



WHATCOM COUNTY FSA NEWS

NOVEMBER 2007

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Monday – Friday
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

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National USDA Website
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National FSA Website
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov>

State FSA Website
<http://www.usda.gov/wa>

UPCOMING IMPORTANT DEADLINES AND DATES TO REMEMBER

November 20 – NAP
signup deadline for
perennial crops such as,
berries, fruit trees and
grapes.

December 3- Last day to
return completed COC
ballots to the County Office

Office Closures

November 12 –
Veteran's Day
November 22 –
Thanksgiving Day
December 25 –
Christmas Day

Handicapped

Accommodations: Special accommodations will be arranged for those persons with a physical, vision, or hearing impaired disability. If special accommodations are needed, please contact our office.



TIME TO VOTE FOR YOUR COUNTY COMMITTEE

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Committees is important to ALL farmers and ranchers with large or small operations. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are the link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Each member of the committee represents a Local Administrative Area (LAA) for a three year term. This year LAA #3 is up for election. LAA #3 is bordered to the west by Trapline Road, Mission Road, Mount Baker Highway, and I-5 to the north by the international border, east and south by the county line. An exact map may be obtained at the Whatcom County FSA Office.

This year we have three nominees for LAA #3.

Kimberly Roe – the operator of a horse-training and horse-boarding facility in the South Fork Valley ½ way between Van Zandt and Acme and is an active participant in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). She also leases cropland to Kalsbeek Farms, LLC.

Kimberly is an active member in the United States Dressage Federation and the United States Equestrian Federation. In high school she was an “Ag Aggie” in the FFA.

Kimberly is very excited about and supportive of agriculture in Whatcom County and looks forward to the opportunity of serving the producers of Whatcom County on the Committee.

Jeremy Visser – operates two operations in Sumas, WA with approximately 1100 animals. He grows corn and grass for silage to support his operation. In high school, he belonged to FFA. Jeremy is an active member in the National Federation of Independent Business.

Jeremy is an advocate of common sense and supports personal responsibility. He believes it is everyone's civic duty to serve the communities where they live. He feels he can best accomplish this on the Whatcom County Committee.

Edward (Ed) Stachila – farms 300 acres as a member of Strachila Farms, Inc. He owns a dairy operation of over 200 cows and grows corn and grass for silage. He is also a partner in Livermore and Son well drilling.

Ed is active in the community as a member of the Saint Joseph Cemetery Board and volunteers time and services to multiple volunteer organizations.

Ed serves as the incumbent Whatcom County Committee Chairperson.

November 2nd – Ballots will be mailed to eligible producers

December 3rd – Deadline to return ballots to the Whatcom County Office

December 7th – Ballots will be counted at the Whatcom County Office

Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters in LAA #3 by November 2, 2007, and must be returned to the FSA county office or postmarked by December 3, 2007. Eligible voters may contact the FSA Whatcom County office before the final date to complete and return ballots if they do not receive a ballot.

DISASTER SIGNUP BEGINS

Livestock Compensation Program (LCP), and Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) producer signup began September 10, 2007.

A Presidential or Secretarial Disaster Declaration must have been issued for the livestock programs.

Whatcom County is approved for 2006 losses between November 2-11, December 14-15, and after May 1 for the Livestock Compensation Program that compensates livestock producers for non-irrigated improved and native grasses and forage sorghum feed losses and the Livestock Indemnity Program that compensates producers for the physical loss (death) of livestock due to natural disasters.

Producers who suffered losses in multiple years must choose which year to receive payments for the livestock programs.

The Crop Disaster Program (CDP) signup began October 15, 2007.

Signup deadlines for these programs have yet to be announced.



The Crop Disaster Program provides payments to producers who suffered approved yield losses of more than 35% or prevented plantings. The program covers weather related losses that occurred in 2005, 2006, or 2007 crop years for all crops planted, or prevented from being planted, before February 28, 2007. Producers may claim losses for multiple crops but in multiple years. The producer may only be paid for the most beneficial eligible crop year.

Signup for **QUALITY** economic losses will be announced at a later date. You must have in excess of a 25% economic loss to be eligible for benefits.

To be eligible, for quantity and quality losses producers must have obtained Commercial Crop Insurance or coverage under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the year for which they claim benefits.

There is an \$80,000 payment limitation per "person" per program.

2008 NAP SIGN-UP

The Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) was designed to reduce financial losses that occur when natural disasters cause a catastrophic loss of production or prevented planting of an eligible crop providing coverage equivalent to CAT insurance.

The coverage period begins 30 calendar days after the application closing date and ends the earlier of one of the following:

- 10 months from the application closing date
- The date harvest is complete
- Abandonment of the crop
- Total destruction of the crop

Producers pay an application fee of \$100 per crop with a \$300 cap per county. You receive a payment if all eligibility requirements have been met and the crop suffers an approved loss greater than a 50% production loss for weather related damages.

November 20, 2007 is the sign up deadline for perennial crops such as, berries, fruit trees and grapes.

FARM LOANS

October 1st marked the beginning of fiscal year 2008 loan funding for the Farm Service Agency (FSA). FSA offers direct operating and farm ownership loan programs, as well as administering a guaranteed loan portfolio. Loans to youths ranging in age from 10 – 20 years old are also available. All applicants are required to meet certain loan eligibility criteria specific to the applicable loan program.

FSA loan funds can be used to purchase farms, livestock and equipment. They may also be used for annual operating expenses, the construction or repair of farm buildings, pay for soil and water conservation practices, and to refinance operating type debt.

Direct FSA farm ownership loans used to purchase real estate will not exceed a term of 40 years and has a current interest rate of 5.5%. The maximum loan amount cannot exceed \$200,000. Applicants must have operated a farm for at least three years prior to applying and meet all other loan eligibility criteria. Funding for this program is based on the availability of loan funds, which has been limited in past years; therefore it would not be uncommon to wait several months for available funding.

Direct operating loans will be termed 1 to 7 years and currently has an interest rate of 5.125%. Loans used for annual operating purposes will generally be termed one year. Repayment for term operating loans used to purchase machinery, equipment and breeding livestock will not exceed 7 years and will be based on the applicant's projected cash flow. Again, the maximum loan amount will not exceed \$200,000.

FSA guaranteed loans are made by conventional lending institutions and are guaranteed by FSA which will pay any loan loss not to exceed 95% of the loan amount. Guaranteed loans can be made up to \$949,000 and can be used for operating and real estate purposes. Individual interest rates are determined by the lending institution.

Additional information regarding the various loan programs can be found at www.fsa.usda.gov, obtained from the local FSA office, or by contacting Mark Turner at (360) 354-5658.