



NEWSLETTER



September 2012

Whatcom County Farm Service Agency

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Office Hours

Mon. – Fri. 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

County Committee

Theresa Sygitowicz, Chairperson
Dan Noteboom, Vice-Chairperson
Larry Tjoelker, Member
Satpaul Neger, Advisor

Office Staff

Farm Programs
Ellen Medeiros, CED
Betty Snell, PT
Darcy Maldonado, PT

Farm Loans

Mark Turner, FLM
Marlene Garber, PT

Next COC Meeting

September 20, 2012 @ 9:00 am

Dates to Remember

- ✓ October 8 – Columbus Day – Office Closed
- ✓ November 12 – Veterans Day – Office Closed
- ✓ November 20 – NAP coverage for perennial crops (Raspberries)
- ✓ November 22 – Thanksgiving Day – Office Closed

More Information may be found at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wa>.

FSA Adopts New Check Processing Method

Producers who make payments by check to the Farm Service Agency can expect to see a change soon in how those checks are processed. FSA is adopting an electronic method for processing check payments from customers.

Using the electronic method, if you submit a paper check payment, either in person or through the mail, the check will be converted into an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) using Over the Counter Channel (OTCnet), a web-based application.

The transfer of funds will be reflected on your bank account statement. The transaction may be recorded in a different place on your statement than where your checks normally appear, such as under “other withdrawals” or “other transactions.” You have protections under Federal law for an unauthorized electronic fund transfer from your account. You should contact your financial institution immediately if you believe that the transaction reported on your account statement was not properly authorized or is otherwise incorrect.

It is important for you to have sufficient funds in your bank account because the electronic transfer of funds could occur within 24 hours. FSA will hold the paper check for up to 14 calendar days to ensure that the transaction was successfully processed and then the check will be shredded. You will not receive the paper check back from FSA.

The agency is implementing the new system to reduce the possibility of losing or misplacing checks, speed up the check clearing process and to reduce the potential for human error.

For more information regarding electronic check processing, contact the county FSA office or see the U.S. Department of Treasury Internet site <http://fms.treas.gov/otcnet/legal.html>

Changes to IRS Forms 1099-G and 1099-MISC for Calendar Year 2012

In past years, IRS Form 1099-G were issued to show all program payments received from the Farm Service Agency, regardless of the amount. For calendar year 2012, the 1099-G reporting will change.

IRS Form 1099-G (Report of Payments to Producers) will only be issued to producers whose reportable payments total \$600 or more for the calendar year. Additionally, if the producer has at least \$600 in reportable payments received from multiple FSA offices, only one Form 1099-G will be issued. Producers subject to voluntary withholding or backup (involuntary) withholding will receive the appropriate IRS form, even if combined payments are less than \$600.

The same changes will apply to producers and vendors who normally receive IRS Form 1099-MISC from FSA. Any producer who receives less than \$600 in combined payments should consult a tax advisor to determine if these payments must be reported on their tax return. For more information regarding IRS reporting changes, please contact the Whatcom County FSA office at (360) 354-5658.

Agricultural Statistics Provide Indirect but Important Benefits

USDA-National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is conducting two surveys that are crucial to get information on small grain production on a county level basis.

Beginning in mid August, producers may receive a CAPS (County Ag. Production Survey) questionnaire to collect data on total acres planted and harvested, and total yield and production of small grains in Washington State. Other producers may receive an Agricultural Survey – September 1, 2012 at the end of August.

Producers who receive the survey may respond in either of the following ways:

Online – Secure, online reporting is the most timely, cost-effective option. The cover letter includes instructions for this easy option.

By mail or fax – Producers fill out the survey questionnaire and return it in the envelope provided or via fax.

A NASS representative will contact producers who do not respond to offer the option of a telephone or personal interview.

WHO USES THE INFORMATION?

All sectors of the agricultural industry rely on NASS to produce timely and accurate acreage, yield, and production estimates. For instance:

USDA agencies use the information to evaluate and administer vital farm commodity, credit, conservation, disaster, insurance and loan programs.

- USDA's Farm Service Agency uses the estimates to administer disaster assistance programs
- USDA's Risk Management Agency uses the data to administer the Federal Crop Insurance Program.

Businesses look at the data when determining where to locate processing plants and other facilities. NASS understands producers are busy this time of year, but have been tasked to collect the data from only a small sample of small grain farmers. Please respond to make sure this important data is as accurate as possible. For additional information please contact NASS WA Director, David Knopf at 1-800-435-5883.

Deadlines for Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program

The application closing date to purchase coverage for the 2013 crop year for planted crops under the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) is listed below in the table.

To apply for NAP coverage, the application must be filed on or before the application closing date for the crop and NAP fees must be paid. The NAP application for coverage fee is \$250 per crop, up to a \$750 cap per county. The maximum for multiple crops in more than one county is \$1,875 per crop year. 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 office if you would like more information or are interested in applying for NAP coverage.

Crops	Application Closing Date
Value loss crop (ornamental nursery)	May 1
Canola and rapeseed; onions, radish, carrots, and cabbage (for seed or fresh); value loss crops (aquaculture, Christmas Trees, turf grass sod, floriculture, mushrooms); artichokes and any fall planted crops not mentioned below.	August 31
Perennial grazing crops; perennial forage crops; forage seed crops; mint; wheat; garlic.	September 30
All perennial crops not listed in the 9/30 category (berries, fruit trees, grapes, asparagus); honey; hops.	November 20
Spring planted crops; small grain forages (wheat, barley, oats including annual pea forage); mustard; summer planted buckwheat; camelina.	March 15

If the application closing date falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the CCC-471 and NAP fee is considered timely filed, if received or postmarked on the first workday following the actual application closing date.

Upcoming changes to Crop Acreage Reporting Dates

Implementation of common acreage reporting dates is a major step by the Risk Management Agency (RMA) and Farm Service Agency (FSA) to reduce the duplication of acreage reporting by producers. Common acreage reporting dates will allow producers to report acreage to either agency for the crop year and either agency will have access to and can retrieve the information necessary for program delivery.

This change does not reduce or modify the programs or services that RMA or FSA provides, but will enable crop insurance agents and FSA office staff to collect information in a more uniform and efficient manner.

Washington producers will begin to work with these changes beginning with the 2013 crop year. Please consult the table below to determine when your specific crop must be reported.

Crops Planned for 2013 Harvest	Reporting Date
Fall Alfalfa Seed Fall Barley Fall Canola Dry Peas (Douglas and Lincoln Counties) Fall Mint Onions (planted 8/15-9/15) Fall Wheat All other Fall-seeded small grains	December 15, 2012
Apples Blueberries Cherries Cranberries Fresh Apricots Fresh Freestone Peaches Fresh Nectarines Grapes Pears Plums	January 15, 2013
Spring Alfalfa Seed Spring Barley Cabbage(planted 4/21-6/10) Spring Canola Corn Dry Beans Dry Peas (planted 3/9-5/25) Green Peas Spring Mint Mustard Spring Oats Onions(planted 3/14-4/20) Potatoes Processing Beans Soybeans Sugar Beets Sweet Corn Spring Wheat	July 15, 2013