

JUNE & JULY 2008

Kittitas County FSA Today

Kittitas County FSA

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Office Phone: (509) 925-8585
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Office Hours

Monday – Friday
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Kittitas County Committee

Rick Haberman, Chair
Brent Dekoning, Vice Chair
Bart Bland, Member
Cristi Eaton, Advisor

Office Staff

Betty Cervine, PT
Brent Reitmeier, CED

Farm Loan Staff

(509) 454-5746
Lisa Ruff, FLM
Scott Smith, FLO
Crispin Garza,
Service Center Liaison
Sandy Christensen, FLP Tech.



Next COC Meeting

Tuesday, July 15, 2008
7:30 AM

Important Dates



Friday, July 4

Office Closed for
4th of July Observance

Friday, July 18

Final Date to Signup for
Livestock Compensation
Program

Friday, Aug. 15

Final Date to File a Timely
Acreage Report

WA State FSA Website

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

National FSA Website

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

National USDA Website

<http://www.usda.gov>



LIVESTOCK COMPENSATION PROGRAM DEADLINE ANNOUNCED

Livestock producers have until July 18, 2008 to enroll in the 2005-2007 Livestock Compensation Program (LCP). Signup began on September 10, 2007 for this program that provided aid to livestock producers who suffered eligible livestock feed losses between January 1, 2005 and February 28, 2007, because of a natural disaster. Please contact the office for an appointment if you have not yet signed up for LCP.

2008 COC ELECTION INFORMATION

One of FSA's responsibilities is to conduct County Committee (COC) elections in an open manner that ensures accountability. FSA will provide local organizations representing socially disadvantaged groups with detailed information about the COC election process. The agency is reaching out to agricultural communities to get equitable representation on local county committees.

Groups representing socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers will be actively solicited for COC election candidates and encouraged to fill out a nomination form (FSA-669A). Under-represented farmers and ranchers are encouraged to participate in their county's COC election process. This year, nominations are for a committee member to represent producers in Local Administrative Area (LAA) #1. LAA 1 encompasses cropland, forest and rangeland north of the Vantage Highway to the Chelan County line and from Highway 97 (Blewett Pass) to the Columbia River.

COC election fact sheets can be found online at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA> under the News & Events tab on the FSA homepage.

FARM RECONSTITUTIONS

In program terminology, farms are constituted to group all tracts having the same owner and the same operator under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation take place, a farm reconstitution may be necessary. The reconstitution — or recon — is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. The following are the different methods used when doing a farm recon. Currently, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by August 1. The new Farm Bill may include a date other than August 1.

- Estate Method — the division of bases, allotments and quotas for a parent farm among heirs in settling an estate;
- Designation of Landowner Method — may be used when (1) part of a farm is sold or ownership is transferred; (2) an entire farm is sold to two or more persons; (3) farm ownership is transferred to two or more persons; (4) part of a tract is sold or ownership is transferred; (5) a tract is sold to two or more persons; or (6) tract ownership is transferred to two or more persons. In order to use this method the land sold must have been owned for at least three years, or a waiver granted, and the buyer and seller must sign a Memorandum of Understanding;
- DCP Cropland Method — the division of bases in the same proportion that the DCP cropland for each resulting tract relates to the DCP cropland on the parent tract;
- Default Method — the division of bases for a parent farm with each tract maintaining the bases attributed to the tract level when the reconstitution is initiated in the system. If payments have already been issued on a particular farm, the reconstitution will be effective for the next year, unless the payments are refunded.

MAINTAINING CRP COVER

CRP cover maintenance is the participant's responsibility and must be done according to the conservation plan. All CRP maintenance activity such as mowing, burning, and spraying must be conducted outside the primary nesting season for wildlife and in accordance with the conservation plan. Spot treatment of the acreage may be allowed during the primary nesting season if certain criteria are met.

VOLUNTARY MODIFICATIONS OF CRP CONTRACT FOR CRITICAL FEED USE

On May 27, 2008, USDA announced that certain acreage enrolled in CRP would be available for hay and forage after the end of the primary nesting season. Beginning June 2, 2008, CRP participants may request to voluntarily modify CRP contracts for critical feed use, such as haying and grazing. Prices for most field crops have advanced to record or near record levels in recent months reflecting strong demand, tight supplies, and competition for acres. The increased demand for commodities and resulting higher prices has impacted the livestock industry. Participants requesting to modify the CRP contract for critical feed use will be required to pay an administrative fee of \$75 before County Committee approval. No payment reduction will be assessed for any producer requesting to modify the CRP contract for critical feed use. Contract acreage must also have the stand established 12-months prior to use for forage.

CONTINUOUS CRP

The Continuous Conservation Reserve Program is a private lands environmental improvement program that allows participants the opportunity to enroll environmentally sensitive acreages in conservation practices that will reduce soil erosion, improve water and soil quality and provide wildlife habitat and food sources. The Continuous CRP program is a voluntary enrollment program. Eligible landowners enter into contracts that range from 10 to 15 years in length. In return, the landowners will receive annual rental and maintenance payments, incentive payments for certain activities, and cost share for establishment. To be eligible for enrollment in the Continuous CRP, participants and acreage must meet certain requirements. Provided the eligibility requirements are met, FSA will automatically accept enrollments of acreage into Continuous CRP. Landowners may enroll in the program at any time during the year. For more information on Continuous CRP enrollments or local Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) availability, please contact the Kittitas County FSA office.

FARM LOAN PROGRAMS

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers loans for farmers and ranchers to purchase farmland and finance agricultural operations. FSA loan programs are designed to help producers who are temporarily unable to obtain private or commercial credit. In many cases, applicants are beginning farmers who have insufficient net worth to qualify for financing through a commercial lender. In other instances, borrowers might have suffered setbacks from natural disasters or might be persons with limited resources. Farm ownership loans or farm operating loans may be obtained as direct loans for a maximum of up to \$200,000. Guaranteed loans can reach a maximum indebtedness of \$899,000. Emergency loans are always direct loans for farmers who may have suffered physical or production losses in disaster areas designated by a Presidential or Secretarial disaster declaration. Rural youth loans, loans to beginning farmers and loans for socially disadvantaged applicants are also available through FSA. For detailed information about loan eligibility or the different loan programs available, contact the county office staff for an appointment with a farm loan officer.

ACREAGE REPORT DEADLINE AUGUST 15

August 15 is the final date to file an acreage report. Filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs. Failed acreage must be reported within 15 days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date.