



NEWSLETTER



OCTOBER-2012 EDITION

Grant County FSA

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Ephrata, WA 98823
(509) 754-2463 (office)
(509) 754-4705 (FAX)

Office Hours

Mon. – Fri. 8:00 a.m – 4:30 p.m.

County Committee

Mike Edwards
John Morris Jr
Roger Watkins
Gwinda Lutz

Office Staff

Greg Anderson, CED
Marilyn Littleton, Program Technician
Katie Markham, Program Technician
Roxanne Neilan, Program Technician

Farm Loan Program Staff

Libby Anderson, Farm Loan Manager
Nancy Seger, Farm Loan Officer
Blanca Helton, Farm Loan Officer
Kristine Sarles, Loan Technician

Next COC Meeting

December 6th, 2012

Dates to Remember

Nov. 12 Veterans Day Observed
(Office closed)
Nov. 22 Thanksgiving Holiday
(Office closed)
Dec. 3 Final date to submit COC
Ballots to County Office
Dec. 15 Acreage reporting deadline
for fall seeded crops

More Information may be found at

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wa>

COMMITTEE ELECTIONS ARE NEAR:

The nomination period for County Committee elections has closed, and Farm Service Agency (FSA) is pleased to announce the following person has been nominated to serve as representative of Local Administrative Area (LAA) 1 on the Grant County Committee for the upcoming three year term.

Chris Edwards- Chris and his wife Rayna raise cattle and dryland wheat with the Edwards Brothers farming operation near Hartline.

LAA #1 is comprised of the northern third of Grant County, including communities of Wilson Creek, Coulee City, and Hartline. The Sagebrush Flats area of the county is also included. Persons listed on FSA database as owners and/or operators with interests lying within the LAA are eligible to vote in the upcoming election. Person(s) with interests in more than one LAA have been designated to vote in the district in which the majority of their farming interests lie.

Ballots will be mailed to all eligible voters in early November; the final date for return of ballots is Monday, December 3, 2012. Ballots will be tabulated on Thursday, December 6, 2012, during the regular County Committee meeting session, beginning at 8:30 a.m. at the USDA Service Center, in Ephrata. Regular session meetings including election processes are open to the public.

Current LAA 1 representative Mike Edwards has served three consecutive terms for a total of 9 years, and has reached the end of his eligibility for further service on the Committee. Thanks again Mike for your service to the farmers and ranchers in Grant County!

2011 DISASTER PROGRAM ANNOUNCED:

Signup for the Supplemental Revenue Assistance (SURE) program will open October 22, 2012, and continue through June 7, 2013. SURE covers weather related crop losses suffered during the 2011 crop year, through September 30, 2011.

Eligible producers must either have suffered a minimum 10% production loss to one or more crops of economic significance, and be located within a county declared as a primary disaster county, or contiguous disaster county, as designated by the Secretary of Agriculture; or be an individual producer with losses of 50% or greater, regardless of county designation.

SURE requires applicants to have carried Federal crop insurance and/or Noninsured Assistance Program (NAP) coverage on all crops of economic significance as a condition of eligibility. Socially disadvantaged, beginning farmers and ranchers, and limited resource farmers may be eligible for SURE without a policy or plan of insurance, or NAP coverage.

2013 ACREAGE REPORTING CHANGES:

Farm Service Agency and the Risk Management Agency have established joint acreage reporting dates; the changes will be effective beginning for the 2013 reporting year. Unfortunately, what that means is that FSA dates will now match the "earliest" acreage reporting date for insurable crops, rather than having one date for all crops in the county, which had previously been the case. The dates for Washington State for 2013 are as follows.

All fall planted wheat/small grains	12/15/2012	Fall planted canola	12/15/2012
Mint	12/15/2012	Fall planted onions	12/15/2012
Alfalfa seed	12/15/2012	Perennial fruits and grapes	01/15/2013
Spring planted crops	07/15/2013	CRP	07/15/2013
Perennial forages	07/15/2013 *	Buckwheat	08/15/2013

* Perennial forage crops covered under a Noninsured Assistance Program (NAP) policy are required to be reported not later than 15 days after the beginning of harvest of the crop; for range policies within 15 days of the beginning of the NAP grazing season; for hayed crops, within 15 days of first cutting, as established by the County Committee.

Acreage reports accepted after the date(s) specified will be considered late filed, and subject to late filing provisions including a late filing fee. Due to the timing of announcing these changes, USDA has instituted a process to waive late filing fees in those instances where producers requested to file acreage timely but County office staff could not complete the request by the established deadline. All producers with winter wheat or other crops with a 12/15 reporting deadline are encouraged to contact our office to request an appointment, not later than December 15, 2012. We will prioritize those with winter endorsement policies (required by 12/15 to your agent as well), and will create a schedule for remaining producers contacting us by the deadline, to be considered timely filed.

USDA Announces Hispanic and Women Farmer and Rancher Claims Period Now Open:

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack recently announced a claim process open to Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who allege discrimination by the USDA between 1981 and 2000 due to denial of application for loan or loan servicing assistance. The claim period began September 24, 2012, and will continue through March 25, 2013. The voluntary claims process will make available at least \$1.33 billion for cash awards and tax relief payments, plus up to \$160 million in farm debt relief, to eligible claimants. There are no filing fees to participate in the program.

Information related to applying for consideration under the claim process may be obtained by calling 1-888-508-4429 or on the web at www.farmerclaims.gov. Claimants must register for a claims package (by calling the number or visiting the website) and the claims package will be mailed to claimants. USDA will conduct an informational meeting about the USDA Hispanic and Women Farmer and Rancher Claims Process on Friday, October 26, 2012 at the Radio KDNA Northwest Communities Education Center located at 121 Sunnyside Avenue, Granger WA. The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. Those interested in learning more or receiving information about the claims process and claims packages are encouraged to attend meetings in your communities about the claims process and contact the website or claims telephone number. Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in this meeting should contact the Farm Service Agency at (509) 323-3000 or Federal Relay Service at 1-866-377-8642 ten days prior to the meeting.

Independent legal services companies will administer the claims process and adjudicate the claims. Although there are no filing fees to participate and a lawyer is not required to participate in the claims process, persons seeking legal advice may contact a lawyer or other legal services provided.