

MARION COUNTY FARM SERVICE AGENCY NEWS BITS

November 2008

Marion County FSA Committee:

Lori Pavlicek, Chairperson

John Beitel, Vice-Chairperson

Gary Butler, Regular Member

Kirk Metteer – CED (kirk.metteer@or.usda.gov)

REGULAR MEETING DATE – 2nd Thursday of the Month



Marion County FSA Office

650 Hawthorne Avenue SE, Suite 130

Salem, Oregon 97301-5894

Phone: (503)399-5741

FAX (503)399-5799

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Dates to Note:

November 27, 2008 – Thanksgiving Day, Office will be closed.

December 1, 2008 – Deadline to Vote for County Committeeperson in Area #1 (North County)

December 1, 2008 – Sales Closing Date – 2009 NAP Crops

December 8, 2008 – County Committee Meeting

December 25 – Christmas Day, Office Will be closed.

January 1, 2009 – New Years Day, Office Will be closed.

On-going – CREP Signup

County Committee Election: Ballots Due by December 1st

In August nominations closed for the Local Administrative Area #1 (LAA#1) 2008 County Committee election. LAA#1 is the northern approximately one third of Marion County with the Silverton Highway (HWY 213) as its southern boundary. Nominated to run for reelection was Lori Pavlicek. Lori and her family operate 4B Farms in the Mt. Angel area. They raise hops, garlic, grass seed, wheat, hazelnuts, cannery crops and other crops. Election ballots were mailed to all eligible voters in LAA#1 on November 1st. Voted ballots must be mailed (postmarked on or before December 1st) to, or dropped off at the Marion County Farm Service Agency Office by close of business December 1st.

Some Notable Changes for the 2009 Crop Year

1. When you certify acreage for 2009 planted crops, it will be important to include all acreage on your farm, even if some is being temporarily farmed by another producer.
2. With the new farm bill, many of the forms we use to gather information regarding entity organization, eligibility for payments, etc., have changed. Expect to spend some extra time completing new forms.
3. To be eligible for program benefits, the Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) threshold for farming-derived income has lowered, with this new farm bill, from \$2½ million to \$750,000 per person.

Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP)

Producers participating in NAP, when harvest is completed please remember to bring your actual production history for your NAP-insured crops into the FSA office to maintain your actual farm yields.

For 2009 crop year only, the NAP application deadline has been extended to December 1st, 2008 for the following crops: for fall-planted vegetable seed crops, canola, carrots, onions and other seed crops; Christmas Trees, cut flowers, ornamental nursery, turf grass sod, herbs, grass, alfalfa, small grain (fall or spring planted), other forage, grazing, grass seed, clover seed, alfalfa seed, and any other perennial not mentioned, berries, fruits and honey. **NOTE: Fresh Sweet Cherries are NOT insurable under Federal Crop Insurance in Marion County, so insurance is offered under the Farm Service Agency NAP program, and Processed Cherries no longer have CAT insurance availability, but instead the producer can purchase "Buy-up" insurance from RMA or NAP coverage through FSA.**

3-15-09 is the application deadline for all spring crops not mentioned above...

5-31-09 is the application deadline for buckwheat.

Contact Debbie Pothetes at (503) 399-5741 extension 111, if you have any questions regarding NAP.

2009 Supplemental Agriculture Disaster Assistance Programs

Overview

On June 18, 2008, the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill) was enacted into Public Law 110-246. This Act amended the Trade Act of 1974 to create five new disaster programs, collectively referred to as Supplemental Agriculture Disaster Assistance programs. Those programs include:

1. Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP)
2. Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP)
3. Livestock Indemnity Program* (LIP)
4. Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) Program
5. Tree Assistance Program (TAP)

To be eligible for these programs, producers must purchase at least catastrophic risk protection (CAT) level of crop insurance for all insurable crops and/or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for non-insurable crops. See item elsewhere in this newsletter regarding NAP crops and the 12-1-2008 purchase deadline.

Supplemental Agriculture Disaster Assistance Programs Eligibility Requirements:

■ SURE, TAP, and ELAP

Producers must obtain a crop insurance policy for each insurable commodity and NAP for each non-insurable commodity on the “farm” to be eligible for assistance under SURE, TAP, and ELAP.

In the 2008 Farm Bill; in general, the term “farm” means the sum of **all crop acreage** in all counties that is planted or intended to be planted **for harvest by the eligible producer**. **Note: If you raise crop(s) on land other than what you normally consider your farm, you must purchase insurance or NAP coverage and report those crops.** In the case of aquaculture, the term “farm” means all fish being produced in all counties that are intended to be harvested for sale by the eligible producer. In the case of honey, the term “farm” means all bees and beehives in all counties that are intended to be harvested for a honey crop by the eligible producer.

■ LFP

Producers must timely obtain a crop insurance policy for insured crops or timely file the required paperwork for NAP for the grazed land.

Any insurance already purchased to meet the eligibility requirements for these programs must be at a minimum level of 50 percent yield coverage and at 55 percent of the insurable price.

■ LIP

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) is exempt from the risk management purchase requirement and therefore, does not require a waiver.

Definitions

A Socially Disadvantaged farmer or rancher is a farmer or rancher who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group. For entity applicants, all members of the entity must be socially disadvantaged. A Socially Disadvantaged Group is a group whose members have been subject to racial or ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities.

A Limited Resource Producer is a producer with both of the following:

- Direct or indirect gross farm sales not more than \$100,000 in both of the previous 2 years (as adjusted for inflation using Price Paid by Farmer Index as compiled by NASS); and
- Total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of 4, or less than 50 percent of county median household income in both of the previous 2 years (to be determined annually using Commerce Department Data).

Limited Resource Producer status can be determined in an automated system using the Web site for USDA Limited Resource Farmer and Rancher Online Self Determination Tool at

<http://www.lrftool.sc.egov.usda.gov/tool.asp>. The automated system calculates and displays the adjusted gross farm sales per year and the higher of the national poverty level or county median household income.

A Beginning Farmer or Rancher is an individual or entity who: (1) has not operated a farm or ranch for more than 10 years, AND (2) substantially participates in the operation. If the applicant is an entity, all members must be eligible beginning farmers or ranchers.

FAXed Signatures

FAXed signatures from producers shall be accepted for certain forms and other documents, provided all signature requirements are met. On some forms and documents FAXed signatures are not acceptable. FAXed signatures include only those received through a FAX machine, and DO NOT include electronic signatures, such as signatures obtained by email or the Internet. Questions regarding FAXed signatures? Contact the FSA office.



Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Provisions

Each producer (and producers with affiliated farming interests) who requests benefits under a program covered by Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELIC) or Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions is required to complete and sign a form AD-1026 certifying that HELIC and WC regulations are not violated on the producer's farm(s). This applies to individuals and entities. Penalties for violating these provisions can be substantial.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

CREP is a jointly funded program by the USDA and State of Oregon. Program objectives include: reducing sediment and nutrient pollution from Ag lands, stabilizing stream banks with adequate vegetation, reducing water temperatures, improving habitat for fish species, and providing a mechanism for farmers to help meet water quality requirements established by federal and state laws.

FSA provides participants with annual rental payments for the life of the contract (10 to 15 years) and cost sharing on practice installation. You will also qualify for Signup Incentive and Practice Completion Incentive payments. CREP targets the use of Riparian Buffers, Wetland Restoration, Wildlife Habitat Buffers, and Wetland Buffers to meet the objectives of the program. There are no enrollment deadlines.

Farm Loans

The limit for farm ownership and farm operating loans has been increased. Eligible applicants may obtain direct loans for up to a maximum indebtedness of \$300,000 per loan type and guaranteed loans for up to a maximum indebtedness of \$949,000. In general, farm ownership loans may be used to purchase a farm, enlarge an existing farm, construct new farm buildings and/or improve structures, pay closing costs, and promote soil and water conservation and protection. Farm Operating Loans may be used for normal operating expenses, machinery and equipment, real estate repairs and refinancing debt.

Controlled Substance

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, growing, or harvesting a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include Marijuana, opium, poppies and other drug producing plants.

Special Accommodations

Special Accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, please contact the county office staff directly or by phone.