



## Service Center

U.S. Department of Agriculture

**Gilliam-Wheeler FSA**  
P.O. Box 467  
Condon, OR 97823  
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**Hours:**  
Monday - Friday  
7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

### County Committee:

Garey Fischer, Wheeler  
Richard Harper, Gilliam  
Ernie Barnett, Gilliam  
Sarah Rucker, Gilliam

**Staff:**  
Bonnie Johnson  
Ellen Wagenaar

**Director:**  
Nick Schott



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Farm Service Agency

# The FSA Dirt

October  
2006

## Pasture, Rangeland, Forage

## 2007 DCP

The Risk Management Agency (RMA) now offers two new pilot Group Risk Protection risk management programs for pasture, rangeland, and forage. These innovative pilot programs are based on vegetation greenness and rainfall indices and were developed to provide livestock producers the ability to purchase insurance protection for losses of forage produced for grazing or harvested for hay. Wheeler County has been selected as a pilot county to test the Vegetative Index.

The Vegetation Index uses the Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) data from the U.S. Geological Survey Earth Resources Observation and Science data center. The NDVI is an alternative measure of vegetation greenness and correlates to forage condition and productive capacity in approximately 4.8 x 4.8 mile grids. In general, the healthier the plants in a given grid, the higher the NDVI value. With this plan of insurance, producers may select one or more 3-month time period(s) that represent a producer's forage species production. These time periods are called index intervals. As with the Rainfall Index, the losses calculated using the Vegetation Index are indemnified based on the deviation from normal within the grid and index interval(s) selected.

The producer will be asked to make several choices when insuring grazing land or hay land production, including coverage level, index intervals, productivity factor, and number of acres. Producers will work with their crop insurance agents to view the map and index grids for their area, and assign acreage to one or more grids based on the location and use of the acreage that is to be insured. For more info: [www.rma.usda.gov](http://www.rma.usda.gov)

Sign up for the 2007 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payments (DCP) program has started. 2006 final direct payments have been issued. The advance payment percent will be 22% for 2007 (down from 40% or 50% in 2006). Keep in mind that the earliest a person can receive a direct advance on their 2007 contract is December 1. The remaining 78% will be issued in October of 2007. DCP still requires all participants to: comply with highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions; devote base acreage to agricultural or conserving use; not plant or harvest fruits and vegetables (other than lentils, mung beans, and dry peas) on base acres (some double cropping exceptions apply); file an acreage report by June 30, 2007 for all cropland on the farm enrolled; and notify the office of when there has been a change of interest on a contract. Most applications will be taken by appointment but some walk-ins will be allowed. For more information concerning DCP, contact this office.

## County Committee Elections

Ballots for the 2006 County Committee election will be mailed to all eligible voters on November 3. The election is being held for the South Gilliam County Local Administrative Area (LAA). Ballots will be sent only to owners and operators who have a majority of their land in this area. A list of eligible voters and a detailed map of the LAA is available in this office. If you do not receive a ballot, and think you should contact this office. Signed and completed ballots are due back in the office by 4:30 p.m. December 4, 2006.

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### **Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)** **Announcements**

Notice to all current CRP participants; in the event CRP land is transferred or sold the following provisions apply: If the new owner becomes the successor to the existing CRP contract, the new owner shall assume all obligations under such contract. If the owner(s) choose not to succeed interest, a payment refund + liquidated damages + total interest will need to be paid back to the FSA. The current contract holder is required to notify the office of any changes of ownership. You can refer to your CRP-1 Appendix or you can call the office for more information.

A recent settlement between the federal government and the National Wildlife Federation has resulted in two changes in CRP in Oregon. The first change is managed haying and grazing which was allowed once every three years and is now limited to once in every ten years. The other change is the nesting season has been changed back to March 1 through July 15. All CRP contracts approved after September 25, 2006 are subject to these changes. Almost all contracts approved prior to September 25 are subject to this change as well. For more information concerning managed haying or grazing and the nesting season, please contact this office.

### **EQIP DEADLINE**

Gilliam and Wheeler County agricultural producers who want to be considered for the current round of cost-share funding through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) need to apply with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

EQIP has a 'continuous sign-up period' for producers interested in the program, but a ranking cut-off date of November 30, 2006 has been established. "Our cut off date has been moved up a little to assist farmers with making rotation decisions," said District Conservationist, Josh Coiner.

This year's EQIP program is similar to last year's program. This year, in Gilliam County, there are three funding categories for EQIP. The categories are dry crop land, grazing lands, and irrigation water savings.

For additional information and to sign up for EQIP, contact Josh, Damon, or Kathy at the USDA Service Center in Condon at 333 South Main Street or by phone (541) 384-2281 ext. 3.