



August, 2012

**Whitman County
Farm Service Agency**

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Office Hours

Mon. – Fri. 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

County Committee

David Swannack, Chairperson
Greg Stout, Vice-Chairperson
Greg Hall, Member
Gracie Miller, Advisor

Office Staff

Tory Bye, CED
Fred Hendrickson, PT
Bonnie Riebold, PT
Doreen Riedner, PT
Nancy Doege, PT
Jonelle Olson, PT

Next COC Meeting

9:00 AM September 18, 2012

Dates to Remember

- **Aug. 31** – NAP coverage deadline for Canola & rapeseed
- **Sept. 30** – Final day to enroll in Highly Erodible Land Initiative continuous CRP
 - NAP coverage deadline for perennial forage and grazing crops
 - Deadline for producers receiving 0% share to sign and complete 2012 DCP/ACRE contracts for producers
- **Dec. 15** – Final day to certify fall planted crop acreage

CROP MARKETING TOOLS AVAILABLE

FSA offers 9-month marketing assistance loans, using the harvested commodity as collateral. Obtaining a loan enables a producer to extend their marketing season by allowing them to hold the commodity beyond harvest when prices are usually lowest. The collateralized commodity may be stored on the farm or in CCC licensed warehouses. Farm storage must be safe and available for FSA inspection at any time. Loans on crops that are enrolled in the ACRE program are subject to a 30% reduction in their loan rates.

Final availability date for loans and LDP's are January 31 for wool and unshorn pelts; March 31 for barley, canola, crambe, flaxseed, honey, oats, rapeseed, wheat and sesame seed; May 31 for corn, dry peas, lentils, and all other eligible oilseeds. The August loan interest rate is 1.250%.

2012 Basic Crop Loan Rates for Whitman County:

Durum Wheat = \$2.64/bu. HRS Wheat = \$3.27/bu.
HRW Wheat = \$3.46/bu. SWW Wheat = \$3.06/bu.
Barley = \$2.18/bu.

Producers who obtain a marketing assistance loan agree to loan provisions which, if violated, may trigger administrative actions, such as assessing liquidated damages, calling the loan and denial of future farm-stored loans. The most common violations are removing or disposing of a commodity being used as loan collateral without prior authorization and providing an incorrect quantity of the available loan commodity.

Other eligible crop loan rates and general loan and LDP information can be found by clicking on this link: [FSA Loans/LDP's](#).

NEW OPPORTUNITIES IN CONTINUOUS CRP

New changes to the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) will make it easier to enroll land meeting certain criteria into the program on a non-competitive basis. The following are a few new opportunities to enroll land into Continuous CRP in a non-competitive application process. Eligible land must have been planted to an annual crop or conserving use in at least four years between 2002 and 2007. Land currently in CRP and within one year of the contract expiration date may be enrolled under the new initiatives. Contact the FSA office if you are interested in or have any questions about these practices.

Highly Erodible Land Initiative: Changes to CRP allow producers to non-competitively enter land with an Erosion Index of 20 or greater into CRP. An Erosion Index of 20 means, on average, this land has the potential to erode at 20 tons of soil per acre per year.

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The agency is authorized to accept up to 10,300 acres with an Erosion Index of 20 in Washington. Contracts receive annual rental payments and are eligible for up to 50% cost share to establish the cover. Signup for this initiative ends **September 30, 2012**.

Continuous CRP Pollinator Habitat: This is a new practice emphasizing a mix of plants that flower throughout the growing season for pollinators. Land bid into CRP for pollinator habitat must be at least 20 feet in width and individual plantings must be a minimum of 0.5 acres. There are no maximum limits on width or contract size. Enrollment of land for pollinator habitat receives an annual rental payment and is eligible for 50% cost share, a 40% practice incentive payment (like cost shares) and a \$150 per acre signing incentive payment (SIP).

Field Borders: Washington has been authorized to enroll up to 5,000 acres of land in CRP field borders to provide habitat for upland birds. Field borders must generally be located around the entire perimeter of a field, but at a minimum along the edges where runoff enters or leaves the field. The borders must have a minimum average width of 30 feet and cannot exceed a maximum average width of 120 feet. Fields of less than 5 acres are not eligible. Enrollment of land for field borders receives an annual rental payment and is eligible for 50% cost share, a 40% practice incentive payment (like cost shares) and a \$150 per acre signing incentive payment (SIP).

DEADLINES FOR NON-INSURED CROP DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The application closing date to purchase coverage for the 2013 crop year for fall planted crops under the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) is as follows:

Crops	Application Closing Date
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

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 coverage fee is \$250 per crop, up to a \$750 cap per county. In return, the crop is covered from catastrophic loss of production or prevented planting due to natural disaster conditions.

Some of the basic eligibility requirements include annual reporting of crop acreages, providing actual production evidence on a yearly basis, and obtaining a loss adjustor appraisal if a damaged crop will be destroyed or left unharvested. Contact our office if you would like more information or are interested in applying for NAP coverage.

Federal Crop Insurance sales closing deadlines (for county eligible crops) closely follow the dates in the table above; however, contact your FCIC agent for actual crop specific sales closing deadlines.

UPCOMING CHANGES TO CROP ACREAGE REPORTING DATES

Starting during the 2013 crop year, producers will be required to report their planted acreage on two separate occasions during the fall and spring. Fall planted grain crops must now be reported to the FSA by December 15, while spring planted crops are to be reported by July 15. This change does not reduce or modify the programs or services that the Risk Management Agency (RMA) or FSA provides, but will enable crop insurance agents and FSA office staff to collect information in a more uniform and efficient manner. **As soon as you complete your fall seeding please set up an appointment with the FSA Office.** To better serve the producers of Whitman County, the FSA Office would like to begin completing acreage certifications as soon as possible to avoid the requirement of a waiting list as we near the December 15 deadline.

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Crops Planned for 2013 Harvest	Reporting Date
Fall Alfalfa Seed, Barley, Canola, Mint, Onions (planted 8/15-9/15), Wheat and all other fall seeded small grains.	December 15, 2012
Apples, Blueberries, Cherries, Cranberries, Fresh Apricots, Fresh Freestone Peaches, Fresh Nectarines, Grapes, Pears and 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, and Spring Wheat.	July 15, 2013
All Other Crops not listed above (including CRP).	July 15, 2013

Reporting acreage timely is a requirement for most FSA programs. If harvest or grazing for that crop year will occur before the established reporting date, producers must report that acreage prior to harvest or grazing begins. In addition, crops planted after the established reporting dates can be reported by amending the previous acreage report within 15 days after planting.

Note for 2012 Late-Filed Reports: June 30 was the deadline to report 2012 crops. Late filing results in the producer paying for the cost of a field visit to verify the crop's existence and to avoid the possibility of losing program payments.

FSA ADOPTS NEW CHECK COLLECTION 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. If you submit a paper check payment, either in person or through the mail, the check will be converted into an electronic transfer using 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 any unauthorized electronic fund transfers from your account. You should contact your financial institution immediately if you believe that the transaction reported on your bank 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 minimize 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 by clicking on the following link: <http://fms.treas.gov/otcnet/legal.html>.

WHITMAN COUNTY FSA HIRING ONE FULL-TIME PROGRAM TECHNICIAN

The Whitman County FSA is currently accepting applications from eligible candidates to fill the role of one permanent, full-time program technician. A program technician performs general office functions related to FSA programs and is generally assigned specific programs to administer in the county office. The position is located in Colfax, Washington, with a salary range of \$27,990 to \$50,431 depending on education, experience, etc. Qualifications include U.S. citizenship; high school graduate or equivalent, one year general office work experience or equal background in operation of a farm/ranch, or two years qualifying education above high school.

To view the full announcement or apply please visit: <http://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/322455000>. Applications must be submitted online or by fax if completing an online application presents a hardship. The vacancy period will run from August 8 through August 22, 2012. If you have any questions or would like more information please contact the Whitman County FSA Executive Director, Tory Bye at (509) 397-4301x2, or by email at tory.bye@wa.usda.gov. FSA is an equal opportunity employer.

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