



NEWSLETTER



March
2012

Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)

General Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Sign-up 43

**Linn-Benton-Lincoln
County
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Hours
Monday - Friday
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Due to recent weather conditions many South Valley producers could be experiencing adverse weather conditions. Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) was established to rehabilitate farmlands and conservation facilities damaged by, wind and water erosion, floods and other natural disasters.

The following list is the practices available under ECP:

- Removing debris from farmland
- Grading, shaping, re-leveling or similar measures
- Restoring permanent fences
- Restoring conservation structures and other installations
- Emergency wind erosion control measures
- Drought emergency measures
- Other emergency conservation measures
- Field windbreaks and farmstead shelterbelts emergency measures

The Emergency Conservation Program does not have money readily available. Each county has to go through an approval process and then receive funding. Attached is the ECP fact sheet giving further details about the program. If you believe you may be eligible for ECP assistance please document your situation with photos and general notes. The Linn-Benton-Lincoln County Office is currently taking request for ECP assistance. If you have any questions please call Heather Yocom, CED at 541-967-5925 ext 107.

USDA announced that the next general CRP sign-up will be held from March 12, 2012, through April 6, 2012. Land that is not currently enrolled in CRP may be offered for enrollment during CRP sign-up 43. In addition, CRP participants with contracts expiring on September 30, 2012, may submit offers. Accepted contracts for CRP sign-up 43 will begin on October 1, 2012.

CRP is a voluntary program that helps agricultural producers use environmentally sensitive land for conservation benefits. Producers enrolled in CRP plant long-term, resource conserving covers to control soil erosion, improve water and air quality and develop wildlife habitat. In return, FSA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. Contract duration is between 10 to 15 years.

FSA administers CRP, while other USDA agencies and partners provide technical support. More information on CRP is available online at www.fsa.usda.gov. Or, you can contact your local FSA office for detailed information on program eligibility requirements and/or submitting CRP offers.



**NOTICE
TO HISPANIC
AND/OR
WOMEN
FARMERS OR
RANCHERS
COMPENSATION
FOR CLAIMS OF
DISCRIMINATION**

If you believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) improperly denied farm loan benefits to you between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic, or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation.

To register your name to receive a claims packet, call the Farmer and Rancher Call Center at 1-888-508-4429 or visit: www.farmerclaims.gov

The claims package will have detailed information about the eligibility and claims process.



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DCP/ACRE Sign-up

2012 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) enrollment opened on Jan. 23, 2012 and closes on June 1, 2012. Producers are reminded that under the 2008 Food, Conservation, and Energy Act, 2012 advanced DCP payments are not available. Final Payments shall be made starting in October 2012. Producers are encouraged to call now for an appointment at the local FSA office.

Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE)

The sign-up for 2010 SURE losses continues through **June 1, 2012**. The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses of crops due to natural disasters that incurred in the crop year 2010. Please contact your local FSA office for additional program eligibility or SURE application information.

Actively Engaged

USDA has amended the rules that govern the requirements to be 'actively engaged' in farming. These rules apply to eligibility for payments under the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) or Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) program administered by FSA.

Normally the stockholder or a member of a legal entity **must** make contributions of active personal labor and/or active personal management for the farming operation. The contributions are to be performed on regular basis, must be identifiable, and separate from the contributions of others.

The exception to this rule for a stockholder or member of a legal entity only occurs when both of the following apply:

- At least half of the interest in the legal entity is held by stockholders or members who are providing active personal labor or active personal management; and
- The total direct payments received by the legal entity and each of the members can't exceed \$40,000.

Farm Loan Programs

The Farm Service Agency is committed to providing family farmers with loans to meet their farm credit needs. If you are having trouble getting the credit you need for your farm, or regularly borrow from FSA, direct and guaranteed loans are currently available.

Ask your lender about an FSA loan guarantee if you've had a setback and your lender is reluctant to extend or renew your loan.

Farm ownership loans or farm operating loans may be obtained as direct loans for a maximum of up to \$300,000. Guaranteed loans have a maximum limit of \$1,214,000. The one-time loan origination fee charged on

FSA guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans has increased from 1 percent to 1.5 percent of the guaranteed portion of the loan, for loans obligated after October 1, 2011. To find out more about FSA loan programs, contact the county office staff.

Rural Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency makes loans to rural youth to establish and operate income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5,000.



Beginning and Limited Resource Farmers

FSA assists beginning farmers and or members of socially disadvantaged groups to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more that 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 % of the county's median size.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit www.fsa.usda.gov

Loans for the Socially Disadvantaged

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operating type loans and/or purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided priority funding for members of Socially Disadvantaged groups.

A socially disadvantaged applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of a group.

FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

Spousal Signatures

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.

An exception 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, feel free to contact your local FSA office.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

The noninsured crop disaster 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. 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.*

March 15 is the upcoming deadline for most annual crops. Contact your FSA County Office for deadlines and more information.

Land Contract (LC) Guarantee Program

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) makes loans through the Land Contract (LC) Guarantee Program. The LC Guaranteed Loans will be offered to the owner of a farm who wishes to sell real estate through a land contract to a beginning farmer or a farmer who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group.

A land contract is an installment contract between a buyer and a seller for the sale of real property, in which complete ownership of the property is not transferred until all payments under the contract have been made.

Guarantees can be used for financing the purchase of a farm with a purchase price up to \$500,000 on a new land contract. FSA offers two types of guarantees under this program.

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

To find out if you qualify contact your local FSA office today or see additional information, including a complete list of borrower and seller eligibility criteria and application materials through the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov.

Federal Crop Insurance Program Adjusted Gross Revenue Lite March 15 is the final date to obtain 2012 AGR-Lite for New Producers

The Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR & AGR-Lite) program provides whole-farm coverage against natural perils and price fluctuation. The AGR program uses a producer's 5-year historical farm average revenue as reported on the IRS tax return

(Schedule F or equivalent forms) and an annual farm report as a base to provide a level of guaranteed revenue for the 2012 insurance period. The policy covers most commodities produced in the Willamette Valley, including livestock.

Insurance is provided against revenue loss due to any unavoidable natural occurrences during the current insurance year or due to market fluctuations that cause a loss of revenue during the current insurance year. AGR guarantees income to protect savings, investments and future earnings and the premium is subsidized for affordability. This is a self-help USDA program, with coverage and cost determined by the uniqueness of your farm's commodities being raised, historical income and intended revenue.

Call today for more information and see how AGR or AGR-Lite can work for you. You can contact Mary Lou Casey, Risk Management Agency at (509) 228-6325 or by e-mail at mary.lou.casey@rma.usda.gov. You can also visit your local crop insurance agent for additional details on AGR or AGR-

Selected Interest Rates for February 2012

90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating - Direct	1.575%
Farm Ownership - Direct	3.375%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.500%
Emergency	3.750%

Lite.

Dates to Remember

Jan. 23	2012 DCP Enrollment began
Month of March	Women's History Month
March – August	Native American Powwows
Mar. 15	NAP deadline for most spring planted crops
April 6	CRP Sign-up 43 Offer Deadline
June 1	2012 DCP Enrollment ends
June 1	2010 SURE Sign up ends

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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 20250-9410, 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). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.