



NEWSLETTER



January 23, 2013

**Lane County
Farm Service Agency**

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Eugene OR 97402

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Hours M – F
8:00 am - 4:30 pm

Staff

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County Committee

Bart Edwards, Chair
Andy Petersen
Harry McIntire
Maryrae Thomson

Farm Loan Staff

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**FSA Announces Important
Sign-Up Dates**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds producers that the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 extended the authorization of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (the 2008 Farm Bill) for many Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) commodity, disaster, and conservation programs through 2013. FSA administers these programs.

The extended programs include, among others: the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program (DCP), the Average Crop Revenue Election Program (ACRE), and the Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC). FSA is preparing the following actions:

- FSA will begin sign-ups for DCP and ACRE for the 2013 crops on Feb. 19, 2013. The DCP sign-up period will end on Aug. 2, 2013; the ACRE sign-up period will end on June 3, 2013.
- The 2013 DCP and ACRE program provisions are unchanged from 2012, except that all eligible participants in 2013 may choose to enroll in either DCP or ACRE for the 2013 crop year. This means that eligible producers who were enrolled in ACRE in 2012 may elect to enroll in DCP in 2013 or may re-enroll in ACRE in 2013 (and vice versa).
- All dairy producers' MILC contracts are automatically extended to Sept. 30, 2013. Eligible producers therefore do not need to re-enroll in MILC. Specific details regarding certain modifications to MILC will be released soon.

FSA will provide producers with information on program requirements, updates and signups as the information becomes available. Any additional details will be posted on FSA's website.

For more information about the programs and loans administered by FSA, visit any FSA county office or www.fsa.usda.gov.



Foreign Buyers Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA within 90 days of the closing.

Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property.

County government offices, realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

The information required by the Secretary of Ag must be reported on form FSA-153. Copies of this form may be obtained from this office or on-line at:

<http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/efcommon/eFileServices/eForms/FSA153.PDF>

2013 County Committee Elections - Ballots Due 2/4/2013

Remember to vote in the County Committee elections; Local Administrative Area (LAA) One. Ballots were mailed to known eligible voters on Jan 7, 2013 for the area which includes **Junction City, North & West Eugene, and Highway 36 to Deadwood areas of Lane County.**

VOTE FOR ONLY ONE and **SIGN THE BALLOT RETURN ENVELOPE** where indicated. **UNSIGNED BALLOTS ARE NOT VALID.** If you are voting as a representative of an entity, you must have signature authority and include the **BY** or **FOR** in your signature (i.e. Doe Farms Inc by John Doe). Spouses cannot sign for each other.

Deadline to return your ballot is February 4, 2013. Ballots will be counted at 9:00 am on Feb 7, 2013 in the Lane County FSA office. Following are short biographies of this year's candidates; they have indicated that they are willing to serve if elected.

BARTLEY EDWARDS lives and farms in the River Road area of Junction City. Bart's been farming for 30+ years and produces grass seed, wheat, vegetable and flower seed crops. He's a graduate of OSU and is president of the Junction City Water Control District.

MARYRAE THOMSON lives on Ferguson Road Junction City. She returned to the ranch 20 years ago after a teaching career. Maryrae has timber, beef cattle and wine grapes. She is secretary of the Lane Small Woodlands Association and is a member of the Lane County Livestock Association.

New Microloan Program

USDA is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9450, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay).

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack unveiled a new microloan program mid-January that will expand access to credit for small farmers and ranchers and beginning and socially disadvantaged producers.

The microloan application process is simpler and requires less paperwork than traditional operating loans. Additionally, the requirement for managerial experience and loan security has been modified to ensure that small family operations and beginning farmers and ranchers can obtain the credit needed to start and continue an agricultural operation. 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, delivery vehicles, and annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents, marketing, and distribution expenses. As financing needs increase, applicants can apply for an operating loan up to the maximum amount of \$300,000 or obtain financing from a commercial lender under FSA's Guaranteed Loan Program.

Small farmers often rely on credit cards or personal loans, which carry high interest rates and have less flexible payment schedules, to finance their operations. The microloan program will expand access to credit and provide a simple and flexible loan process for small operators.

The current interest rate for Microloans is 1.25 percent.

In addition to microloans, FSA offers several farm loan programs that provide funding to purchase land, livestock, equipment, feed, seed, and supplies, or can be used to construct buildings or make farm improvements.

Producers interested in applying for a microloan or other farm loan programs should contact the Farm Loan Staff located in the Tangent USDA Service Center, 541.967.5925. Farm Loan Manager is Donna Sprenkle at X105, donna.sprenkle@or.usda.gov.

Hispanic and Women Farmer and Rancher Claims Period

Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who allege discrimination by the USDA in past decades can file claims until 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.

USDA will continue reaching out to potential Hispanic and female claimants, around the country to inform those who may be eligible for this program.

Website: www.farmerclaims.gov

Phone: 1-888-508-4429

Deadline for Claims: March 25, 2013

Claimants can obtain a claims package in the mail by calling 1-888-509-4429 or by visiting the website www.farmerclaims.gov.

CELEBRATING IN FEBRUARY BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Dates to Remember	
Feb 4	Ballots due in Office
Feb 7	County Committee Meeting & Ballot Count
Feb 18	Presidents Day, Office Closed
Feb 19	DCP and ACRE sign-up period begins
Mar 25	Hispanic and Women Farmer and Rancher Claims Period ends.
June 7	SURE applications due