



NEWSLETTER



Stevens County Farm Service Agency

November 2010

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Office Hours

Monday – Friday
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

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County Committee

Doug Falstad - Chairperson
Bruce Stumpf - Vice Chair.
John H. Steele – Reg. Member
Gayla McCanna - Advisor

Web Sites

National:

www.fsa.usda.gov

WA State:

www.fsa.usda.gov/wa

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DIRECT & COUNTER-CYCLICAL PROGRAM SIGN UP FOR 2011

Applications are now being accepted for the Direct & Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) and the Average Crop Revenue Election Program (ACRE) for 2011. To be eligible for program payments and benefits, producers must file a contract each year.

DCP direct payment rates remain unchanged from last year at \$.52/bushel for wheat and \$.24/bushel for barley. Advance direct payments are available under either program at 22% of the total direct payment rate for the year. Payments are earned on 83.3% of the farm's established base acreage, times the farm's established yield, times the producer's share. Producers are free to plant any crop on their base acreage with the exception of fruits & vegetables and wild rice.

Please call in advance for an appointment to sign up for DCP or ACRE.

NAP APPLICATION DEADLINE—ORCHARD CROPS

The final date to apply for coverage under the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for fruit crops is November 20, 2010. If you produce fruit and want to be covered by the NAP program, do not miss this deadline. Cost is \$250 per crop not to exceed \$750 per producer per county, not to exceed \$1,875 in all counties.

COMMITTEE ELECTIONS – PLEASE VOTE

Election ballots will be sent during November to producers along Lake Roosevelt and the Spokane Indian Reservation area of Stevens County. Ryan Esvelt is running unopposed for this position. Monday, December 6, 2010 is the final date to return voted ballots. Ballots must be delivered to the county FSA office or postmarked by December 6 to be eligible and counted. Ballots will be counted Friday, December 10, 2010. Please remember that a proper signature is required on the ballots including a "by" and a title when signing for an entity. Power of attorney is not authorized for voting purposes. Thank you to all who take time to vote.

CUSTOMERS MAKING PAYMENT BY CHECK TO FSA

Over the next year, FSA/CCC is moving toward an electronic method for processing producers' checks. This will allow FSA/CCC to process collections faster. When producers present checks, either in person or through the mail, the checks will be converted into an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). The funds will be debited from the producer's account, usually within 24 hours of receipt. Checks given in person will then be voided and returned to the producer. Mailed checks will be voided and held for up to 14 days, then shredded if not picked up by the producer. Please see the U.S. Department of Treasury legal notices posted in the Service Center or visit the following U.S. Department of Treasury Internet site for detailed information:

<https://www.pccotc.gov/pccotc/pcc/usingpcc/Legal%20Notices/legalnotices.htm>

SPOUSAL SIGNATURE AUTHORITY

A husband and wife can sign most documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) programs in which either has an interest, unless written notification denying a spouse this authority has been provided to the county office. There are limited exceptions to the spousal signature provisions for specific programs and for farm loans.

LETTERS FROM FSA

Several producers are receiving letters from FSA reminding them to submit a form CCC-927 (Individual) or CCC-928 (Entity) to the IRS. Our office previously provided all producers with the proper form to complete and mail directly to the IRS. IRS checks FSA records with their records to verify that producer's certification to Adjusted Gross Income are accurate. Failure to submit this form will delay payments and can result in FSA requiring refund of previously issued payments. We've had instances reported where the producer was sure they sent their form to IRS only to find their name is on the list. We have been instructed to tell you to re-file the applicable form to IRS. Forms are available at our office. These forms apply to 2009 and 2010 payments.

CONSERVATION LOAN PROGRAM

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack has announced the launch of a Conservation Loan program that will provide farm owners and farm-related business operators' access to credit to implement conservation projects that will conserve natural resources. "This will give farmers who want to implement conservation measures on their lands a chance to do so by providing assistance with their up-front costs," said Vilsack. "In return, these producers will help to reduce soil erosion, improve water quality, and promote sustainable and organic agricultural practices."

Conservation Loan funds can be used to implement conservation practices approved by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), such as the installation of conservation structures; establishment of forest cover; installation of water conservation measures; establishment or improvement of permanent pastures; implementation of manure management; and the adaptation of other emerging or existing conservation practices, techniques or technologies. Funds can also be used in conjunction with enhancement practices called for under approved CRP contracts.

Direct Conservation Loans can be obtained through local Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices with loan limits up to \$300,000. Guaranteed Conservation Loans up to \$1,119,000 are available from lenders working with FSA.

For more information on the Conservation Loan program, contact our office or visit the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov.

BIOMASS CROP ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (BCAP)

The Secretary of Agriculture announced the resumption of the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) and the publication of the final rules of the program. The BCAP final regulation as published reflects policies developed as a result of more than 24,000 comments received on previous Federal Register notices and a proposed rule, and knowledge gained by implementing a portion of the program in 2009.

BCAP uses a dual approach to support the production of renewable energy. First, BCAP provides assistance for the establishment and production of eligible renewable biomass crops within specified project areas. Producers in those areas who enter into BCAP contracts may receive payments of up to 75 percent of the cost of establishing eligible perennial crops. Further, they can receive payments for up to five years for annual or non-woody perennial crops and up to 15 years for woody perennial crops. FSA will be accepting project area proposals and, after project area proposals have been approved, eligible producers may participate by enrolling at their FSA county office.

In addition, BCAP also assists agricultural and forest landowners and operators by providing matching payments for the transportation of certain eligible materials that are sold to qualified biomass conversion facilities. The facilities convert the materials into heat, power, bio-based products or advanced biofuels. We will be providing more information on BCAP as soon as details are received.