

December 2013



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Wallowa County FSA Office

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County Executive Director:
Bill Williams, ext 104

Committee Members:

Melvin Stonebrink

Donna Smith

Wes Wilsey

Farm Loan Manager:
Kevin Jordan, 541-278-8049,
X 111

Program Technicians:
Lela Kunkle, ext. 102

Dates to Remember

December 16, 2013 - Crop Reporting Date for fall planted crops, all hay & grazing crops

December 17, 2013 - Service Center Christmas Open House 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

December 20, 2013 - Committee Election Ballots mailed to Lostine/Wallowa area ag producers

December 25, 2013 - Christmas (Office Closed)

January 1, 2014 - New Year's Day (Office Closed)

January 17, 2014 - Committee Election Ballots Return Deadline

January 20, 2014 - Martin Luther King Day (Office Closed)

2014 Acreage Report Dates

Farmers and ranchers in Wallowa County have until Monday, December 16th to report hay, pasture, fall planted wheat and any other fall-planted small grains. The acreage reporting deadline has been extended 1 day as December 15th falls on a Sunday.

Susie Madigan, ext 103

Next County Committee Meeting:

January 23, 2014 @ 10:30 a.m.

Acreage reports submitted after the deadline will be considered late filed. Producers filing acreage reports after January 15th for hay, pasture and fall planted crops will be required to pay a late file fee. The minimum late file fee is \$46.00 per farm.

Please call Susie at 541-426-4521 extension 103 to schedule an appointment

If you cannot make your crop acreage report by the December 16th deadline, you MUST notify us. This can be done by fax, email, phone, regular mail or in person. You must also give us the date that you will be able to make your crop report so that we can place you on a register.

New County Committee Election Ballots to me Mailed

The Wallowa County Committee Election ballots that were mailed to producers on Nov. 4 were incorrectly printed with the producer's name and address on the back of the ballot. County committee elections must use a secret ballot so the misprinted ballots cannot be used. Please destroy or recycle the misprinted ballot. If you have already voted, your ballot was destroyed unopened.

New ballots will be mailed to producers on December 20, 2013. These ballots will indicate that they are the corrected ballot in several places, including on the outside of the mailing, on the ballot and on the outside of the return envelope.

The corrected ballot must be returned to the Wallowa County FSA Office or postmarked by January 17, 2014. All newly elected county committee members will take office February 18, 2014. All county committee members whose term expires on Dec. 31, 2013, will have their term extended to January 31, 2014.

County committee members are an important component of the operations of FSA and provide a link between the agricultural community and USDA. Farmers and ranchers elected to county committees help deliver FSA programs at the local level, applying their knowledge and judgment to make decisions on commodity price support programs; conservation programs; incentive indemnity and disaster programs for some commodities; emergency programs and eligibility. FSA committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws.

To be an eligible voter, farmers and ranchers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm may also be eligible to vote.

The candidates in this year's election are:

Bobbie Lou Baker was born in Wallowa County, grew up on the family farm and then left the area for other pursuits. She moved back in 1995 and started ranching full time 11 years ago. She raises hay crops and angus & angus cross livestock.

She is currently the chairperson of the Wallowa Rural Fire District, has served as a board member on the Wallowa County Planning Commission. For the past 9 years she has served as the Beef Superintendent for the Wallowa County fair and was a 4-H leader for the Lower Valley Livestock Club.

Bruce Lathrop is also a Wallowa County native. He lives in Lostine and has been farming for 15-20 years. He raises hay crops & livestock.

He is currently an alternate on the Wallowa County FSA Committee and attends when a Committee member is

unable to make the meeting.

Melvin Stonebrink has been farming in the Leap area for 17 years. He raises wheat, barley, hay and has raised dry peas. He also is raising livestock.

He is a native of Wallowa County and is a member of the Farm Bureau. He is a board member of the Wallowa Soil & Water District and is finishing his second 3-year term on the Wallowa County FSA Committee.

More information on county committees, such as the new 2013 fact sheet and brochures, can be found on the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov/elections or at a local USDA Service Center.

Increased Guaranteed Loan Limit

The Farm Service Agency maximum loan limit for the Guaranteed Loan Program has increased to \$1,355,000 effective Oct. 1, 2013. The limit is adjusted annually based on data compiled by the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

The lending limit is adjusted every year according to an inflation index. The maximum combined guaranteed and direct farm loan indebtedness will also increase to \$1,655,000.

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 the Umatilla County FSA Office with questions about farm loans.

Microloan Program

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) developed the Microloan (ML) program to better serve the unique financial operating needs of beginning, niche and small family farm operations.

FSA offers applicants a Microloan designed to help farmers with credit needs of \$35,000 or less. The loan features a streamlined application process built to fit the needs of new and smaller producers. This loan program will also be useful to specialty crop producers and operators of community supported agriculture (CSA).

Eligible applicants can apply for a maximum amount of \$35,000 to pay for initial start-up expenses such as hoop houses to extend the growing season, essential tools, irrigation and annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents, marketing, and distribution expenses. As financing needs increase, applicants can apply for a regular operating loan up to the maximum amount of \$300,000 or obtain financing from a commercial lender under FSA's Guaranteed Loan Program.

Individuals who are interested in applying for a microloan or would like to discuss other farm loan programs available should contact the Umatilla County FSA office to set up an appointment with a loan official

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:

- 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

For additional clarification on proper signatures please contact our office.

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).