

May 2013



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Klamath County FSA Updates

Klamath County FSA Office

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Crop Losses

Producers who suffer crop losses because of weather related conditions are reminded to contact their FSA office to report their losses. Producers whose crops are destroyed are encouraged to file a CCC-576 in order for FSA to report that acreage as failed acreage. Reporting your acreage properly will help maintain your eligibility for any future programs.

For those producers with NAP insurance, you must file a Notice of Loss within 15 days of a disaster event which causes a loss or within 15 days of when the loss becomes apparent. For NAP producers, if you suffer a loss and cannot harvest your crop an appraisal must be performed to determine the production potential for the farm. This appraisal must be conducted prior to grazing or destroying the crop.

Acreage Reporting

Producers are reminded of important acreage reporting deadlines. Beginning with the 2013 year there are multiple reporting deadlines. Fall seeded or perennial crops had a deadline of December 15, 2012. Producers still have the opportunity to report these crops without being considered late filed, however these crops must be reported prior to June 30, 2013 in order to avoid paying fees associated with late filed acreage reports.

Spring seeded crops have a deadline of July 15, 2013. All spring planted crops in Klamath County must be reported by this deadline to avoid late file fees. If your crops are planted contact your FSA office to complete your crop acreage report.

Guaranteed Loan Program

The Farm Service Agency loan limit for the Guaranteed Loan Program has increased to \$1,302,000. The limit is adjusted annually based on data compiled by the National Agricultural Statistics Service. The lending limit

increases every year according to an inflation index. The maximum combined guaranteed and direct farm loan indebtedness has increased to \$1,602,000.

As a reminder, the one-time loan origination fee charged on FSA guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans is 1.5 percent of the guaranteed portion of the loan. Producers should contact their local FSA County Offices with questions about farm loans.

2013 FSA County Committee Elections - Candidate From Merrill/Malin Area Needed

The election of agricultural producers to the Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to all farmers and ranchers, whether beginning or long-established, large or small operation. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. County Committee (COC) members are a critical component of FSA operations.

The intent is to have the COC reflect the makeup of the producers and represent all constituents. This means wherever possible, minorities, women or limited resource producers need to be on the committee to speak for these underrepresented groups.

County committees provide local input on:

- Commodity price support loans and payments
- Conservation programs
- Incentive, indemnity and disaster payments for some commodities
- Emergency programs
- Payment eligibility

FSA county committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws and members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions.

Election Period

June 17, 2013 – The nomination period begins.

Aug. 1, 2013 – This is the last day to file nomination forms (FSA-669A) at the local USDA Service Center.

Nov. 4, 2013 – Ballots mailed to eligible voters.

Dec. 2, 2013 – Last day to return completed ballots to the USDA Service Center.

Jan. 1, 2014 – Newly elected county committee members take office.

Who Can Hold Office

To hold office as a county committee member, a person must meet the basic eligibility criteria:

- Participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA
- Be eligible to vote in a county committee election
- Reside in the local administrative area (LAA) in which the person is a candidate. For this election, you must reside in the Merrill - Malin area.

Not have been:

- Removed or disqualified from the office of county committee member, alternate or employee
- Removed for cause from any public office or have been convicted of fraud, larceny, embezzlement or any other felony
- Dishonorably discharged from any branch of the armed services.

Nominations

To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign nomination form FSA-669A. The form includes a statement that the nominee agrees to serve if elected. This form is available at USDA Service Centers and online.

Individuals may nominate themselves or others as a candidate. Additionally, organizations representing minority and women farmers or ranchers may nominate candidates. Nomination forms are filed for the county committee of the office that administers a producer's farm records.

Who Can Vote

Agricultural producers of legal voting age may be eligible to vote if they participate or cooperate in any FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm also may be eligible to vote. More information about voting eligibility requirements can be found in the FSA fact sheet titled "FSA County Committee Election – Eligibility to Vote and Hold Office as a County Committee Member." Producers may contact their local USDA Service Center for more information.

CRP Sign-up Starts May 20th

USDA will conduct a four-week general sign-up for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), beginning May 20 and ending on June 14. CRP protects the nation's natural resources through voluntary participation, while providing significant economic and environmental benefits to rural communities across the United States.

Currently, about 27 million acres are enrolled in CRP. Producers that are accepted in the program can receive cost-share assistance to plant long-term, resource-conserving covers and receive an annual rental payment for the length of the contract which is 10-15 years.

Contracts on 3.3 million acres of CRP are set to expire on Sept. 30, 2013. Producers with expiring contracts or producers with environmentally sensitive land are encouraged to evaluate their options under CRP. For more information on CRP and other FSA programs, visit a local FSA service center or www.fsa.usda.gov.

USDA Microloans Expand Small Farm Finance Options

There's a new USDA loan program that might be the perfect fit for beginning farmers and ranchers seeking access to capital. On January 15, the USDA Farm Service Agency rolled out a new Microloan program designed to help farmers and ranchers with credit needs of \$35,000 or less. This new credit tool simplifies and streamlines the process for farmers obtaining loans under \$35,000; it cuts the paperwork burden in half and is built to fit the needs of smaller-scale farmers and ranchers.

According to the 2007 Census of Agriculture, 71% of all farm operations gross less than \$25,000 per year. These farmers and ranchers are not typically served by agricultural lenders and may in fact have difficulty obtaining financing from commercial banks. The Microloan program is designed to better serve the unique capital needs of these operations. For growers who sell their crops at farmers' markets or through Community Supported Agriculture operations (CSAs), the Microloan program could be a great financial option to consider.

Farmers can use Microloan funds to pay for initial start-up expenses such as hoop houses to extend the growing season, essential tools, irrigation supplies, delivery vehicles, and annual expenses such as seed, utilities, land rents, marketing, and distribution expenses. The current interest rate for Microloans is 1.375%, which is also a great benefit for farmers and ranchers who are just starting out, need capital, and are operating on a tight budget.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay),

(866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).