



September - October 2007

Skagit-Island-San Juan County FSA News

Skagit-Island-San Juan County FSA

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Office Hours

Monday – Friday
8:00 A M – 4:30 PM

Area Committee

Kris Hansen, Chair
Wilbur Bishop, Vice-Chair
Todd Gordon, Member
Mark Wesen, Member
M R Buffum, Jr., Member

Office Staff

June Freet, PT
Marlene Garber, PT

Next COC Meeting

September 20, 2007
10:00 A M in the USDA
Conference Room.

IMPORTANT DATES:

November 20 – Final day for
Nap sign-up for perennial
crops such as berries, fruit
trees and grapes.

OFFICE CLOSURES:

October 8 – Office closed for
Columbus Day

October 9, 10, & 11th – Office
closed for training.

November 12 – Office closed
for Veteran's Day.

November 22 – Office closed
for Thanksgiving.

WEBSITES

National USDA website:
<http://www.usda.gov>
National FSA website:
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov>
Washington State FSA
website:
<http://www.usda.gov/wa>



FARWELL TO FARMERS AND FRIENDS

I couldn't leave Mount Vernon without expressing my thoughts and saying good bye to the friends I have made and to the farmers I have been privileged to know over the past few years. It has been a great pleasure to serve the producers of Skagit, Island and San Juan Counties. I wanted to let you all know how much I have enjoyed working with you and getting to know each of you. I have many fond memories to take with me. I have accepted a position in Utah in order to be closer to my family. We have three sons that live there and right now seven grandchildren with two more on the way. So, with some regret, I'm leaving the Skagit Valley to be close to the loves of my life, my grandchildren. Farewell for now.....Ellen

DISASTER LEGISLATION PASSED

The U.S. Dept of Agriculture announced sign-up dates for the new Livestock Compensation Program, Livestock Indemnity Program and Crop Disaster Program. The three ad hoc disaster programs provide benefits to farmers and ranchers who suffered losses caused by natural disasters in recent years.

Livestock Compensation Program - The sign-up for LCP began September 10, 2007. This program compensates livestock producers for feed losses occurring from January 1, 2005 to February 28, 2007 due to a natural disaster. Drought caused much of the feed loss in Washington State during that time but loss from other disasters may also be eligible. The program requires pasture losses to qualify for a payment and a disaster designation for the year the payments are made.

Livestock Indemnity Program – The sign-up for LIP began September 10, 2007. LIP pays producers for the physical loss of livestock due to natural disasters that occurred during the same January 1, 2005 to February 28, 2007 time period.

Crop Disaster Program – Sign-up for the crop portion of the new program begins October 15, 2007. CDP covers losses occurring during 2005, 2006 and losses on crops planted before February 28, 2007. Payments will be made on crops with yield reductions of over 35%, based on a county average yield. Producers must also have obtained crop insurance or coverage under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the year for which they file for benefits.

For additional information about the Disaster Programs check the Farm Service Agency website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov> or call the local FSA Office.

BANK ACCOUNT CHANGES

Beginning in October, payments will be issued for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP). These payments can be significantly delayed if bank account information is not current and correct. If your account number has changed or the account has been closed and you have changed banks, please notify the Farm Service Agency Office with out delay.

COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTION

The nomination period for the 2007 County Committee Election closed August 1st. One nomination was received for Kristen Hansen of Concrete for LAA #3. Kris is currently the chairperson for the Area Committee. The election will take place by mail-in ballot during November and the final date to return ballots is December 3rd. Ballots will be counted on December 6th in the Skagit County FSA Office.



FSA ANTICIPATES JOB OPENING

The Farm Service Agency anticipates have a job opening for a County Operations Trainee (COT) in the immediate future. This is a management development opportunity for recruitment as a County Executive Director.

As a COT you receive intensive practical, managerial and program training. You acquire knowledge, skills and experience in the administration of policy, programs and the daily operations of FSA. As you build leadership and communications skills you will learn how to supervise and motivate employees along with developing interpersonal relationships with staff, clients and community leaders.

Qualification for the COT position will be available at www.fsa.usda.gov/wa when the vacancy is announced, but general requirements are a 4-year degree and at least one year of specialized experience, or a combination of experience with FSA programs and education above the high school level. You must also be a U.S. citizen, complete a background security investigation, and be available to travel.

You can also find information on employment with FSA at <http://www.usajobs.com/>. For an inquiry, type "County Operations Trainee" or "Farm Service Agency" under keywords. This is a permanent, non-federal position.

IS YOUR PAPERWORK COMPLETE

Have you provided the FSA Office with all the necessary paperwork to insure that you will receive your DCP and/or CREP payment in October? If not, it is not too late! Those who did not get signatures returned by the August 3rd are still eligible to participate, but will be required to pay a late-filing fee of \$100 per contract. The final deadline for submitting late filed signatures for 2007 DCP is September 30, 2007. If you are uncertain if all paperwork has been completed, please contact the office and we will check for you.

Remember: Payment Eligibility paperwork must also be complete and filed.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (EQIP) SIGN-UP WITH NRCS

Agricultural producers and foresters are encouraged to sign up for the 2008 Environmental Quality Incentive Program. The program provides financial cost sharing to help private farm and forest landowners implement conservation practices. Some examples of practices available for cost sharing are those that help reduce the impact of livestock on surface and ground water; those that save water through more efficient irrigation system installation; tree planting and thinning; road upgrading for fish access and habitat restoration. Farms must produce an annual gross sale of \$1000 of agricultural products. Forestlands must have a forestry plan, or a history of timber harvest and/or forestland management activities. To be considered for the 2008 program year, applications must be received by Friday, November 2, 2007. Application can be made at your local Natural Resources Conservation Service Office. [(360)428-2668]



ACCESSIBILITY: Person with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in any meeting, event or function should contact the county office. FSA is committed to making programs accessible to all customers.

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