



Stevens County Farm Service Agency

February 2011

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County Committee

Doug Falstad - Chair
Bruce Stumpf - Vice Chair.
Ryan Esvelt - Reg. Member
Gayla McCanna - Advisor

Web Sites

National:
www.fsa.usda.gov
WA State:
www.fsa.usda.gov/wa

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Conservation Reserve Program Sign Up

It was recently announced that the next Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) general sign up will start Monday, March 14, 2011 and end Friday, April 15, 2011.

CRP allows producers to enroll land in ten year contracts that help preserve environmentally sensitive land. In exchange for leaving the land idle, producers receive annual rental payments and 50 percent of the cost to establish the cover. Rental rates are tied to county average rental rates and the productivity of the soils in the offered acreage. In general, no other income can be derived from the land while under contract.

Eligibility and ranking scores are based on several factors. Eligible land must have been planted to an annual crop or conserving use in at least four years between 2002 and 2007. In Stevens County, the land must have an erodibility index of 8 or greater, or be CRP expiring in 2011.

Offers will be ranked using the Environmental Benefits Index. Points will be awarded based on the environmental and habitat benefits of the proposed cover planted. More points are awarded for native covers. Existing CRP covers may need to be replanted to maximize the score. Extra points will be awarded for the most erosive land and bids that include pollinator habitat on 10% of the acreage.

[Please call to make an appointment to apply for this program.](#)

Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program Sign Up

Now is the time to come in and sign your contracts for the Direct and Counter-Cyclical program (DCP). Contracts must be prepared annually for this program which provides payments based on historical grain plantings. After contract approval, advances are available at a rate of 22% of the total payment. Final payments will be made after the first of October. Participants are reminded that there are two requirements for this program: contracts must be signed by June 1, and acreage reports must be filed by June 30. [Please make an appointment to apply for this program.](#)

Foreign Persons Must Report U.S. Agricultural Land Holdings

Foreign persons with an interest in U.S. agricultural lands are reminded to report holdings and transactions to the Secretary of Agriculture.

Any foreign person who acquires, transfers, or holds any interest, other than a security interest, in agricultural land in the United States is required by law to report the transaction no later than 90 days after the date of the transaction.

Foreign investors must file Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) reports with the FSA county office that maintains reports for the county where the land is located. Failure to file a report, filing a late report, or filing an inaccurate report can result in a penalty with fines up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the agricultural land. For AFIDA purposes, agricultural land is defined as any land used for farming, ranching, or timber production, if the tracts total 10 acres or more.

Disclosure reports are also required when there are changes in land use. For example, reports are required when land use changes from nonagricultural to agricultural or from agricultural to nonagricultural. Foreign investors must also file a report when there is a change in the status of ownership such as owner changes from foreign to non-foreign, from non-foreign to foreign or from foreign to foreign. Data gained from these disclosures is used to prepare an annual report to the President and Congress concerning the effect of such holdings upon family farms and rural communities in the United States.

Election Results

Ballots for the county committee election were counted December 10, 2010. Ryan Esvelt of Rice was elected to a three year term on the committee. County committee members meet once a month to oversee FSA business and provide input on agricultural conditions in the county.

Updating Farm Ownership Records

To bring agency documents in line with state law, FSA asks that producers update their farm ownership records and program contracts to include their spouses. DCP/ACRE, CRP and other contracts signed from this point forward should include spouses, but this will not affect the share disbursement. FSA does not dictate how spouses are awarded contract shares. To prove that any property is separately owned, you must provide adequate documentation, other than a deed, to demonstrate your separate ownership.

FSA is in the midst of a drive to update a variety of producer records to streamline contract and program processes. Accurate records help ensure farmers and ranchers receive payments quickly and without problems. Also, updating FSA's farm ownership records to include spouses will guarantee that these spouses receive COC election ballots, since these spouses are eligible to vote in elections.

Sorghum Check off Referendum

Sorghum farmers are reminded to vote in the upcoming check off referendum on whether or not to continue the program's existence. Ballots will be available on the Agricultural Marketing Service's website (<http://www.ams.usda.gov>) starting February 1, 2011, and going through February 28, 2011. Interested producers can also obtain and return ballots at their local FSA office during the same time frame.

The Sorghum check off program, and its 13-member board, is authorized by the Commodity Promotion, Research, and Information Act of 1996. The mandatory program is funded at the rate of 0.6 percent of the net market value on grain sorghum and 0.35 percent of the net market value of sorghum forage.

Eligible Sorghum producers are those growers who were engaged in the production and sale of sorghum in the U.S. from July 1, 2008 through December 31, 2010.

FSA State Director to Meet with Producers

Producers wanting to know more about FSA programs or comment on FSA programs and services will have an opportunity for dialogue with the agency's State Executive Director Judy Olson. Ms. Olson will participate in a producer meeting and listening session on Tuesday, March 22, 2011. The meeting starts at 10 a.m. and will be in Davenport, WA at the Memorial Hall, 511 W. Park Street. The meeting is one of four that Ms. Olson will attend in the state. Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in the meeting should contact the Lincoln County FSA office at (509) 725-4501 or jeff.lust@wa.usda.gov. FSA is committed to making programs accessible to all customers.