

September 2013



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## Lower Columbia Area Updates

### Reporting Weather Damage

Prompt weather-related disaster reporting is crucial for FSA to determine the need for disaster declarations. If you experienced crop damage or other agriculture losses due to recent weather events, contact the FSA office and your crop insurance agent. Disaster declarations trigger availability of emergency loans and in some instances, additional disaster assistance programs.

Damage reports aren't just limited to crops. They can include damage to structures, eroded farmland or livestock mortality. Helpful documentation includes the specific location of farm damage, date and time of the disaster event, the type of damage (hail, wind, etc), what was affected and the estimated percent of loss. Photographic evidence of significant damage will also be helpful as both FSA and insurance agents use them in support of future program applications and cumulative damage reports.

Disaster designation triggers availability of low-interest Emergency loans. Timely reporting to FSA and your insurance agent is also important for Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance (NAP) or crop insurance payments. Emergency loans may be used to replace essential property or pay production costs associated with the disaster year. They may also be used to pay essential living expenses, reorganize a farming operation or refinance certain debts.

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### Lower Columbia Area FSA Office

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**County Executive Director:**  
Taylor B. Murray

**Program Technicians:**  
Wes Taylor

### USDA Announces Changes in Price Discovery for Fall and Spring Wheat and Reminds Western Washington Producers of Crop Insurance Signup Dates

Spokane, Wash., Aug. 19, 2013 — USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) announced the availability of a separate revenue price for fall and spring wheat for the **2014 Multi-Peril Crop Insurance (MPCI)** crop year. RMA also reminds western Washington producers of the upcoming September 30 sales closing date for wheat insurance coverage.

The current wheat policy (with the premium partially paid by USDA) allows producers to choose yield protection, revenue protection with upside/downside price protection or revenue protection with just downside price protection.

"The spring wheat type now uses the Minneapolis Grain Exchange (MGE), referencing the September futures contract. Spring and winter wheat projected prices are now both available before the September 30 wheat

**Senior Farm Loan Officer:**

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**Next County Committee**

**Meeting:** October 31, 2013  
at 10:00 AM

sales closing date,” said RMA Spokane Regional Office Director Dave Paul. If a policy is purchased by the sales closing date and the producer later decides not to plant either winter or spring wheat, they report zero acres of the respective type and no premium would be due. The premium billing occurs in August of the year of harvest.

**Producers are encouraged to visit their crop insurance agent soon** to learn specific details for the 2014 crop year, including insurance for forage production which may be eligible for coverage under a written agreement. Federal crop insurance program policies are sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance companies and agents. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers throughout the United States or on the RMA web site at [www3.rma.usda.gov/tools/agents](http://www3.rma.usda.gov/tools/agents).

**Procedures for Accessibility**

Reasonable accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment to attend or participate in meetings or events sponsored by the Farm Service Agency. If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in one of our events, please contact the local office and we will make any needed arrangements.

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## Acreage Reporting

Filing an accurate acreage report at your local FSA office can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs. Failed acreage is acreage that was timely planted with the intent to harvest but because of disaster related conditions; the crop failed before it could be brought to harvest. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date. Annual acreage reports are required for most FSA programs. Annual crop report deadlines vary based on region, crop, permanent vs. annual crop type, NAP or non-NAP crop and fall or winter seeding. Consult your local FSA office for deadlines in your area.

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## Change in Farming Operation

If you have bought or sold land, or if you have picked up or dropped rented land from your operation, make sure you report the changes to the local FSA office as soon as possible. You need to provide a copy of your deed or recorded land contract for purchased property. Failure to maintain accurate records with FSA on all land you have an interest in can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. Making the record changes now will save you time in the spring. Update signature authorization when changes in the operation occur. Producers are reminded to contact their local FSA office of a change in operations on a farm so that records can be kept current and accurate.

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## General Eligibility Requirements for FSA Farm Loans:

- U.S. Citizen
- Legal capacity to incur the loan obligation
- Unable to obtain sufficient credit elsewhere
- Not delinquent on a federal debt
- Not have had a previous loan which resulted in a loss to the Agency (with certain exceptions)

- Satisfactory credit history
- No disqualification from Crop Insurance violations
- No conviction for controlled substance
- Demonstrate Management, Education, On-the-Job Training or Farming Experience For Direct Farm Ownership Loans only the additional requirements apply,
- Participated in business operations of a farm or ranch for at least 3 years out of past 10 years or
- Operated a farm, or
- Employed as farm manager or farm management consultant

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## Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation Compliance

Landowners and operators are reminded that in order to receive payments from USDA, compliance with Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions are required. Farmers with HEL determined soils are reminded of tillage, crop residue, and rotation requirements as specified per their conservation plan. Producers are to notify the USDA Farm Service Agency prior to conducting land clearing or drainage projects to insure compliance. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in the loss of eligibility and all Federal payments.

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## Signature Policy

Using the correct signature when doing business with FSA can save time and prevent a delay in program benefits. The following are FSA signature guidelines:

- A married woman shall sign her given name: Mrs. Mary Doe, not Mrs. John Doe
- For a minor, FSA requires the minor' signature and one from an eligible parent

Note, by signing the applicable document, the parent is liable for actions of the minor and may be liable

- for refunds, liquidated damages, etc... When signing on one's behalf the signature must agree with the name typed or printed on the form, or be a variation that does not cause the name and signature to be in disagreement. Example - John W. Smith is on the form. The signature may be John W. Smith or J.W. Smith or J. Smith. Or Mary J. Smith may be signed as Mrs. Mary Joe Smith, M.J. Smith, Mary Smith, etc

- FAXED signatures will be accepted for certain forms and other documents provided the acceptable program forms are approved for FAXED signatures. Producers are responsible for the successful transmission and receipt of FAXED information.

**Examples of documents not approved for FAXED signatures include:**

- Promissory note

- Assignment of payment
- Joint payment authorization
- NAP actual production history and approved yield record
- Acknowledgement of commodity certificate purchase
- Financing statement
- UCC financing statement
- Spouses may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and CCC programs in which either has an interest, unless written notification denying a spouse this authority has been provided to the county office
- Spouses shall not sign on behalf of each other as an authorized signatory for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations, or other similar entities **all** members of a general partnership must sign for the general partnership unless an individual is authorized to act on the behalf of the general partnership and bind all members
- Spouses may sign on behalf of each other's individual interest in a partnership, unless notification denying a spouse that authority is provided to the county office
- Acceptable signatures for general partnerships, joint ventures, corporations, estates, and trusts shall consist of an indicator "by" or "for" the individual's name, individual's name and capacity, or individual's name, capacity, and name of entity. For additional clarification on proper signatures contact your local FSA office.

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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).