



Lane County Oregon FSA Updates - February 26, 2013

Lane County OR Farm Service Agency

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Hours M – F
8:00 am - 4:30 pm

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County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to **BART EDWARDS** of Junction City. Bart was elected to represent farmers from the Junction City, North & West Eugene, & Highway 36 to NW of Deadwood areas of Lane County on the County Committee (COC). **MARYRAE THOMSON**, also of Junction City, was elected as the alternate to the COC in LAA 1. Maryrae also serves as the COC Advisor.

FSA appreciates all of the voters taking the time to complete the election ballot. The committee system works only because of your participation.

The committee held their organizational meeting in February and determined these positions: Andy Petersen, Chairperson; Harry McIntire, Vice-chairperson; Bart Edwards, member; Maryrae Thomson, Advisor.

DCP and ACRE Sign-up

FSA began 2013 sign-ups for DCP and ACRE on 2/19/2013. The Direct & Counter-Cyclical Payment (DCP) sign-up period will end 8/2/2013; and the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) sign-up period ends 6/3/2013.

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 2013. 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. Likewise, producers who were enrolled in DCP may opt for ACRE enrollment.

[Read more about DCP and ACRE](#) or contact us for more information or to schedule an appointment to enroll.

Ag Census Deadline Extended

For those who missed the February 4 deadline, USDA reminds producers that their farm is important and needs to be counted. As a result, Census forms are still being accepted.

Farmers and ranchers can return their forms by mail or online by visiting a secure website, www.agcensus.usda.gov. Federal law requires all agricultural producers to participate in the Census and requires NASS to keep all individual information confidential. For more information about the Census, including helpful tips on completing your Census form, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov or call 1-888-4AG-STAT (1-888-424-7828).

Farming Operation Changes

Producers who have bought or sold land, or added or dropped rented land from their operation must report those changes to the FSA office as soon as possible. A copy of the deed or recorded land contract for purchased property is needed to maintain accurate records with FSA. Failure to report changes can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. While making record updates, be sure to update signature authorizations.

Making record changes now will save time in the Spring. Farm and Entity updates are required before program enrollment.

Price Support For Producers Of Wool

The Loan Deficiency Payment (LDP) program is in place to financially support producers when market prices fall below a set loan rate. The difference between the loan rate and the actual market price equals a payment rate available to producers if they forgo a loan on the commodity. If you will be shearing and selling wool or selling unshorn lambs for immediate slaughter, you may be eligible for a cash payment based on the pounds of wool or pelt.

Producers must first have on file with our office page one of Form **CCC-633 EZ, "LOAN DEFICIENCY PAYMENT (LDP) AGREEMENT AND REQUEST"**. This allows producers to enter into an agreement with CCC to indicate their intention to receive LDP benefits before loss of Beneficial Interest (BI) for all eligible commodities for a specific crop year.

2013 loan rate for ungraded wool is \$0.40; there currently is not an LDP payment rate.

You may call or email our office for the form, or access here: <http://fsaintranet.sc.egov.usda.gov/dam/ffasforms/currentforms.asp>

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

The Noninsured Crop Assistance Program (NAP) is a federally funded program that helps producers reduce their risk when growing food and fiber crops, specialty crops and crops for livestock feed. These benefits are only available for crops for which the catastrophic level of crop insurance is not available in the county. Application for coverage must be filed by the applicable crop's application closing date.

Production records and applications for payment for all crops must be reported to FSA no later than the acreage reporting date for the crop for the following year. FSA requires that any production reported in a loss year be verifiable according to Agency specifications. **NAP Losses must be reported within 15 days of loss or when the loss becomes apparent.**

45th General Sign-up for the Conservation Reserve Program Announced

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will conduct a four-week general sign-up for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), beginning May 20 and ending on June 14. CRP has a 27-year legacy of protecting the nation's natural resources through voluntary participation, while providing significant economic and environmental benefits to rural communities across the United States.

Currently, about 27 million acres are enrolled in CRP. Producers that are accepted in the sign-up can receive cost-share assistance to plant long-term, resource-conserving covers and receive an annual rental payment for the length of the contract (10-15 years).

Contracts on 3.3 million acres of CRP are set to expire on Sept. 30, 2013. Producers with expiring contracts or producers with environmentally sensitive land are encouraged to evaluate their options under CRP.

Additional sign-ups for continuous CRP programs such as Highly Erodible Land Initiative and Initiative to Restore Grasslands, Wetlands and Wildlife will be announced in spring 2013.

For more information on CRP and other FSA programs, visit a local FSA service center or www.fsa.usda.gov.

2013 Crop Year Acreage Reporting Deadlines

Call our office to make an appointment once your spring crops have been planted. Deadlines to report:

May 15

Cabbage fresh (planted 3/12-4/20)

July 15

Spring Alfalfa Seed, Spring Barley, Cabbage (planted 4/21-6/10), Spring Canola, Corn, Dry Beans, Dry Peas, Green Peas, Spring Mint, Mustard, Oats, Onions (planted 2/15-5/15), Potatoes, Processing Beans, Sugar Beets, Sweet Corn, Spring Wheat, Annual Grass Seed, Perennial Grass Seed or Sod, CRP land, and ALL OTHER CROPS

August 15

Cabbage (planted 6/11-8/10)

Hispanic and Women Claims of Discrimination

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.

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. There are no filing fees to participate in the program. Claimants can obtain a claims package in through the toll-free number or by visiting the website below.

Website: www.farmerclaims.gov

Phone: 1-888-508-4429

Deadline for Claims: March 25, 2013

Payment Limitations (PL)

All payment eligibility and payment limitation provisions, including AGI limitations, are extended for the 2013 crop year, program year, and fiscal year.

All rules and requirements effective for 2012 program payments and benefits are applicable to eligible recipients of 2013 program payment and benefits. This includes the requirements of actively engaged in farming, cash-rent tenant, substantive change, minor child, and spousal provisions. Payments will continue to be limited by direct attribution to person and legal entity.

Additional information on payment limitations is available at FSA county offices or online at: www.fsa.usda.gov

ANNUAL REMINDERS

Actively Engaged

To be eligible for payments and benefits under specified programs, all program participants, either individuals or legal entities, must provide significant contributions to the farming operation to be considered as "actively engaged in farming." Contributions can consist of capital, land, and/or equipment, as well as active personal labor and/or active personal management. The management contribution must be critical to the profitability of the farming operation and the contributions must be at risk.

Each partner, stockholder or member with an ownership interest must contribute active personal labor and/or active personal management to the farming operation on a regular basis. The contribution must be identifiable and documentable; as well as separate and distinct from the contributions made by any other partner, stockholder or member. If any partner, stockholder or member with an ownership interest fails to meet this requirement, program payments will be reduced by the corresponding share held by that partner, stockholder or member. There is an exception allowed for legal entities, such as corporations, if total direct payments received both directly and indirectly, by the legal entity and its members do not exceed \$40,000.

Controlled Substance

Any person convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium poppies and other drug producing plants.

Power of Attorney

For those who find it difficult to visit the county office because of work schedules, distance, health, etc., FSA has a power of attorney form available that allows producers to designate another person to conduct business at the office. If interested, contact our office or any Farm Service Agency office for more information.

Appeal Process

After an FSA official makes a decision on a request for USDA services or application, the producer will be sent a letter informing him/her of the decision and options that can be pursued. Generally, program participants have three choices — an informal review with the original agency decision-maker, an opportunity for mediation and finally an appeal to the next level of authority within the agency. County office staff has further details.

FSA Signature Policy

Husbands and wives may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation programs in which either has an interest. This option is automatically available unless a written request for exclusion is made to the county office staff by either spouse.

There are exceptions to the rule. Spouses may not sign on behalf of each other for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations or other similar entities.

Individual signatures are also required on certain Farm Loan Program and Farm Storage Facility Loan documents.

For more clarification on spousal signature authority, contact your local FSA office.

Farm Loan Staff – Located in Tangent USDA Service Center

31978 N Lake Creek Rd
Tangent OR 97389

541.967.5925 X2 Phone

541.928.9345 Fax

Farm Loan Manager Donna Sprenkle, X105 Donna.sprenkle@or.usda.gov

Farm Loan Technician Patty Curtis, X106 Patty.curtis@or.usda.gov

Guaranteed Loan Program

The FSA loan limit for the Guaranteed Loan Program has increased to \$1,302,000. 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 has increased 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.

Microloan Program

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

The program will operate similar to the Operating Loan program but will include reduced requirements for managerial experience and loan security, as well as reduced paperwork. The microloan program can be used for such expenses as annual crop inputs, marketing and distribution expenses, purchase of livestock and equipment, and minor farm improvements such as wells and coolers. Eligible applicants may obtain a microloan for up to \$35,000. The repayment term may vary and will not exceed seven years. Annual operating loans are typically repaid within 12-18 months of when the loan is closed. The interest rate is the same as the regular Operating Loan (currently 1.25%).

Land Contract (LC) Guarantees

The Land Contract (LC) Guarantee Program is a valuable tool to transfer farm real estate to the next generation of farmers and ranchers. Guarantees will be offered to the owner of a farm who wishes to sell real estate through a land contract to a beginning or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher. The guarantee reduces the financial risk to the seller.

FSA offers two types of guarantees:

- Prompt Payment Guarantee - A guarantee up to the amount of three amortized annual installments plus the cost of any related real estate taxes and insurance.
- Standard Guarantee - A guarantee of 90 percent of the outstanding principal balance under the land contract.

The guarantee period is 10 years and the contract payments must be amortized for a minimum of 20 years. The purchase price of the farm cannot exceed the lesser of \$500,000 or the market value of the property.

For additional information, go to: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/lc_guarantee_program.pdf

Special Accommodations

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should notify the county FSA office staff in person or by phone. This service is provided for office visits and any special event sponsored by FSA.

Celebrating in MARCH - Women's History Month

Dates to Remember

Ongoing	DCP and ACRE sign-up
Mar 15	NAP spring crop deadline to purchase
Mar 25	Deadline to file Hispanic and/or Women's Discrimination Claim
May 20	General CRP Sign up Begins
May 27	Office Closed, Memorial Day
June 3	ACRE enrollment deadline
June 7	2011 SURE deadline for 2011 losses
June 14	General CRP Sign up ends
July 4	Office Closed, Independence Day
July 15	Acreage Reporting Deadline for CRP and spring crops
July 15	Production Reporting Deadline for NAP covered crops
Aug 2	DCP Enrollment Deadline

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).