

July 2007

## Benton County FSA News

Phone: (509) 786-2313

### Benton County FSA

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### Dennis Simmelink, CED

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### Office Staff

Bonnie Anderson, PT  
Teresa Johnson, PT  
Alison Burgett, PT

### Jon Wilson, Farm Loan Mgr.

Pam Castoldi, FLO  
Joyce Nevins-Ginsberg, FLO  
Franklin County FSA Office  
Phone: (509) 545-8543

### Office Hours

Monday – Friday  
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

### Benton County Committee

Jeff Freepons, Chairman  
Larry Wilkerson, Vice Chairman  
David Roseberry, Member  
Adolfo Alvarez, Advisor  
Teresa Engbertson, Advisor

### COC Meetings

Meetings are scheduled for the LAST Wednesday of every month @ 9:00 AM except for July when no meetings are held.

### 2007 Loan Rates

SWW	\$2.82/Bu
HRS	\$3.17/Bu
HRW	\$3.34/Bu
Barley	\$2.20/Bu
Oats	\$1.30/Bu

### Dates to Remember:

August 1<sup>st</sup>; Last day to file COC nomination forms  
August 3<sup>rd</sup>; DCP enrollment ends  
August 29<sup>th</sup>; Next COC meeting

**We are able to provide the fastest and most efficient service when your farm records are properly updated. Help Us Help You by keeping us informed of any changes in your farming operation.**



[www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/wa/](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wa/)

### NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dennis Simmelink has been named the new County Executive Director for Benton County. He is looking forward to working with county producers and welcomes your active participation in dealing with our county's agricultural issues. Please feel free to call or stop by at any time.

### DCP SIGNUP CONTINUES

Due to heavy workload constraints in County offices through out the Country, the deadline for enrollment in the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) has been extended to August 3, 2007. A late-filing fee of \$100 will be assessed for farms that are enrolled after August 3, 2007 but before close of business September 30, 2007. We do have the opportunity to place your farm on a register for enrolling after the deadline without the late fee being applied for extenuating circumstances.

Several landowners and operators who have enrolled in prior years have not yet come in to enroll their farms in the 2007 program. Although the timeframe has been extended, please do not delay in getting your farm enrolled in the program as soon as you can. Advance payments can be issued to those requesting one as soon as **all** those involved on the farm have signed the contract and completed all applicable paperwork. Please don't forget your farm can not be approved for payment until ALL SIGNATURES have been provided to the County office. During program signup, a thorough review of all files and forms will be completed to insure all provided information is correct and signature authorizations are in place. This will take some additional time so please plan accordingly. Call for an appointment before coming in the office to insure we will have all paperwork ready for you.

### CRP – WEED CONTROL EFFORTS

The efforts some are making to improve their CRP grass stands are to be commended. In checking fields throughout the County the effort can be seen. Good Job and please continue with your efforts as I can assure you more frequent spot checks will continue to be made. It is also evident that we are facing 'new challenges' with the spread of newer weed species such as Kochia, Yellow Star Thistle, Knapweed, and others.

As indicated in previous newsletters as well as written correspondence to CRP contract holders, the County Committee is taking a very serious stand in regard to CRP maintenance issues. Enrolling ground into the Conservation Reserve Program does not remove one's responsibility to be a good steward of the land and maintain the ground as you would any other property you are responsible for. So, take care of the weaknesses you see in your stand, be proactive, and don't wait and hope that maybe your CRP won't get checked. CRP stands are being checked not only by FSA and NRCS, but even at times by neighbors or passersby who are concerned by weaknesses they may see. County offices are obligated to follow-up on "Whistleblower" complaints and keep the identity of the complainant confidential. Take a look at your CRP fields and take care of them!

The county office will be conducting several 'weed control/concern' meetings later this fall and winter to help coordinate weed control efforts across the county, and to help facilitate solutions. We are currently working with the Franklin County FSA Office and the WA Department of Fish and

Wildlife to begin coordinating weed control issues in a more regional setting. Feel free to contact the office if you have any questions or concerns.

### **BENTON FSA COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTIONS**

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Committee members are a critical component of the day-to-day operations of FSA. Committee members help guide FSA farm programs at the local level. They make FSA agricultural programs fit the needs of the local producers.

County Committees make decisions on commodity price support loans and payments, conservation programs, incentive, indemnity and disaster payments for some commodities and other farm disaster assistance. The County Committee operates with official regulations designed to carry out Federal laws. Committee members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions.

The election of responsible agricultural producers to FSA county committees is important to ALL farmers and ranchers. It is crucial that every eligible producer take part in this election process because county committees are a direct link between you and the Farm Service Agency.

This year LAA # 1, which encompasses the northern portion of the county and includes all land lying north of Highway 22 and west of Highway 225 at the juncture of Benton City, is up for election. Jeff Freepons currently holds this position. Please contact the Benton County office at 415 Wine Country Rd in Prosser, or by phone at 509 786-1923 for additional information or nomination forms.

**The final date to submit nomination forms is August 1, 2007.**

### **PAYMENT LIMITATIONS**

Producers participating in certain Farm Service Agency programs are subject to limitations on the total annual payments that can be received. The maximum amounts a "person" can receive per year are: Direct Program Payments - \$40,000; Counter-Cyclical Payments - \$65,000; Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP) - \$75,000; Conservation Reserve Program and Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CRP/CREP) \$50,000; Non Insured Assistance Program (NAP)- \$100,000; and Crop Disaster Program (CDP) - \$80,000.

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 included average adjusted gross income as a payment eligibility requirement for some FSA programs. The "Adjusted Gross Income" (AGI) rule requires all individuals or entities requesting program benefits to certify that their "3-year" average adjusted gross income as specified on IRS form 1040 (or similar item on IRS forms for individuals) was less than \$2.5 million. Non-compliance to this rule will result in ineligibility for all program benefits subject to the AGI rules.