also be eligible for SURE if the actual production on the farm is less than 50 percent of the normal production on the farm due to a natural disaster. For SURE, a farm is defined as all crops in which a producer had an interest nationwide.

For more information on the SURE program, please visit the county office or <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

USDA Streamlines Payment Limits to Enhance Program Integrity

Beginning in January 2010, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provided producers with consent forms to voluntarily complete and submit to IRS.

These forms authorize IRS to disclose a very limited amount of information to USDA for 2009 through 2011 average adjusted gross income (AGI) compliance purposes. Producers must submit the applicable form to IRS, authorizing the review, in order to retain 2009 and future payments subject to current AGI requirements. The form must be mailed to the IRS within 60 days of signing the form. *FSA cannot accept the consent forms.*

Two consent forms, one for individuals (CCC-927) and one for legal entities (CCC-928) will be used. Every individual or entity who was required to file form CCC-926, Average Adjusted Gross Income Statement, must file the applicable consent form.

IRS will provide FSA and NRCS with a report, indicating whether or not producers met the statutory AGI limits. No actual tax data will be included in the report that IRS sends to USDA.

Producers whose average AGI appears to exceed statutory limitations will be notified by letter and provided an opportunity to submit a third party verification from a certified public accountant or attorney that demonstrates AGI limits have not been exceeded. Producers will be given 30 days to submit this verification to the Washington State FSA Office. Non-compliant participants will be required to refund applicable program payments.

The purpose of the agreement is to reduce fraud in farm programs and streamline payment limits for family farmers. The actions are intended to strengthen the integrity and defensibility of USDA farm safety net programs. This agreement will ensure that payments are not issued to producers whose adjusted gross income (AGI) exceeds limits set in the 2008 Farm Bill. The limits are \$500,000 nonfarm average AGI for commodity and disaster programs; \$750,000 farm average AGI for direct payments; and \$1 million nonfarm average AGI for conservation programs.

FSA Unveils Conservation Loan Program

Your local FSA office is now accepting applications for its new Conservation Loan Program. This will give farmers who want to implement conservation measures on their lands a chance to do so by providing assistance with their up-front costs. Conservation Loan (CL) funds can be used to implement conservation practices approved by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), such as the installation of conservation structures; establishment of forest cover; installation of water conservation measures; establishment or improvement of permanent pastures; implementation of manure management; and the adaptation of other emerging or existing conservation practices, techniques or technologies. Direct CLs can be obtained through local Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices with loan limits up to \$300,000. Guaranteed CLs up to \$1,112,000 are available from lenders working with FSA.