



September and October 2009

WHATCOM COUNTY FSA NEWS

Whatcom County FSA

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Office Hours

Monday – Friday
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

County Committee

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National USDA Website

<http://www.usda.gov>

National FSA Website

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

State FSA Website

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

Next COC Meeting

September 23, 2009
9:00 AM

DATES TO REMEMBER

September 30- NAP deadline for grasses.

November 20 – Deadline to purchase NAP Insurance for berries and apples.

December 7 – Final date to return County Committee election ballots to county office.



FSA State Executive Director Appointed

Judy Olson has been named the newly appointed State Executive Director (SED) for the Washington State Farm Service Agency. She has served for many years as the Eastern Washington Director for U.S. Senator Patty Murray. She is a fourth-generation farmer, and has over 25 years of experience working with volunteer producer organizations and on community service activities. She was the first woman to be elected president of the Washington Association of Wheat Growers, and is the first woman selected to serve as a Washington State FSA Director. She began her FSA appointment August 3, 2009.

NAP Coverage Provisions

The Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) provides disaster coverage for those crops in which Federal Crop Insurance is unavailable. The final date to purchase 2010 NAP disaster coverage for rangeland and pasture is **September 30, 2009**. Other perennial crops such as raspberries, strawberries, apples and honey have a purchase coverage closing date of **November 20, 2009**. The cost for NAP coverage is now \$250 per crop not to exceed \$750 per county, and a \$1,875 fee limit for multiple counties.

Producers with NAP coverage are also reminded that Notice of Loss reports need to be filed within 15 days of the date of weather related disaster events, or when damage to a crop becomes evident. Additionally, if the intention is to not harvest the crop, the County FSA office must be contacted so that a loss adjuster can verify the crop damage prior to its abandonment or destruction. Failure to meet these requirements can compromise NAP coverage, or make claims ineligible for assistance.

Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program Linkage

Eligibility for crop disaster benefits for the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE) that was legislated under the 2008 Farm Bill, is directly linked to the requirement of producers having 2010 crop year NAP coverage on all *non-insurable* crops of economic significance, and Federal Crop Insurance on all *insurable* crops of economic significance. Please note the following crop insurance sales closing dates:

- ☐ **September 30, 2009** – Wheat (both winter and spring), Barley

Livestock producers are also reminded that NAP coverage is required on rangeland and other grazing crops to remain eligible for the Livestock Forage Disaster Program, and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bee, and Farm-raised Fish Program, established under the 2008 Farm Bill. Details on how to sign-up for these programs under SURE will be announced once they become available.

Selecting and Changing MILC Payment Start Month

Dairy producers who are enrolled in the Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC) and want to change their start date for 2010 MILC payments to October have until September 14, 2009 to request the change. Additionally, producers who currently have October as their start month and would like to change it must also make that change by September 14, 2009. Dairy producers are allowed to change their start month an unlimited number of times throughout their enrollment in MILC provided the changes are made:

- On or before day 14 of the month prior to the new MILC production start-month (unless that day falls on a weekend or federal holiday, then the date falls to the previous business day)
- Before payment is sought
- Before the original selected MILC production start-month has passed.

For example, if a dairy operation's current start-month for FY 2010 is January, and the dairy operation decides to change the start-month to October, the new start-month would have to be selected by September 14, 2009. If the start-month is never changed, it will remain the same through 2012.

FSA Farm Loan Program-Lender of First Opportunity

October 1 is the beginning of the fiscal year 2010 loan funding season for the Farm Service Agency (FSA). FSA offers direct operating and farm ownership loan programs, as well as administering a guaranteed loan portfolio. 4H and FFA project youth loans are available to applicants with ages between 10 – 20 years old. All applicants are required to meet certain loan eligibility criteria specific to the applicable loan program.

FSA loan funds can be used to purchase farms, livestock and equipment. They may also be used for annual operating expenses, the construction or repair of farm buildings, pay for soil and water conservation practices, and refinance operating type debt.

Direct FSA farm ownership loans used to purchase real estate will not exceed a term of 40 years and have a current interest rate of 4.875%. The maximum loan amount cannot exceed \$300,000. Applicants must have operated a farm for at least three out of the last 10 years prior to applying and meet all other loan eligibility criteria. Funding for this program is based on the availability of loan funds.

Direct operating loans will be termed 1 to 7 years and currently have an interest rate of 3.000%. Loans used for annual operating purposes will generally be termed one year. Repayment for term operating loans used to purchase machinery, equipment and breeding livestock will not exceed 7 years and will be based on the applicant's projected cash flow. Again, the maximum loan amount will not exceed \$300,000.

Guaranteed loans are made through a commercial lender and are guaranteed by FSA which will pay any loan loss not to exceed 95% of the loan amount. Guaranteed loans can be made up to \$1,094,000 and can be used for operating and real estate purposes. Individual interest rates are determined by the lending institution.

Sign-up for New Conservation Program Announced

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has announced a continuous sign-up for the revamped Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). CSP encourages agricultural and forestry producers to maintain existing conservation activities and adopt additional ones on their operations.

Agricultural and forestry producers must submit their applications by Sept. 30 to be considered for funding in the first ranking period. Prior to accepting an application a producer must have farm records established with the USDA. For more information contact the NRCS field office in Lynden at (360) 354 2035 ext.102

Livestock Indemnity Program

Signup for the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) began on July 13, for losses to eligible livestock that died due to eligible disaster conditions. The deadline to apply for losses suffered in calendar year 2008 is **September 14, 2009**. Losses for 2009 that occurred *prior* to July 13, 2009 must be filed by September 13, 2009. Losses suffered on or after July 13, 2009 must be filed within 30 days of when the loss is apparent. Losses suffered must be in excess of normal mortality rates as determined by FSA. Eligible disaster conditions include blizzards, extreme cold, extreme heat, floods, wildfires, and disease. Payments will be made at 75% of the fair market value of the livestock as determined by FSA. More information can be obtained at the County Office.