



NEWSLETTER



January 2012

FARM SERVICE AGENCY

Ferry County

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Okanogan County

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Office Hours

Mon. – Fri. 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Ferry County Committee

Jerry Larson, Chair
Kathleen Olson, Vice-Chair
Bill Floyd, Member
Luanne Finley, Advisor

Okanogan Co. Committee

Stan Stout, Chair
Jeff Delfeld, Vice-Chair
Mark Timmerman, Member
Jade Gabriel, Advisor
Victor Castro, Advisor

Office Staff

Gary Breiler, CED
Stu Skidmore, FLM
Sandy Hinger, FLT
Cliffene Coyne, PT
Virginia Lane, PT

Next COC Meeting

To be announced

Staffing Changes

Government-wide budget cuts have impacted USDA. With the need to reduce salary expenses, the agency offered early retirements. The Farm Loan Manager and Farm Loan Officer in the Wenatchee office took advantage of the early retirement offer and left their positions last August.

Jose Limon, Farm Loan Officer in Okanogan County for the last 7 1/2 years has accepted the new Senior Loan Officer position in the Wenatchee office.

In the past several years, temporary funding has allowed the Okanogan County office to hire a Program Technician. That funding has been reduced.

Since there will be a smaller staff in the Okanogan office, we encourage you to phone ahead and make office appointments whenever possible, especially if you are traveling any significant distance. We will continue to provide the best service possible, and thank you for your patience through this time of transition.

Signature Authority

Husbands and wives can sign most documents on behalf of each other, unless written notification denying this authority has been provided to our office.

Email Addresses Needed

Due to budget constraints, FSA newsletters will only be available electronically. The newsletters will also be posted on the state FSA website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wa>. Producers should contact our office to

provide an email address in order to sign-up and receive electronic notifications. Farm operators, please notify your land owners of this so they will know to contact us with their information and receive notifications.

SURE Sign-up for 2010 Crop Losses

The sign-up period for the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE) for crop losses in 2010 has begun and runs through June 1, 2012. Eligible producers should apply for benefits as soon as possible to ensure payment eligibility.

The SURE program provides benefits to eligible producers for farm losses due to natural disasters. Qualifying farmers or ranchers are eligible for the program since a disaster designation has been made for Ferry and Okanogan Counties. Producers who suffer at least a 10 percent crop production loss must have crop insurance or a non-insured crop disaster assistance program policy, for **all** 2010 crops in **all** counties. Some exceptions apply.

A fact sheet with more detailed information and a potential payment calculator are available on the FSA website. For more information or to sign-up, please contact our office.

Farm Service Agency Allocates Funds for Minorities and Women

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency has a portion of its farm loan program funds specifically allocated for minority and women producers. FSA farm loans are available to all qualified applicants; however some funds are specifically allocated for minorities and women.

Loan funds can be used to purchase farms, livestock and equipment. They may also be used to operate the farm, build or repair farm service buildings, pay for soil and water conservation practices, and in some cases refinance debts. FSA offers both direct and guaranteed loans. For direct loans made by FSA to purchase a farm, the terms may extend to 40 years with a current interest rate of 3.375 percent. Special programs are available for participation with a commercial lender.

Direct operating loans may be made for 1 to 7 years with a current interest rate of 1.375 percent, which is subject to change. If the rate goes above 5.00 percent, these loans could be made at a rate as low as 5.00 percent, depending on a farm operation's cash flow.

The FSA guaranteed loans are made by banks or other lenders for which FSA guarantees up to 90 percent of any loss. The guaranteed loan program includes both operating and real estate loan programs.

Please contact our Okanogan County Office for more information on loans. The staff there serves Ferry and Okanogan County producers.

Disaster Assistance

Secretarial Disaster Designation S3183 has been approved for combined effects of frost, freezes, extreme cold, high winds, and excessive snow for November 2010 through March of 2011 in Ferry and Okanogan Counties. Emergency loans are therefore available to affected producers. Please contact our Okanogan County Office for eligibility requirements if you suffered losses due to these weather conditions.

Women in Ag Meeting

A conference is scheduled around the state of Washington for women in agriculture. This conference is sponsored by WSU Cooperative Extension Service, and is scheduled for February 11, 2012. It will be held simultaneously at sixteen locations including Wenatchee. The cost is \$25. For more information, visit the website www.WomeninAg.wsu.edu.

2011 Commodity Loans

Marketing Assistance Loans are available to producers who share in the risk and production of a crop. To be eligible, you must maintain beneficial interest in the crop through the time of application (control and title). Eligible 2011 crops are wheat, barley, oats, canola, corn and dry peas. Loan rates vary by county, crop, and variety. The final date to request a loan is March 30, 2012.

Online Financial Information

FSA financial services website allows producers to access both current and historical financial information. Registered producers may view summary or detailed information about specific payments, collections, outstanding debts (excluding loans) and CCC-1099G data. Producers can also enter their own information to assign a payment to a third party, request that a payment be made jointly, or route their program payments to their account at a financial institution. Individual producers who have internet availability and have registered for an e-authentication level 2 access can utilize this service. To sign-up for an access account, visit the website www.eauth.egov.usda.gov. Producers will complete a customer profile and submit it online. After submitting your information, you will receive a confirmation email, and you must respond to it within 7 days to activate your account. You will then prove your identity by visiting our office and presenting a photo ID such as a driver's license. Please contact us if you have any questions.

2012 DCP Sign-up

FSA will begin accepting applications for the 2012 Direct and Counter-

Cyclical Payment Program (DCP) on January 23, 2012. Farmers may enroll online or at the local FSA office **until June 1, 2012**.

DCP provides payments to eligible producers on farms annually enrolled through the 2012 crop years. There are two types of DCP payments; direct payments and counter-cyclical payments. Both are calculated using the base acres and payment yields already established for the farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. No advance payments will be issued for 2012. Counter-cyclical payments are issued only when the effective price for a commodity is below its target price.

Producers who are eligible for the DCP Program will also be eligible to enroll in the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program. The enrollment period for the ACRE is the same as DCP. Producers may first enroll in the DCP Program and then later modify their enrollment to participate in the ACRE program instead.

The optional ACRE Program provides a safety net based on revenue losses and acts in place of the price-based safety net of counter-cyclical payments under DCP.

Interested farmers may contact our office for further information or to make an appointment to sign-up. Additional information is also available online at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wa>

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Bill Floyd of Ferry County and Mark Timmerman of Okanogan County! They were each elected to represent farmers and ranchers on the County FSA Committees. Both were re-elected to a three-year term, having served on the committees previously. FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.