



# NEWSLETTER



## FEBRUARY 2013

### Grant County FSA

2145 Basin St SW STE A  
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

John Morris Jr-Chair  
Roger Watkins-Vice Chair  
Chris Edwards-Member  
Gwinda Lutz-Advisor

### Farm Program Staff

Greg Anderson-ext 1101  
Marilyn Littleton-ext 1100  
Katie Markham-ext 1104  
Roxanne Neilan-ext 1103

### Farm Loan Program Staff

Libby Anderson-ext 1105  
Nancy Seger-ext 1106  
Blanca Helton-ext 1102  
Kristine Sarles-ext 1107

### Next COC Meeting

February 21, 2013

### Dates to Remember

February 18-President's Day  
(Office closed)

March 15-Final date to purchase crop insurance on spring planted crop

July 15-Acreage reporting deadline for spring seeded crops.

August 2-Deadline to enroll into DCP

More Information may be found at  
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wa>.

## NEW COMMITTEEMAN ELECTED

Chris Edwards from Hartline has been elected to serve a 3 year term on the Grant County FSA Committee. Chris's term began January 1, 2013. Chris will represent producers from LAA #1, which 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. Congratulations Chris!

## 2011 DISASTER PROGRAM CONTINUES

Signup for the Supplemental Revenue Assistance (SURE) program continues 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 percent 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 percent 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.

## MICROLOANS AVAILABLE

Farm Service Agency now offers more flexible access to credit through the new Microloan program. The program is an attractive loan alternative for smaller farming operations like specialty crop producers and operators of community supported agriculture, or CSA. Microloans can be used for all approved operating expenses as authorized by the FSA Operating Loan (OL) Program, including but not limited to initial start up expenses, annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, and rents, purchase of livestock and/or equipment, or minor farm improvements such as wells and coolers.

Eligible applicants may obtain a microloan for up to \$35,000. The repayment term may vary and will not exceed seven years. Annual operating loans are repaid within 12 months or when the agricultural commodities produced are sold. Interest rates are based on the regular operating loan rates that are in effect at the time of the microloan approval or closing, whichever is less. Current interest rates are 1.25%. Please contact the Farm Loan staff at the County Office for more loan program details

## **2013 FARM PROGRAM SIGNUP BEGINS**

The American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 was recently passed by Congress. This resulted in the extension of the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program (DCP) and the Average Crop Revenue Election Program (ACRE) for the 2013 crop year.

This office will begin accepting signups for 2013 DCP/ACRE beginning **Tuesday, February 19, 2013**. As done in past years, this office will be sending out post cards to our **dry land operators only** with a pre-determined date and time of the scheduled appointment. If the date and time of the appointment does not fit your schedule, please contact this office so that a mutually agreed upon appointment can be established.

During the appointment, producers will be reviewing and completing the following items;

- Reviewing entity forms previously completed for prior years programs and making any necessary adjustments.
- Completing new 2013 Adjusted Gross Income forms (CCC-933). Income limitations are the same as in past years.
- Completing 2013 acreage reports (if not already completed). **Please have your planting dates available.**
- Completing the DCP or ACRE contracts. All owners receiving a share of the payment must sign, unless you have POA.
- If you participated in ACRE in crop year 2012, please provide us with your actual production records.

A major program change now allows those producers who elected to participate in ACRE in prior years to now enroll back into DCP. We will discuss this change in more detail during your appointment. Again, post cards will be sent out by this office in the very near future. Please be on the lookout for these.

## **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](http://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.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Click here for the full non-discrimination statement.  
[http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navtype=FT&navid=NON\\_DISCRIMINATION](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navtype=FT&navid=NON_DISCRIMINATION)