



NEWSLETTER



CROP MARKETING TOOLS AVAILABLE

August 2012

Columbia and Walla Walla County Farm Service Agency

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Office Staff
Columbia
Christy Bell, PT
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Walla Walla
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Lee Walters, PT

Next County Committee Meeting:
Sept 19th (Tentative) – 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.

FSA offers 9-month marketing assistance loans, using the harvested commodity as collateral. Obtaining a loan enables a producer to extend their marketing season by allowing them to hold the commodity beyond harvest when prices are usually lowest. The collateralized commodity may be stored on the farm or in CCC licensed warehouses. Farm storage must be safe and available for FSA inspection at any time. If all eligibility criteria and application requirements are met, loans can generally be disbursed in less than a week (delays usually attributable to lien search results).

The following crops are eligible for commodity loans or LDPs: barley, oats, wheat, corn, grain sorghum, soybeans, canola (and other oilseeds), dry peas, lentils and large and small chickpeas. Honey and wool are also eligible. Unshorn pelts are eligible for LDP only.

Final availability date for loans and LDP's is January 31 for wool and unshorn pelts; March 31 for barley, canola, crambe, flaxseed, honey, oats, rapeseed, wheat and sesame seed; May 31 for corn, dry peas, lentils, and all other eligible oilseeds. The August loan interest rate is 1.250%.

Commodity	Columbia County Loan Rate	Walla Walla County Loan Rate
Barley	\$2.20	\$2.23
Wheat-Hard Red Winter	\$3.50	\$3.51
Wheat-Hard Red Spring	\$3.32	\$3.32
Wheat-Soft White Winter	\$3.06	\$3.06
Wheat-Durum	\$2.64	\$2.64

Other eligible crop loan rates and general loan and LDP information can be found by clicking on this link: [FSA Price Support](#).

CONTINUOUS CRP ADDS THREE NEW PRACTICE INITIATIVES

New changes to the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) will make it easier to enroll land meeting certain criteria into the program on a non-competitive basis. However, signup under these new initiatives ends **September 30, 2012**. The three new initiatives are: CP42 – Pollinator Habitat, CP33 – Habitat Buffers for Upland Birds, and Highly Erodible Land Initiative.

The Highly Erodible Land initiative allows producers to non-competitively enter land with an Erosion Index of 20 or greater into CRP.

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An Erosion Index (EI) of 20 means, on average, this land has the potential to erode at 20 tons of soil per acre per year. Producers may sign a CRP contract with the FSA at any time under this new provision and not have to wait for a general signup period. The agency is authorized to accept up to 10,300 acres with an EI of 20 in Washington.

The Pollinator Habitat emphasizes a mix of plants that flower throughout the growing season for pollinator. The land bid into Pollinator Habitat must be at least 20 feet in width and individual plantings must be a minimum of 0.5 acres. There are no maximum limits on width or contract size.

Habitat Buffers for Upland Birds consist of planting field borders the limited to minimum average width of 30 feet and a maximum average width of 120 feet. Participants are encouraged to implement the buffer around an entire field, but at a minimum they must be installed where runoff enters or leaves the field. The maximum number of acres that can be enrolled in Washington State is 5000. Contracts will be approved on a first come first serve basis.

For all three initiatives, eligible land must have been planted to an annual crop or conserving use in at least four years between 2002 and 2007. Land currently in CRP and within one year of the contract expiration date may be enrolled under the new initiatives. Leaving the most highly erodible soils in CRP and farming the rest of the land may be an option for some producers with expiring CRP contracts. Contracts are 10 years in length.

Please contact our office if you have any questions on these newly announced initiatives.

DEADLINES FOR NON-INSURED CROP DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The application closing dates to purchase coverage for the 2013 crop year for fall planted crops under the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) is as follows:

Crops	Application Closing Date
Canola and rapeseed; onions, radish, carrots, and cabbage (for seed or fresh); value loss crops (aquaculture, Christmas Trees, turf grass sod, floriculture, mushrooms); artichokes and any fall planted crops not mentioned below.	August 31
Perennial grazing crops; perennial forage crops; forage seed crops; mint; wheat; garlic.	September 30
All perennial crops not listed in the 9/30 category (berries, fruit trees, grapes, asparagus); honey; hops.	November 20

To apply for NAP coverage, the application must be filed on or before the application closing date for the crop and NAP fees must be paid. The coverage fee is \$250 per crop, up to a \$750 cap per county and 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 our office if you would like more information or are interested in applying for NAP coverage.

UPCOMING CHANGES TO CROP ACREAGE REPORTING DATES

Implementation of common acreage reporting dates is a major step by the Risk Management Agency (RMA) and Farm Service Agency (FSA) to reduce the duplication of acreage reporting by producers. This change does not reduce or modify the programs or services that RMA or FSA provides, but will enable crop insurance agents and FSA office staff to collect information in a more uniform and efficient manner. Washington producers will begin to work with these changes beginning with the 2013 crop year. Please review the new reporting dates.

Crops Planned for 2013 Harvest	Reporting Date
Fall Alfalfa Seed, Barley, Canola, Mint, Onions (planted 8/15-9/15), Wheat and all other fall seeded small grains.	December 15, 2012
Apples, Blueberries, Cherries, Cranberries, Fresh Apricots, Fresh Freestone Peaches, Fresh Nectarines, Grapes, Pears and Plums.	January 15, 2013
Spring Alfalfa Seed, Spring Barley, Cabbage (planted 4/21-6/10), Spring Canola, Corn, Dry Beans, Dry Peas (planted 3/9-5/25), Green Peas, Spring Mint, Mustard, Spring Oats, Onions (planted 3/14-4/20), Potatoes, Processing Beans, Soybeans, Sugar Beets, Sweet Corn and Spring Wheat.	July 15, 2013
All Other Crops not listed above (including CRP).	July 15, 2013

Reporting acreage timely is a requirement for most FSA programs. If harvest or grazing will occur before the established reporting date, producers must report acreage prior to harvest or grazing begins. In addition, crops planted after the established reporting dates can report timely by amending the previous acreage report within 15 days after planting.

Note for 2012 Late-Filed Reports: June 30 was the deadline to report 2012 crops. Late filing results in the producer paying for the cost of a field visit to verify the crop and to avoid the possibility of losing program payments. Before the County Committee can accept a late-filed acreage report, all of the following apply:

- the operator must pay the cost of a farm visit
- physical existence of the crop or crop residue must exist
- the crop's use can be verified
- the crop's acreage can be determined.

WELCOME ABOARD

The Columbia County office is excited to introduce Amber Steinhoff as our newest Program Technician. Amber is a graduate from Oregon State University in Natural Resources with a minor in Fish and Wildlife, and went to high school right here in Dayton. Since graduating from Dayton High School she has been working for the Washington State Department of Natural Resources and the United States Department of Agriculture as a Forestry Technician/Wildland Firefighter.

She has spent the last nine years traveling around the country to different Wildland fire incidents and has enjoyed getting to meet new people, see new sights, and create lasting relationships with people from all over the world whom she now calls friends and colleagues.

She has a very strong agricultural background and is very passionate about anything outdoors including hunting, fishing, hiking, riding horses, training barrel racing horses, etc. She is very excited to be able to help the farming/ranching industry thrive here in her local community through her work for the Farm Service Agency. We are pleased to have Amber working here at the Farm Service Agency and look forward to all of our producers meeting and working with her. Come in and meet Amber the next time you are close to the Dayton Service Center.