



# NEWSLETTER



**October 2012**

## **Twin Harbors-Lewis County Farm Service Agency**

1554 Bishop Rd.  
Chehalis, WA 98532  
Phone – 360-748-0083 Ext. 2  
Fax – 360-740-9745

### **Office Hours**

Mon. - Fri. 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

### **County Committee**

Vic Boekelman - Chairperson  
Anna Aho – Vice Chairperson  
Don Taylor – Member  
Allen Devlin – Member  
Christy Kriegsman - Member

### **Office Staff**

Martha Dorsey – Executive Director  
Julie Moldenhauer – Program Tech.

### **Farm Loan Staff**

Jeff Peterson – Sr. Farm Loan officer  
Ruth Wynn – FL Program Tech.

### **Next COC Meeting**

October 23, 2012

### **Dates to Remember**

December 3, 2012 – Final day for  
County Committee ballots to be  
returned to County office, or  
postmarked

### **FSA Web Sites**

State- <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wa>  
National- <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>  
USDA- <http://www.usda.gov>

## **FSA County Committee Elections**

County Committee election ballots will be mailed out on November 5th. If for some reason you don't receive a ballot, feel free to notify the county FSA office.

We have Local Administrative Area (LAA) 4 on the ballot this year. LAA 4 encompasses the western portion of Lewis County. The LAA runs north, south, and west to the Lewis County line, and east, parallel to I-5 – approximately 5 miles out.

We have 3 candidates running this year:

- **Anne Aho**

Anne has represented LAA 4 as a Committee member for the past three years, and has previously served terms as an alternate member and an advisor. Anne has raised beef and dairy cattle, llamas, and sheep, along with hay and Christmas trees.

- **Anton (Tony) Schilter**

Tony and his wife Sunny-Jo own SunTon Farms, an organic dairy with approximately 250 milking cows. Tony has been in the dairy business since 1967 and has served in years past on both Lewis and King County FSA Committees.

- **Mike Peroni**

Mike, along with his wife Heidi, owns and operates Boistfort Valley Farm in Curtis, WA. Boistfort Valley Farm employs 25 workers and grows certified organic crops on approximately 50 acres in the Boistfort Valley. They market their produce at farmers markets, through a CSA program, and directly to local and regional retailers and restaurants. Mike has been growing certified organic vegetables, herbs, and flowers in SW Washington and marketing them directly to consumers and wholesalers since 1988. Mike has long been involved in the administration of farmers markets and is past president of both the Olympia Farmers Market and the Community Farmers Market in Chehalis.

The FSA County Committee is the most direct link between USDA farm programs and local growers. The County Committee system helps shape nation-wide programs into programs that work at the local level by making decisions related to commodity price support loans and payments, establishing allotments, yields, and marketing quotas for some crops. The Committee also makes eligibility determinations for conservation programs, as well as disaster assistance.

Ballots will be mailed to all eligible voters November 5, 2012. Ballots must be returned to the county office no later than December 3, 2012. Ballots will be counted December 6 at 9:30 a.m. **Please vote!!!**

## **2008 Farm Bill Expiration – What Does It Mean to You?**

Many programs and policies of the Farm Service Agency were authorized under the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill) through Sep. 30, 2012. As of Oct. 1, 2012, the authority or funding provided under the 2008 Farm Bill for USDA to operate a number of these programs expired, and the authority and funding for additional programs will expire in the coming months. The latest information about FSA programs common in Western Washington State is listed below. If Congress extends all, or a portion of, the current farm bill or passes a new farm bill, the information may change.

CRP/CREP – FSA will continue to pay all Conservation Reserve Program SIP, PIP, annual rental, and cost-share payments for contracts approved before October 1, 2012

DCP/ACRE - FSA is making Direct and Cyclical Payment and Average Crop Revenue Election program payments for 2012 crops. No legislation has been enacted to reauthorize or extend DCP or ACRE. FSA may still be required to maintain the number of base acres and yields on each farm and tract, based on legislation enacted at a later date.

ECP – Authorization continues for the Emergency Conservation Program.

LIP/LFP/ELAP – Authorization for the Livestock Indemnity Program, Livestock Feed Program and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program ended as of Sept. 30, 2011.

Loans - FSA is still accepting and processing direct operating, farm ownership, youth and emergency loans. FSA is also accepting Farm Storage Facility Loan applications.

MILC – The Milk Income Loss Contract Program ended with the 2008 Farm Bill on Sept. 30, 2012. FSA will make MILC payments for September production in November, if milk prices adjusted for feed prices trigger a MILC payment.

You are encouraged to still report acres and production to FSA. Maintaining current and accurate farm records benefit you for current program participation and possible future program participation.

## **2013 Reporting of Fall Seeded Crops**

All producers are reminded that the acreage reporting date for fall seeded crops has changed, beginning with the crop planted for 2013 harvest. The new acreage reporting date for fall seeded crops is December 15, 2012 and most fruit crops is January 15, 2013. This change applies to all fall seeded crops including winter wheat and perennial fruit crops. Please call for an appointment to certify your crops now.

## **Increased Guaranteed Loan Limit**

The Farm Service Agency has announced that the loan limit for the Guaranteed Loan Program will increase to \$1,302,000 on Oct. 1, 2012. The limit is adjusted annually based on data compiled by the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

The lending limit increases every year according to an inflation index. The maximum combined guaranteed and direct farm loan indebtedness will also increase to \$1,602,000.

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 their local FSA County Offices with questions about farm loans.

## **Farm Service Agency Reserves/Targets Funds for Minorities and Women**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency has a portion of its farm loan program funds specifically allocated for minority and women producers. While FSA farm loans are available to all qualified applicants, by setting aside funds specifically for minorities and women, it ensures that they will receive a portion of available funds.

Loan funds can be used to purchase farms, livestock and equipment. They may also be used to operate the farm, build or repair farm service buildings, pay for soil and water conservation practices, and in some cases refinance debts. FSA offers both direct and guaranteed loans.

For direct loans made by FSA to purchase a farm the terms may extend to 40 years with a current interest rate of 3.0% which is subject to change. Special programs are available for participation with a commercial lender. For rates and terms and down-payment requirements, please contact our office.

Direct Operating loans may be made for one to seven years with a current interest rate of 1.125%, which is subject to change. If the rate goes above 5.00%, these loans could be made at a rate as low as 5.00%, depending on a farm operation's cash flow.

The FSA guaranteed loans are made by banks or other lenders for which FSA guarantees up to 90% of any loss. The guaranteed loan program includes both operating and real estate loan programs.

For additional information concerning these programs, contact Jeff Peterson, Senior Farm Loan Officer.

## **USDA Announces Hispanic and Women Farmer and Rancher Claims Period Now Open**

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack has announced that Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who allege discrimination by the USDA in past decades can file claims between September 24, 2012 and March 25, 2013.

The process offers a voluntary alternative to litigation for each Hispanic or female farmer and rancher who can prove that USDA denied their applications for loan or loan servicing assistance for discriminatory reasons for certain time periods between 1981 and 2000.

As announced in February 2011, the voluntary claims process will make available at least \$1.33 billion for cash awards and tax relief payments, plus up to \$160 million in farm debt relief, to eligible Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers. There are no filing fees to participate in the program.

The Department will continue reaching out to potential Hispanic and female claimants, around the country to get the word out to individuals who may be eligible for this program so they have the opportunity to participate.

Call center representatives can be reached at 1-888-508-4429. Claimants must register for a claims package (by calling the number or visiting the website) and the claims package will be mailed to claimants. All those interested in learning more or receiving information about the claims process and claims packages are encouraged to attend meetings in your communities about the claims process and contact the website or claims telephone number.

Website: [www.farmerclaims.gov](http://www.farmerclaims.gov)

Phone: 1-888-508-4429

Claims Period: September 24, 2012 - March 25, 2013.

Independent legal services companies will administer the claims process and adjudicate the claims. Although there are no filing fees to participate and a lawyer is not required to participate in the claims process, persons seeking legal advice may contact a lawyer or other legal services provider.

## **IRS 1099 Changes**

Calendar year 2012 has brought changes to the way FSA reports farm program payments to the producer and to the IRS. In past years, IRS Forms 1099-G would be issued to show all program payments received from the Farm Service Agency, regardless of the amount.

Starting with calendar year 2012, producers whose total reportable payments from FSA are less than \$600 will not receive IRS Form 1099-G. Also, producers who receive payments from more than one county will only receive one Form 1099-G if the total of all payments from all counties is \$600 or more.

The same changes will apply to producers and vendors who normally receive IRS Form 1099-MISC from FSA.

**Please remember to vote for your LAA 4 County Committee Representative!!!**