



## Columbia and Walla Walla County Farm Service Agency

### October 2010

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<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wa>

**Office Hours**  
 Monday – Friday  
 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

**Office Staff**  
**Columbia**  
 Christy Bell, PT  
 Gerri Richter, PT

**Walla Walla**  
 Nicole Armijo, PT  
 Jeri Casali, PT  
 Norma Colunga, PT  
 Lee Walters, PT  
 Ray Painter, Temp PT

**Farm Loan Officer**  
 Pamela Castoldi  
[pamela.castoldi@wa.usda.gov](mailto:pamela.castoldi@wa.usda.gov)  
 509-522-6347 ext 111

### Next County Committee Meeting:

Oct 21, 2010 - Joint meeting at Walla Walla service center  
 \*meeting starts at 8:30am

**\*Special Accommodations:**  
 Persons 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.

## Fall Payments

FSA will begin making annual Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) payments as well as Direct and Counter-cyclical (DCP) and Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) direct payments in October. Just as a reminder, last year FSA began processing payments through a new system. Kansas City operation headquarters will process payments for all county offices in the nation. Payment statements will also be mailed from Kansas City. The Payment process will begin with annual CRP payments and then into DCP/ACRE direct payments.

If problems arise, Kansas City will inform the county office and we will work to fix the issue as quickly as possible. Also remember that payments will arrive via direct deposit in 3-5 business days from the time they are processed. Mailed checks can take up to 7-10 business days from processing before arrival.

2009 ACRE payments have a new payment software system that was developed specifically for this program. We are anticipating that 2009 ACRE payments will be processed the end of October or first of November.

Please understand that we are working to issue payments quickly and without issues. Your patience during this process is greatly appreciated. Thank you

## Conservation Loan Program

If the cost-share requirement on a conservation practice is preventing you from adopting the practice or a new building or equipment is required to implement an approved conservation practice, the new Conservation Loan (CL) may allow FSA to assist with the financing you need.

These loans differ from standard FLP loans because they do not require you to be unable to obtain outside credit, you do not have to be "family size" and there are no "graduation" clauses which require you to refinance the CL debt in the future.

Loan may be made up to \$300,000, with terms to 20 years (depending on type of loan). Interest rate for October 2010 is 4.375%. Security is required.

Questions on this new loan program should be directed to Pam Castoldi, Farm Loan Officer, located in the Walla Walla Service Center – 509-522-6347, ext. 111.

## COC Elections

County Committee elections will begin in November. This year the Local Administrative Area for Walla Walla County is located in the irrigated portion of the county, encompassing Lowden, Touchet, and Burbank communities. This year on the ballot is Steve Bughi. Steve is a local irrigated producer producing many crops including wheat and soybean; he also works at the Walla Walla Farmers Coop. Steve has served on the County Committee for the past 6 years.

The Local Administrative Area for Columbia County is located in the northeast portion of the county, north of Patit Creek Road and east of Smith Hollow. This year on the ballot is Valerie Turner. Valerie has served on the County Committee for the past 6 years. She is a local wheat producer with her family as well as works for the Columbia County Conservation District.

Ballots will be mailed to all eligible voters November 5, 2010. **Ballots must be returned to the county office no later than December 6, 2010.** Ballots will be counted December 9<sup>th</sup> in Dayton and December 13<sup>th</sup> in Walla Walla.

## Paper Check Transactions

Over the next year, FSA/CCC is moving toward an electronic method for processing producers' checks. This will allow FSA/CCC to process collections faster. When producers present checks, either in person or through the mail, the checks will be converted into an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). The funds will be debited from the producer's account, usually within 24 hours of receipt. Please see the U.S. Department of Treasury legal notices posted in the Service Center or visit the following U.S. Department of Treasury Internet site for detailed information:

<https://www.pccotc.gov/pccotc/pcc/usingpcc/Legal%20Notices/legalnotices.htm>

## Special Thanks

The Walla Walla and Columbia County offices would like to thank all of the county producers that donated food to the local food bank. Your donations along with contributions from the office staff, community garden, and other community members totaled 365 pounds of food. We appreciate all of the support you provide to our great communities in Walla Walla and Columbia counties

**PRESORTED STANDARD  
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
 Spokane, Washington  
 PERMIT #939**

### 2010 Disaster Designation

Farmers and ranchers in Walla Walla County may be eligible for financial relief due to crop losses. The U.S. Department of Agriculture recently designated various counties in Oregon as primary natural disaster areas due excessive rainfall last spring. The designation triggers availability of low-interest loans and direct payments under the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payment Program (SURE) for farmers and ranchers in the Oregon counties and contiguous counties.

Governor Gregoire has submitted a request for disaster designations for several Washington Counties, including both Columbia and Walla Walla. That designation has not been approved yet.

### Deadlines for Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program

The application closing date to purchase coverage for the 2011 crop year for non forage/grazing perennial crops including grapes, berries, fruit trees, asparagus and honey, under the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) is November 20, 2010

To apply for NAP coverage, the fees have changed effective for 2009 and subsequent crop years. The application fee is \$250 per crop, up to a \$750 cap per county. The maximum for multiple crops in more than one county is \$1,875 per crop year. In return, the crop is covered from catastrophic loss of production or prevented planting due to natural disaster conditions.

For all NAP covered crop, in order for producers to be eligible for NAP benefits, production loss must be attributed to adverse weather conditions. Losses must be reported to FSA within 15 days after the adverse weather event or when the loss becomes apparent. You may receive a payment if all eligibility requirements have been met and the crop suffers greater than a 50% production loss for weather related damages.

Some of the basic eligibility requirements include annual reporting of crop acreages, providing actual production evidence on a yearly basis, obtaining a loss adjustor appraisal if the damaged crop will be destroyed or left unharvested. Contact the county office if you would like more information or are interested in applying for NAP coverage.

Dates to Remember	
Oct. 11	Columbus Day Holiday
Nov. 5	County Committee ballots mailed to voters
Nov. 11	Veterans Day Holiday
Nov. 25	Thanksgiving Day Holiday
Dec. 6	County Committee ballots due

### Marketing Assistance Loans

FSA offers 9-month CCC loans, using the harvested commodity as collateral. The loans enable producers to extend their marketing season by allowing them to hold their commodity beyond harvest when prices are usually lowest. Producers must maintain beneficial interest in the commodity for the entire length of the loan. The commodity may be stored on the farm or in CCC licensed warehouses. The commodity must be provided safe storage through loan maturity. The structure must allow for safe inspection, measurement, and sampling of the commodity. FSA will disburse a commodity loan or record settlement of a forfeited farm-stored loan only after receiving acceptable documentation from the producer. Documentation must show that all in-handling charges have been provided for or paid.

Any loan that reaches maturity date and has not been settled, are subject to forfeiture. The county office will begin the forfeiture process on the date of maturity. If a loan is forfeited, sale of the commodity under loan will pay off the outstanding amount. If the sale of that commodity does not cover the outstanding balance, producers will still be required to repay the remaining balance.

### Signature Authority for Spouses

Spouses may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation programs in which either has an interest unless written notification denying a spouse this authority has been provided to the county office. A spouse may not, however, sign a Power of Attorney on behalf of the spouse, nor may they sign on behalf of the other as an authorized signatory for entities. Spouses must also have Powers of Attorneys on file to sign for claim settlements such as promissory notes.

### Assigning Program Payments

When producers request, FSA will issue all or a portion of their program payment to a third-party (assignee), such as a lender. This can save time and effort for a producer and any assignee with which the producer has an agreement.

FSA will make every attempt to pay the full amount designated by the producer on an assignment form. However, FSA will only pay the assignee to the extent the producer earns the payment. In situations where the assignee or the producer receives a portion of a payment intended to go to the other, they are responsible for working together to resolve any differences.

Selected Interest Rates for October 2010	
Farm Operating Loan - Direct	2.125%
Farm Ownership Loan	4.375%
Conservation Loan (NEW)	4.375%
Emergency Loans	3.750%