



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT of AGRICULTURE
FARM SERVICE AGENCY NEWSLETTER

GRAYS HARBOR, LEWIS, and PACIFIC COUNTIES

June 20, 2007

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Wa. State FSA web site: www.fsa.usda.gov/wa/

National FSA web site: www.fsa.usda.gov

Office Hours:

Monday- Friday: 8:00 a.m – 4:30 p.m
 Except Holidays (New Years Day, Martin Luther King B-day
 President's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day,
 Columbus Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving, & Christmas)

Staff:

Lyle Heimbigner, County Executive Director
 Mark Turner, Farm Loan Manager (360) 354-5658
 Jeff Peterson, Farm Loan Officer
 Lynne White & Ruth Wynn, Program Technicians

Twin Harbors – Lewis FSA Committee: Byron Bentson, Vic Boekelman, Robert Quinby, Sam Zion, and Leo Zylstra. Advisors: Liz Anderson and Anne Aho. The committee meets monthly on Thursday of the 2ND full week of the month. Meeting dates are subject to change. Please contact the office to verify meeting dates.

NOMINATIONS FOR COUNTY COMMITTEE DUE AUGUST 1ST

Nominations are currently being accepted for producers who wish to serve on the Twin Harbors-Lewis FSA Committee. Elections will be held in Local Administrative Area (LAA) No. 1 and No. 2. LAA#1 is comprised of the coastal areas (ie Range 11) of Grays Harbor and Pacific Counties. LAA#1 also includes the Quinault Indian Reservation. LAA#2 includes the balance of Grays Harbor County (ie eastern 3/4ths of the county).

“The freedom to hold open elections is one of the numerous liberties we enjoy as Americans. In countries around the world, the right to vote in a democracy is a dream, rather than reality. Yet, in the US, eligible farmers and ranchers may vote not only in the general election, they can vote in FSA Committee elections as well. For ag. producers overseas, the ability to elect peers to a special committee that assists in the administration of their ag. programs is inconceivable. Allowing local producers to have a role in implementing farm programs at the grassroots level is what separates FSA from other government agencies at home and abroad.” (Teresa Lasseter, Administrator)

In order to serve on the committee, one must be an agricultural producer and must either live in or conduct the majority of their farming operation within the boundaries of the LAA they will represent. It is the responsibility of the committee to insure that federally mandated USDA programs are administered at the local level in an effective manner. Committees accomplish this by meeting monthly. Committee members are compensated for their time and mileage to attend these meetings. If you would like to run for a position or nominate another person for the committee, please submit a nominating petition no later than **August 1, 2007**. Nominating petitions are available from the county office.

BEGINNING FARMER AND RANCHER FINANCING

FSA's loan programs are designed to help family farmers who are temporarily unable to obtain commercial credit. In many cases, these are beginning farmers who have insufficient net worth to qualify for commercial credit. The law also requires FSA to reserve or target loan funds for exclusive use by beginning farmers. Funds remain targeted for beginning farmers in the guaranteed programs until April 1 of each year. In the direct programs, funds are targeted for beginning farmers until September 1 of each year.

A beginning farmer or rancher is an individual or entity who:

- Has not operated a farm or ranch for more than 10 years
- Substantially participates in the operation
- For Farm Ownership loan purposes, does not own a farm greater than 30 percent of the average size farm in the county
- For Farm Ownership loan purposes, must have participated in the business operation of a farm for at least 3 years.

Maximum amounts of indebtedness are \$200,000 for Direct Loans and \$899,000 (amount varies annually based on inflation) for Guaranteed Loans. FSA has a special down payment program to assist beginning farmers and ranchers to purchase a farm or ranch. This program also provides a means for retiring farmers and ranchers to transfer their land to a future generation. Also, beginning farmer or rancher applicants may choose to participate in a joint financing plan. In this program, FSA lends up to 50 percent of the amount financed, and another lender provides 50 percent or more. FSA will charge a reduced interest rate on the loan. Eligible beginning farmers and ranchers are given first priority to purchase FSA acquired properties at the appraised market value for the first 135 days after acquisition. For more information about FSA loan programs, contact Jeff Peterson (360) 748-0083, ext 118.

RURAL YOUTH CAN EARN AND LEARN THROUGH YOUTH LOAN PROGRAM

A youth-loan program is helping Washington youth finance 4-H, FFA, and other small projects, as they learn about managing money and running a business. Low-interest rate loans up to \$5,000 are available to rural youth from 10 to 20-years old. Youth loans can be used to finance most any income-producing project. Youth need a sponsor such as a 4-H or FFA project leader. The sponsor is not held accountable for the loan. FSA will help young borrowers put together a budget. Marketing, budgeting, paying bills, and repaying a loan are important life lessons that this program helps teach. (continued on back)

The loan from FSA is repaid when the project generates income. It carries the same low interest rate as regular FSA borrowers. Parents usually don't have to co-sign, which makes the loan unique. They're available to youth in rural areas and towns of less than 10,000 people. Most projects are eligible, as long as they generate enough money to repay the loans. Past loans have been made for raising livestock and growing crops. However, loans are not limited to projects involved solely with production agriculture. Parents and others can contact the local FSA office to learn how to apply or obtain the application form. For more information, contact Jeff Peterson @ (360) 748-0083, ext 118.

STAY TUNED FOR DISASTER PROGRAMS

The following provides a brief summary of the National Crop and Livestock Disaster Programs contained in the Iraq Supplemental Appropriations. At this time, signup dates and specific program details have not been announced. Generally, producers incurring a loss in more than one of the 2005, 2006 or 2007 calendar years must choose only one year for which they want to receive benefits for each program. Signup information and additional details will be announced in future newsletters and local newspapers.

Crop Disaster Program (CDP) -

- The program covers quantity and quality losses from natural disasters and related conditions that occurred in 2005 and 2006 and for 2007 crops if the crop was planted before February 28, 2007, or in the case of prevented planting would have been planted before February 28, 2007.
- **Only producers who obtained crop insurance coverage or coverage under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the year of loss will be eligible for assistance.**
- Quantity losses must be in excess of 35 percent to be eligible. The payment rate is set at 42 percent of the established price.

Livestock Compensation Program (LCP) -

- The program compensates livestock producers for feed losses resulting from natural disasters occurring between January 1, 2005, and February 28, 2007, including losses due to blizzards that started in 2006 and continued into 2007. Livestock producers may elect to receive compensation for losses in the calendar year 2007 grazing season that are attributable to wildfires occurring during the applicable period, as determined by the Secretary.
- Producers in primary or contiguous counties declared Secretarial or Presidential disaster areas between January 1, 2005, and February 28, 2007, are eligible. Also, producers in counties receiving Administrator's Physical Loss Notice during the same period are eligible.
- The following are among the types of livestock operations that will be eligible for LCP: dairy cattle, beef cattle, buffalo, beefalo, equine, poultry, elk, reindeer, sheep, goats, swine or deer.

Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) -

- The program compensates livestock producers for livestock losses between January 1, 2005, and February 28, 2007, that resulted from natural disasters, including losses due to blizzards that started in 2006 and continued into 2007. Producers in primary or contiguous counties declared Secretarial or Presidential disaster areas between January 1, 2005, and February 28, 2007, are eligible. Also, producers in counties receiving Administrator's Physical Loss Notice during the same period are eligible.

Dairy Disaster Assistance Program (DDAP) -

- The program provides \$16 million in benefits to dairy producers for dairy production losses.
- Producers in primary or contiguous counties declared Secretarial or Presidential disaster areas between Jan. 1, 2005, and Feb. 28, 2007, are eligible. Also, producers in counties receiving Administrator's Physical Loss Notice during the same period are eligible.