



NEWSLETTER



Columbia and
Walla Walla County
Farm Service Agency

April 2012

Travis Martin, CED
travis.martin@wa.usda.gov

Columbia County
202 S 2nd St
Dayton, WA 99328
509-382-2421 ext 2
509-382-4084 fax

Walla Walla County
325 N 13th Ave
Walla Walla, WA 99362
509-522-6347 ext 2
509-525-2811 fax

Office Hours
Monday – Friday
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Office Staff
Columbia
Christy Bell, PT

Walla Walla
Nicole Armijo, PT
Norma Colunga, PT
Lee Walters, PT

Next County Committee Meeting:
May 16, 2012 – Walla Walla Service
Center

***Special Accommodations:**

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.

CRP SIGNUP TO END SOON

The 43rd signup of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) will end Friday, April 6, 2012.

CRP allows producers to enroll land in ten year contracts that help preserve environmentally sensitive land. In exchange for retiring the land from crop production, producers receive annual rental payments and cost share equaling 50 percent of the cost to establish the cover. Rental rates are tied to county average rental rates and the productivity of the soils in the offered acreage.

Eligibility and ranking scores are based on several factors. Eligible land must have been planted to an annual crop or conserving use in at least four years between 2002 and 2007. The land must also have an erodibility index of 8 tons/acre or greater, be in the state air quality or wildlife Conservation Priority Area, or be existing CRP that is scheduled to expire in 2012.

Offers will again be ranked using the Environmental Benefits Index, or EBI. Points are awarded for environmental and habitat benefits of the proposed cover being established. More points are awarded for diverse, multi species, native covers. To maximize points, producers might want to consider replanting these types of covers.

MAINTENANCE OF EXISTING CRP ACREAGE

This office wishes to remind producers with existing CRP acreage that controlling weeds and stand maintenance is a requirement of remaining in compliance with the CRP contract. Every year, FSA & NRCS personnel from this office conduct field visits to verify stand density and species requirements are being met, as well as to ensure that weed control measures are being conducted on CRP acreage. Please remember the following items;

1. The primary nesting season is April 1 through July 1. Prior approval is needed from the FSA County Committee to conduct weed control measures such as spraying, mowing, or burning on CRP that has been certified as established. The nesting season requirements do not apply to those CRP contracts that have not been certified as established.
2. Mid-management activities are required on most CRP contracts. The most used mid-management activity is spraying and/or mowing. Please review your conservation plans to see what year these operations must be completed in. Cost share is available for these operations. Failure of CRP stands due to neglect of the CRP participant can lead to sizeable payment reductions, and in extreme cases, contract termination.

JOB OPENING FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY

Columbia County seeks a full time permanent Program Technician. Responsible for carrying out office activities and functions pertaining to the technical assistance and support related to FSA programs. Uses various types of computer systems to maintain producer data and process automated program forms. Uses a high degree of initiative and judgment in planning and carrying out assigned tasks and resolving problems encountered. The position is located in Dayton, Washington. To apply visit USAJobs.gov reference # **ADZ630272-WA**. Call 509-382-2421 for more information. Applications must be submitted by April 24, 2012. FSA is an equal opportunity employer.

2012 DCP/ACRE ENROLLMENT

Appointments are now being accepted for producers wishing to enroll into the 2012 Direct & Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP), or the Average Crop Revenue Election Program (ACRE). **Contracts for both of these programs are required to be completed annually.** For the 2012 crop year, all producers sharing in the payment of the DCP/ACRE contract **must sign, date and return the contract to this office by June 1, 2012.**

Also remember that all ACRE participants are required to provide the office with their annual crop production. 2011 production certification needs to be completed no later than June 30, 2012.

2010 CROP DISASTER PROGRAM ENDING JUNE 1ST

The deadline for producers to submit applications for 2010 crop year Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE) is June 1, 2012. The application and all required documentation must be on file and signed by close of business on that day. To be eligible for SURE, a producer must have obtained a policy or plan of insurance for all crops through the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation or obtained Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage, if available, from the Farm Service Agency.

To receive SURE payments, an eligible producer must have a qualifying loss. A qualifying loss means at least a 10 percent production loss affecting one crop of economic significance due to a disaster on a farm in a disaster county. Producers outside a declared disaster county, but with production losses greater than or equal to 50 percent of the normal production on the farm (expected revenue for all crops on the farm), also qualify for SURE.

YOUTH LOANS AVAILABLE

FSA makes operating loans to individual rural youth ages 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.

KEEP FARM RECORDS UP TO DATE

Accurate farm records are essential for this office to be able to administer farm programs effectively. With this in mind, operators and owners of farms participating in federal programs are reminded to please keep this office updated on any farm record changes that take place during the crop year. Record changes would include becoming a new operator or owner of farm ground, obtaining a new bank account, making changes to your entity structure, or notifying this office of deceased individuals.