



Adams County FSA

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February 2011

Office Hours

Monday – Friday
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

County Committee

Leroy Watson Jr.
Matt Miller
Greg Galbreath
Trish McRae

COC Meetings

Thursday of the third full week
of each month.

Office Staff

Chris Holt, CED
Angela Melcher, PT
Jullie Cain, PT
Karin Neilsen, PT
Elizabeth Sitton, PT

Farm Loan Staff

Libby Anderson FLM
Nancy Segar FLO

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CRP Signup 41 Announced

Secretary Vilsack recently announced plans to conduct a general CRP Signup this year. Offers will be accepted on land with CRP expiring at the end of FY 2011, as well as on cropland not currently enrolled in CRP, but which meets land eligibility requirements. The signup period will run from March 14, 2011 through April 15, 2011. Contract period for all offers accepted will begin on October 1, 2011.

An Environmental Benefit Index (EBI) will be used to evaluate and rank acceptable offers nationwide. The EBI assigns a score to each offer, considering the benefits to wildlife, soil erosion, water quality, air quality, and cost to the government. Upon the conclusion of signup, the Secretary will establish a national EBI cutoff level, with offers receiving scores at or above the cutoff being potentially acceptable for enrollment. In Adams County, the pool of available acreage within the statutory limit of 25% of available county cropland, including active contracts expiring on September 30, 2011 is approximately 21,500 acres. In the event that acceptable offers for land physically located in the county exceed available acreage, offers with the highest overall EBI will be accepted until the 25% limit is reached. In Signup 39, this had the effect of significantly increasing the acceptable EBI cutoff over the national established level.

FSA will present an informational presentation on changes to the EBI scoring system, and other issues of interest to CRP, as well as a presentation on the Conservation Loan Program and Youth Loan availability in conjunction with the Grower Meeting scheduled for March 2, 2011 in Lind, at the Grange Hall, beginning at 9:00 a.m. For further information on this meeting, please contact our office.

CRP Reminders

CRP contracts accepted during signup 39 are reminded of the following “action items” and cutoff dates for items included in the CRP contract Conservation Plan of Operations.

Spring Seeding Cutoff – CRP contracts scheduled to have been seeded during the 2010-2011 overwinter period should be wrapping up seeding activity. The seeding cutoff for grass seeding in the county is historically around the middle of February, with written permission of the County Committee required to complete any seeding activity beyond March 1. While this winter has given us nice precipitation, and much of it has penetrated the soil, it is still true that seeding later in the overwinter period carries a higher degree of risk, and seedlings are more susceptible to dry conditions later in the spring.

Initiating Seedbed Preparation for 2011-12 Seeding – For those contracts where seeding is planned during the upcoming winter dormant period (Nov. ‘11- Feb. ‘12), an initial activity to disturb and begin destruction of existing cover, and to initiate weed growth (harrowing, light tillage, or heavy tillage) is expected to be completed, not later than the middle of March. The choice of method of seedbed preparation (whether mechanical fallow, chemical fallow, or a combination of the two) is left to the producer; however, it is expected that an appropriately prepared seedbed will be developed for seeding during the 2011-2012 dormant seeding period. Variance from this seeding plan must be approved in writing by the County Committee, and must be based on documenting conditions outside the control of the producer’s control.

Food Plots – Producers who agreed to plant wildlife food plots are reminded that this is an annual requirement; therefore, planting is to occur on a minimum of 50% of the required acreage this spring. Producers are allowed to plant half, and fallow half of the acreage each year. Perennial food plot plantings are also approved. For more information, contact our office.

Wildlife Watering Facilities – Producers who agreed to establish watering facilities have received information on cultural resource requirements prior to beginning construction, and should be in the process of obtaining the information needed to meet this requirement for expending federal funds. All guzzlers are planned for installation not later than the fall of 2011, or upon notice from FSA that cultural resource requirements have been met.

2009 SURE Signup Begins

Signup for the 2009 Supplemental Revenue Assistance (SURE) program, is currently underway, and will continue through July 29, 2011. As with the prior year program, SURE requires a 10% qualifying loss; benefits are based on a comparison of whole farm actual and expected revenues, including interests in all counties where the applicant farms.

One significant modification to the 2009 SURE calculation is the addition of 100% of ACRE-ACRE payments in consideration of farm actual revenue portion of the SURE benefit calculation. For those farms enrolled in ACRE, this can significantly impact 2009 SURE payment eligibility. We are requesting that persons interested in SURE contact Karin for an

appointment; in this manner the eligibility workbook necessary to calculate SURE eligibility can be completed ahead of your meeting, allowing you to review the data for accuracy and to view potential SURE benefits at the time of signup.

Town Hall Meetings Planned by Farm Service Agency

Producers wanting to know more about FSA programs or comment on FSA programs and services will have an opportunity for dialogue with the agency's State Executive Director Judy Olson. Ms. Olson will participate in a producer meeting and listening session on Tuesday, March 22, 2011. The meeting starts at 10 a.m. and will be in Davenport, WA at the Memorial Hall, 511 W. Park Street. The meeting is one of four that Ms. Olson will attend in the state. Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in the meeting should contact the Lincoln County FSA office at (509) 725-4501 or jeff.lust@wa.usda.gov. FSA is committed to making programs accessible to all customers.

Asparagus Revenue Market Loss Assistance Program Underway

The Asparagus Revenue Market Loss Assistance Program (ALAP) was authorized as a part of the 2008 farm legislation, in order to compensate asparagus producers who suffered losses of revenue as a result of 2004-2007 imports. Signup for this program was recently announced, beginning on February 7, and continuing through April 8, 2011.

To qualify for benefits, producers must have as an owner, operator, or tenant have shared in the risk of commercial asparagus production during both the 2003, and the 2007 crop year. The act authorizes a total of \$15 million nationwide for administration of ALAP, with funding divided equally between fresh and processed production. Payments to eligible growers are based on certification of total production of asparagus for the 2003 crop year. In the event that national production enrolled in ALAP causes calculated benefits to exceed authorized funding, an alternative payment method will be utilized. Under the alternative payment method, payments would first be limited not to exceed \$100,000 per grower in each production category reaching available funding limit, and any producers failing to meet Adjusted Gross Income provisions would be determined ineligible for payment. Upon completion of these initial steps, maximum payment rate for each type of production would then be recalculated by dividing funding available for the marketing category by the total nationwide payment quantity for the respective marketing category of asparagus.

To request ALAP benefits, producers are required to complete CCC-895 Request for ALAP benefits, and to complete certain other payment eligibility forms with the FSA Office. For more information on the ALAP program, or to schedule an appointment to request benefits, please contact our office.

Tree Assistance Program

The Tree Assistance Program (TAP) is another program authorized through the 2008 farm bill legislation. TAP provides assistance to orchardists and vineyard operators who suffer losses to trees and vines in excess of 15%, adjusted for normal mortality, as a result of adverse weather conditions occurring between January 1, 2008 and October 1, 2011. TAP payments are made for rehabilitation, or replanting of damaged/destroyed orchards and vineyards; all work must be completed within 1 year of the approval of the application. Risk Management Purchase Requirement (RMPP) provisions implemented with the 2008 farm bill apply to TAP; this means that in order to qualify for TAP, applicants must have carried multi-peril insurance or NAP on all crops grown. *De-minimus*, and crop of economic significance waivers do not apply to TAP applicants.

Producers are reminded that a notice of loss on damaged/destroyed trees and vines is required to be filed not later than 90 days after the date of damaging weather, or when damage becomes apparent, in order to be considered for TAP. FSA must conduct an initial on-site inspection to verify damage prior to application approval, and a final inspection must also be completed to verify replanting/rehabilitation, prior to issuance of payments. TAP payments are made on 70% of the cost of replanting in excess of normal mortality, or 50% of the cost of pruning, grafting, and removal of materials when rehabilitating existing trees.

November 2010 temperatures had the potential to damage trees and vineyards, although the damage was likely not immediately apparent. With the onset of spring weather, producers are reminded of the requirement for timely filing notices of loss to maintain TAP eligibility and to call our office with any tree survival concerns to initiate the notice of loss process.

Farm Storage Facility Loans

Producers interested in additional grain, hay or certain cold storage structures are reminded of the availability of the Farm Storage Facility Loan Program (FSFL) to construct these facilities. Loan terms can be up to \$500,000, on 7-12 year repayment terms, and require 15% down. FSA is required to take a security interest on real estate to which FSFL structures are affixed. The February interest rate is 2.75% on 7 year loans, 3.375% on 10 year loans, and 3.625% on 12 year loan terms. FSFL funding has been appropriated and is available for 2011 FY applications. For additional program details, please call our office.