

USDA - FARM SERVICE AGENCY – KLAMATH CO

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www.fsa.usda.gov/or

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Upcoming Spring Producer Meetings

The Farm Service Agency and Natural Resource Conservation Service will be holding producer meetings in Merrill and Bonanza as well as having an open house at the service center here in Klamath Falls to discuss important farm bill changes that may affect your ability to earn payment.

New changes to the farm bill include:

- Farm Storage Facility Loan available for hay storage and vegetable storage facilities
- Farm Loan Limits increase to \$300,000 for Operating, and Ownership Loans and \$1,094,000 Guarantee Loans
- The Average Crop Revenue Election Program
- Supplemental Revenue Assurance Program
- Changes in Adjusted Gross Income Requirements
- Changes to payment limitation that may affect corporations and other entities ability to earn payments.
- Rural Development will be available on April 2nd to answer questions about Rural Housing Loans and Community Service Projects.

-Mark These Dates On Your Calendar-

Producer Meeting March 31- 10 AM Merrill Civic Center in conjunction with Siskiyou and Modoc County FSA
Producer Meeting April 1, 2 PM Bonanza Library

Producer Meeting April 2, 10 A.M. Specifically Covering Programs for Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, Beginning Farmers and Ranchers and historically underserved producers – In Conjunction with Rural Development

NEW Open House April 2 from 2 P.M. until 7 P.M. in Conjunction with Rural Development

Stimulus Funding for FLP Loans

As part of the recently approved economic stimulus package, FSA's Farm Loan Programs (FLP) is scheduled to receive an extra \$173 million in funding for the direct operating loan (OL) program nationally. Many states have a current backlog of approved OL loans waiting for funding. As of February 23, the backlog stood at 1,039 loans valued at more than \$72 million. Producers' financial needs have increased significantly with the elevated costs of production inputs and the downturn in the agricultural economy. This growing need, coupled with FLP's successful marketing efforts, has generated increased demand for FSA OL loans as well as farm ownership loans. For information on Farm Loans including programs contact Dorothy Scull at X 104.

Payment Limitation Comment Period Extended

FSA has announced that the comment period for the regulation defining actively engaged participation in a farming operation has been extended for an additional 60 days, FSA is seeking a diverse range of comments from different areas of the United States and farming communities.

With this extension, the public may continue to submit comments until April 6, 2009. The extension document is available at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/federalNotices?are=home&subject=lare&topic=frd-ii>.

NRCS Taking Applications for Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

Natural Resources Conservation Service is now taking applications for the 2009 Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, or WHIP. **The deadline is April 1.** WHIP is a voluntary program for private landowners that provides technical and financial assistance to develop and improve high quality habitat that supports wildlife populations of National, State, Tribal and local significance. Eligible land includes private agricultural land, non-industrial private forest land and tribal land. You must be an agricultural producer to qualify.

Special consideration is being given to historically underserved groups, which includes beginning farmers and ranchers, limited resource farmers and ranchers and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

To apply for WHIP, please contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service at (541) 883-6932. For more information on NRCS programs, visit www.or.nrcs.gov.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program

Producers are reminded about the need for insurance coverage on crops in order to remain eligible for the agency's Disaster Assistance Programs such as SURE, LFP, TAP, and ELAP. Producers must purchase at least catastrophic (CAT) level of insurance for all insurable crops.

NAP is a federally funded program that provides coverage to producers for non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory or prevented planting occurs due to natural disasters. Crops eligible for NAP coverage are those for which crop insurance is not available, including fruits and vegetables, aquaculture, turf grass, forage crops and just to name a few.

Producers must apply for coverage before a disaster strikes. NAP applications for coverage must be filed using Form CCC-471 and pay the applicable service fees by the closing date. Application closing dates vary by crop.

Producers with 2009 NAP coverage must remember to complete the following to qualify for benefits:

- Timely file acreage reports and keep track of harvested production using acceptable methods. For example, bale weights or other means of determining quantities of hay are required. Check with FSA for specific requirements.
- File a "Notice of Loss" within 15 days of when a loss is apparent, due to drought, hail, etc. An appraisal may be required if the crop will not be harvested and under some other circumstances.
- Producers must certify compliance with HEL and Wetland provisions on an AD1026.
- Producer must establish eligibility to receive payment on CCC902I or CCC902E and payments are subject to the \$100,000 annual limitation per person. Producer must also meet gross income limitations requirements for the year of benefit.
- Producer must have risk in producing the crop.
- Producer must apply for coverage prior to the established deadline. Production records must also be provided prior to the acreage reporting deadline following the year of coverage.

Sodbuster, Swampbuster

Most Farm Service Agency programs require compliance with sodbuster and swampbuster provisions. These provisions require producers to follow an approved conservation system on all highly erodible land planted to an annual crop as determined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service

Be sure to have determinations made on any new land you plan to plant to annual crops. If you plan to plant a different crop on your current cropland, check with NRCS to assure the new crop will qualify under your conservation system. Swampbuster provisions state that converting a wetland to make possible the planting of a crop will result in the loss of all USDA benefits. To avoid this possibility it is strongly recommended that producers check with NRCS before starting to work in the fields. Also remember that adjusting field boundaries may qualify as a Sodbuster activity. Please check with FSA if you have any plan to bring additional land into production, to avoid being ineligible for FSA or NRCS programs.

Farm Loan Information

FSA borrowers who have mortgaged their real estate to FSA for a farm loan need to be aware of the limitations of our mortgage/deed of trust puts on the sale and use of proceeds from partial real estate sales, timber harvests and mineral sales including gravel. FSA regulations require that written consent be obtained from FSA prior to any removal of timber or minerals or partial sale of the FSA mortgaged property.

Use of the sale proceeds are limited to paying secured real estate lenders in order of the priority of their liens including FSA; paying customary costs associated with the transaction; and with limitations, development or enlargement of farm real estate or applying the funds as a regular payment on FSA loans. Funds may not be used to pay capital gains taxes, refinance debts, purchase equipment/livestock or pay family living expenses. Borrower use of small amounts of timber or minerals for household use is acceptable if you have any questions; please contact Dorothy Scull at 541-883-6924, ext. 104.

Annual Notice to Producers

FSA is required annually to notify producers of program requirements, policies, and reminders. The following are some of those notifications:

Power of Attorney: We have a power of attorney form available for those who find it difficult to visit the county office personally because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., that enables you to designate another person to conduct your business at the FSA office. This can be done by completing an FSA-211, Power of Attorney. The form is available at your local USDA Service Center or online at: [Hhttp://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov](http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov)H Forms obtained and completed outside the USDA Service Center office must be notarized. To find out more, call the office. New this year, NRCS and FSA utilize the same power of attorney form.

Annual Notice Continued

Direct Deposit Mandatory: As of Jan 1, 1999, all payments issued by the county FSA office will be by direct deposit (electronic funds transfer) to a pre-designated checking or savings account with your financial institution. Forms are available at the FSA office to sign up for direct deposit if you haven't yet. For those already signed up, it is important that we are notified anytime there is a change in your account number or financial institution. If we are not notified timely, future payments may be delayed.

Controlled Substance: Any person who is convicted under federal law of planting, producing, cultivating, harvesting, growing, or storing a controlled substance will be ineligible to participate and receive payments under USDA programs. Marijuana, opium poppies, and other drug producing plants are controlled substances.

Reasonable accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If special accommodations are required, please call the FSA County Office staff, and we will be happy to make any arrangements that are necessary.

Appeal Process: After an FSA official makes a decision on your request or application for USDA services, you will be sent a letter informing you of the decision and options you can pursue if you disagree. Generally, appellants have three choices — an informal review with the original agency decision-maker, an opportunity for mediation and finally an appeal to the next level of authority within the agency.

FSA Signature Policy

Using the correct signature when doing business with FSA can save time and prevent a delay in program benefits. The following are FSA signature guidelines:

- For a minor, FSA requires the minor's signature and one from an eligible parent. Note, by signing the applicable document, the parent is liable for actions of the minor and may be liable for refunds, liquidated damages, etc
- When signing on one's behalf the signature must agree with the name typed or printed on the form, or be a variation that does not cause the name and signature to be in disagreement. Example - John W. Smith is on the form. The signature may be John W. Smith or J.W. Smith or J. Smith. Or Mary J. Smith may be signed as Mrs. Mary Joe Smith, M.J. Smith, Mary Smith, etc
- FAXED signatures will be accepted for certain forms and other documents provided the acceptable program forms are approved for FAXED signatures. Producers are responsible for the successful transmission and receipt of FAXED information.
- Spouses may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and CCC programs in which either has an interest, unless written notification denying a spouse this authority has been provided to the county office
- Spouses shall not sign on behalf of each other as an authorized signatory for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations, or other similar entities
- Spouses may sign on behalf of each other's individual interest in a partnership, unless notification denying a spouse that authority is provided to the county office
- Acceptable signatures for general partnerships, joint ventures, corporations, estates, and trusts shall consist of an indicator "by" or "for" the individual's name, individual's name and capacity, or individual's name, capacity, and name of entity

For additional clarification on proper signatures contact your local FSA office.

Customer Statement

Producers with an USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account will be able to access their farm data via their Customer Statement. The Customer Statement puts a range of USDA services and programs into a single report that's available online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

It allows USDA customers to view their participation, application and payment status in various commodity and conservation programs; information on farm loans, conservation plan and land unit information.

The U. S. 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 a 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, audiotape, 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 Adjudication and Compliance, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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Sign up for eGov, to conduct business with FSA. Go to <http://www.sc.egov.usda.gov> and use your home computer to file forms, apply for programs, check contracts and view your Customer Statement or payment history. All you need is Level 2 eAuthorization, a valid email account and your home computer. Contact us for more details.

Important Dates	
March 31, 2009	Last day to apply for LDP's and commodity Loans
June 1, 2009	DCP Deadline, no late filing provisions
May 25, 2009	Office Closed, Memorial Day
August 15, 2009	Acreage Reporting Deadline for Klamath County
July 3, 2009	Office Close, 4th of July
March Interest Rates	
Commodity Loans 1.5 %	
Farm Storage Facility Loans 2.25%	
Operation Loans 2%	
Farm Ownership Loans 3.5%	