

March/April/May 2008

SO. PUGET SOUND FSA NEWS

Pierce County FSA

1011 E. Main #107
Puyallup, WA. 98372-6738
(253) 845 9272
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Office Hours

Monday – Friday
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

County Committee

Lucy Cerqui, Chair
Harry Petersen, V-Chair
John Kingsbury, Member
Cindy Stolz, Member
Faith Sasaki, Advisor

Office Staff

George Jaquish, CED
Kathy Modin, PT

Farm Loan Staff

Mark Turner, FLM
(360) 354-5658
Jeff Peterson, FLO
(360) 748-0084

COC Meeting Schedule

March 20, 2008
April 17, 2008
May 22, 2008

Holiday Closures:

Memorial Day, May 26th

Web Sites

www.fsa.usda.gov – FSA National

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wa/> - WA State FSA

<http://www.usda.gov> - USDA

South Sound Farm Forestry Association (360) 705-1888

Handicapped

Accommodations: Special accommodations will be arranged for those persons with a physical, vision, or hearing impaired disability. If special accommodations are needed, please contact our office



NON-INSURED CROP DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The application closing date to purchase coverage for the 2008 crop year for spring planted crops under the Non-insured Crop Disaster assistance program (NAP) is March 15, 2008.

To apply for NAP coverage, there is an application fee of \$100 per crop with a \$300 cap per county. The maximum for multiple crops is more than one county is 4900. 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 the county FSA office at 253-845-9272 if you would like more information or are interested in applying for NAP coverage.

CROP INSURANCE SALES CLOSING DATES

USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) reminds Pacific Northwest producers of the March 17 sales closing deadline for their 2008 crop year spring Multi-Peril Crop Insurance (MPCI).

Current policyholders and uninsured growers must make all of their decisions on crop insurance coverage, especially which crops to insure and which level of coverage to obtain, prior to the sales closing date.

Important also, March 17 is the deadline for NEW applications under the **Adjusted Gross Revenue-Lite (AGR-Lite)** insurance program throughout the states of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington.

Producers should contact a local MPCI agent for information on the upcoming sales closing dates and for complete crop insurance details for the 2008 crop year ahead of the March 17 deadline. Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance companies. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers throughout the United States or on the RMA Web site at <http://www3.rma.usda.gov/tools/agents/>.

CROP INSURANCE REBATING SCHEMES

With the spring sales closing date for many Federal crop insurance policies right around the corner, crop insurance agents have been marketing their products aggressively. Producers report that some agents have approached them with promises of lower insurance premiums, refunds, or dividends. Most of these schemes are not legal. The Risk Management Agency and state insurance regulators have stepped up their efforts to uncover illegal rebating. Those producers who are found to participate in these schemes will not only lose their crop insurance coverage but may also become ineligible for other government programs. Producers can report suspicions of illegal rebating to the OIG Hotline: 1-800-424-9121

ACREAGE REPORTING

The 2002 Farm Bill required that all cropland on a farm be reported and certified as a condition of eligibility for producers participating in many USDA programs. With the ending of the 2002 Farm Bill it is not clear which programs will continue to require an acreage report. However, we will continue to take an acreage report for CREP, NAP and on any farm in which production will be used for a commodity loan or loan deficiency payment. **June 30** is the final date to timely certify. Please contact our office to arrange an appointment to file your acreage report.

Producers are reminded that information reported to FSA on the acreage report should be accurate and the same information reported to other Federal Agencies, such as crop insurance.

FOREIGN INVESTORS 90 DAY REPORTING RULE

Foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land are required by law to report your land holdings, acquisitions, leases of 10 years or more, and land use changes within 90 days of these transactions. Report these changes to the local FSA office. Failure to report these changes can result in a civil penalty of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of your interest in agricultural land.

DISASTER DEBT SET-ASIDE PROGRAM (DSA)

When the Farm Service Agency (FSA) direct loan borrowers are located in a designated disaster area or contiguous county, and are unable to make their scheduled payments on any debt, FSA is authorized to consider set-aside of some payments to allow the operation to continue.

Borrowers have eight months from the date of designation to apply for the program. A complete application includes a written request from all liable parties, actual production, income and expense records for the period in which disaster occurred, and other items as required.

Borrowers are eligible to receive the disaster set-aside based on the following: (1) the borrower is unable to pay all family living and farm operating expenses, payments to other creditors and payments to FSA; (2) the borrower must have operated the farm or ranch at the time of the disaster; (3) each loan considered for disaster set-aside must have been outstanding at the time of the disaster; (4) the borrower must be current or not more than one installment behind on any FSA loan; (5) the loan considered for disaster set-aside must have at least a term of two years remaining on the payments; (6) after the disaster set-aside is completed, the borrower must be current with FSA payments; (7) the amount set aside cannot exceed one year's FSA payment; (8) each loan can only receive one disaster set-aside; (9) the borrower must be able to develop a positive cash-flow projection for the coming year.

Each payment set-aside must be repaid prior to the final maturity of the note. Any principal set-aside will continue to accrue interest until it is repaid.

CONSERVATION COMPLIANCE

All participants in USDA Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) programs are required to be actively applying a conservation system in place on all highly erodible land (HEL) you operate. Several areas where problems may arise in complying with a conservation system are: renting new cropland, purchasing new land, breaking out additional cropland, planting different crops and changing or removing existing conservation practices. It is important that you contact the FSA office BEFORE taking any of these actions. Also, it is very important that you contact the county office before modifying, tilling, draining, dredging, filling or leveling any wetland or drainage ditch. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations may result in loss of all USDA payments and eligibility.


County Executive Director