

NOVEMBER-2007

GRANT COUNTY FSA NEWS

Grant County FSA

2145 Basin St. SW STE A
Ephrata, WA 98823
Phone: (509) 754-2463 ext. 2
Fax: (509) 754-4705

Office Hours

Monday – Friday
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

County Committee

John Morris Jr., Chairman
Richard Reffett, V-Chairman
Mike Edwards, Member
Angela Pixton, Advisor

Farm Program Staff

Greg Anderson, CED
Judi Kanoff, PT
Marilyn Littleton, PT
Katie Markham, PT

Farm Loan Staff

Everett Purrington, FLM
Nancy Seger, FLO
Libby Anderson, FLO
Barb Williams, FLT

Next COC Meeting

December 6th, 2007-8:30 AM

FSA Web sites:

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

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

PLEASE KEEP OUR OFFICE
UP TO DATE ON ANY
CHANGES MADE TO YOUR
FARM OPERATION. THIS
INCLUDES LAND CHANGES,
OPERATOR/OWNER
CHANGES, ENTITY
CHANGES, AND ANY
UPDATES TO BANK
ACCOUNT INFORMATION.
THANK YOU!!

FSA COMMITTEE ELECTIONS:

Two nominees from administrative area #2 (Ephrata, Quincy, Royal Slope and Mattawa areas) have expressed their willingness to serve on the 2008 Grant County FSA Committee, if elected. A brief biography of these individuals is as follows:

John Morris Jr. farms with his 2 brothers and raises primarily potatoes, corn, peas and some hay. John's farm is located south of Ephrata in the Block 71 area. John currently serves as Chairman on the 2007 Grant County FSA Committee.

Rex Lefler has irrigated farming interests primarily located on the Royal Slope. Rex farms mostly alfalfa and timothy hay in the block 83 and 85 areas.

Ballots will be mailed out beginning November 2nd, 2007. Ballots must be returned or postmarked by December 3rd, 2007. Eligible ballots will be tabulated on December 6th, 2007 here at the County Office. Please take the time to vote for the candidate of your choice. The FSA County Committee is your local voice on the administration of numerous federal farm programs.

DISASTER PROGRAMS ANNOUNCED:

This office is now accepting appointments for signups under two separate disaster programs recently approved by Congress for implementation.

The **Livestock Compensation Program (LCP)** will compensate eligible livestock producers who suffered feed losses on non-irrigated native pastures due to drought conditions occurring in calendar year 2005.

The list of eligible livestock under the LCP is somewhat extensive, with beef being the primary livestock affected in Grant County. Eligible beef categories include adult cows/bulls and non-adult cows/bulls. Livestock weighing less than 500 lbs. as of January 1st, 2005 are not eligible under this program. Livestock must have been physically located in Grant County on January 1st, 2005 and be maintained for commercial use as part of a farming operation.

Benefits will be based on the lesser of the calculated value of the feed loss on the native pastures, or the calculated value of the livestock based on a 30-day feed need basis. When signing up for this program, livestock producers will be asked as to the total number of livestock present on the native pastures, total number of acres of dry land native pastures, and the normal grazing period for the livestock on these pastures. The ending signup date for this program has yet to be determined. Please contact this office for more information on LCP.

The **Crop Disaster Program (CDP)** can provide benefits to eligible producers who suffered quantity or quality losses to crops due to adverse weather conditions in crop year 2005, 2006, or 2007 if the crop was planted prior to February 28th, 2007. Producers must select one year if multiple years of losses are determined. **The current signup will be for production losses only. Quality losses, such as rained on alfalfa, will be addressed during a later signup date that has yet to be determined.**

Producers must have sustained production losses in excess of 35% of the approved yield to be eligible for benefits. **A major change in eligibility criteria for CDP participation is the producer must have had federal crop insurance on any insurable crop or a NAP policy in place for any non-insurable crop in the year the crop loss was sustained.**

As stated above, this office will be conducting signups for these disaster programs **by appointment only**. We anticipate heavy workload in these programs, so please, contact the County Office prior to your visit to establish an appointment. For more disaster program information, please contact the County Office.

PAYMENTS ISSUED:

This office has been extremely busy preparing and issuing annual rental payments under the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and final direct payments under the Direct & Counter Cyclical Program (DCP) for the 2007 crop year. We anticipate being completed with these payment processes in the near future. The payment processes this year have taken more time than in past years. This is due primarily to the Improper Payment Review that this office was part of. We extend our thanks to those producers who were asked to complete new eligibility forms, provide updated signature authorizations and those who provided us with additional legal documentation when needed.

On the reverse side of this matter, some producers have yet to return eligibility forms sent to you by this office. Please understand that **payments cannot be issued to you until these eligibility forms have been returned.** If you have yet to receive your payments, this is probably the reason why. Please contact this office if you have any questions concerning your program payments.

EQIP DEADLINE NEARS:

Producers interested in sign up for the 2008 Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) have **until November 2nd, 2007 to do so.** EQIP can assist landowners and operators with restoring and protecting agricultural lands by providing financial and/or technical assistance to treat natural resource concerns. Priority is being given to those projects addressing ground and surface water quality, soil erosion and wildlife habitat. Contact the NRCS office at (509) 754-2463, ext. 3 for more program details.

CRP WEED CONTROL:

Letters have been sent out by this office informing those producers who need to conduct some type of weed control measure on CRP acreage. As a friendly reminder, please adhere to the "good neighbor" policy and conduct the weed control measure as soon as possible. Failure to conduct weed control measures in a timely fashion can lead to the County Committee assessing payment reductions. This can be an expensive learning experience for the producer. Again, please ensure that timely and effective weed control is being taken on your CRP.

FSA LOANS AVAILABLE:

FSA Loans can be used to pay for annual operating expenses, purchase equipment, and or farm ground. Loan limits are \$200,000 for operating expenses and/or farm equipment purchases and a separate limit of \$200,000 for real estate purchases. The current interest rates are 5.00% for operating/equipment loans and 5.125% for real estate loans.

FSA also offers a Youth Loan program to help kids in 4-H or FFA finance their project. This is a great opportunity for them to pay for that fair animal/project while learning about banking and financing. The maximum loan amount for a Youth Loan is \$5,000 and the current interest rate is 5.00%.

To learn more about FSA loan programs, answer your questions and to provide assistance with submitting an application, please contact the Farm Loan staff at (509) 754-2463, ext. 2. You can ask for Everett Purrington, Loan Manager, Nancy Seger, Loan Officer, or Libby Anderson, Loan Officer.

CORN STUBBLE RETENTION PROJECT:

As in past years, and in an effort to provide more feed for migrating waterfowl, the Washington Dept. of Fish & Wildlife will again work with grain corn producers to compensate them for leaving corn stubble un-disked until March 1st, 2008. The emphasis area will again be west of Dodson Rd. and north of the Frenchman Hills. Please contact Gretchen Fitzgerald or John Cotton at 754-4624 ext. 32 for more information.

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotapes, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington D.C. 20250-9410 or call 1-800-795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.