

F S A F a r m N e w s

Skagit-Island-San Juan County Farm Service Agency

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Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

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Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) 2008 Signup Announced

Signup has begun for the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments program (SURE) for 2008. This program was authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill, passed in May of 2008.

Eligible Farms: A farm is eligible when either:

- A portion of the farm is located in a county covered by a qualifying natural disaster declaration (USDA Secretarial Declarations only) or a county that is adjacent to a county with that designation; OR,
- The actual production is less than 50% of the normal production.

Important note: A "farm" refers to all crop acreage in all counties that a producer planted or intended to be planted for harvest for normal commercial sale or farm livestock feeding.

Example: Skagit County is contiguous to a county which had a 2008 Secretarial Disaster Declaration (Chelan County), thus, Skagit County producers are eligible to apply for SURE on that basis provided they experienced at least a 10 percent loss on a crop due to weather related conditions. Island and San Juan Counties however, were not declared disaster counties, nor are they contiguous. Therefore, producers in Island and San Juan Counties (who did not also farm in Skagit or another eligible county) are only eligible to apply on an individual basis if the farm experienced at least a 50% loss in production on the farm, compared to expected revenue for the farm.

Eligible Producers:

Risk Management Purchase Requirements: For producers to be eligible for 2008 SURE, they must have obtained a policy or plan of insurance for all crops through either the Federal Crop Insurance Act or FSA's Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). There are limited exceptions to this rule, and SURE does not require coverage for forage crops intended for grazing. **Note:** Eligible farmers and ranchers who meet the definition of "Socially

Disadvantaged", "Limited Resource", or "Beginning Farmer or Rancher" do not have to meet this requirement.

Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) Criteria

For the **2008** crop year, producers are not eligible if their average AGI is \$2.5 million or greater, unless 75% or more of their AGI is from agriculture. For **2009 and subsequent crop years**, producers or legal entities whose average nonfarm income exceeds \$500,000 are not eligible.

10 Percent Production Loss

In an eligible county (Skagit, as explained in the example above) producers must suffer a 10 percent production loss to at least one crop of economic significance on their farm in order to be eligible for SURE. For a loss to be a qualifying loss, it must be caused by a natural disaster. A crop of economic significance is one that contributes at least 5 percent of the expected revenue for a farm.

Payment Limitations

A limit of \$100,000 applies to the combination of payments from SURE and the livestock disaster programs – Livestock Forage Program (LFP), Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), and Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-raised Fish (ELAP). For 2008 SURE, payments are limited per "person" according to payment limitation rules in effect for 2008.

Signup Period

Signup for SURE has begun, and a signup ending date has not been announced. Watch for future information on the www.fsa.usda.gov website. Sign up for this program in your county FSA office. If you farm in multiple counties, visits to each county FSA office MAY be necessary to complete your application.

Needed for Signup:

- Acreage and production records, if not already provided for crop insurance purposes or FSA.
- Information to establish your farm (deeds, leases) if not already provided to FSA
- Other information requested from FSA

If you wish to sign up for this program, please call our office for more information and to make an appointment.

County Committee Election Results

Ballots have been counted for the County Committee Election which was held in December. Mark Wesen was re-elected to serve a 3-year term in Local Administrative Area 1, in Northwest Skagit County. M.R. Buffum was re-elected to serve a 3-year term in Local Administrative Area 4, which encompasses all of San Juan County. We greatly appreciate those who took the time to complete and return their ballots and welcome the re-elected committee members. Nominations for the Committee election occur in the fall, so if you or anyone you know is interested and your area is coming up for election, be sure to contact our office for information about the nominating process.

Washington FSA State Committee Members Appointed

Five Washington farmers have begun their duties as FSA state committee members. The State Committee members were appointed by the Presidential Administration and will oversee the activities of the agency to include carrying out the state agricultural conservation programs, resolving appeals from the agriculture community and helping to keep producers informed about FSA programs. The individuals appointed to serve on this committee include:

Lennie Davis (Chairperson) is from Coulee City, and is a partner in Tom Davis Farms Joint Venture. She previously served on the state committee during the Clinton Administration.

Larry A. DeHaan from Lynden, Wash., has worked in the dairy business for over thirty years. From 1989 to 1994, he served on his local FSA county committee. DeHaan has also won numerous awards, including the Whatcom Conservation Farmer of the Year in 1999.

Steve Hair from Walla Walla, is a former member and chair of the Walla Walla FSA County Committee. He also served as President of the Walla Walla Association of Wheat Growers.

Jesus Limon from East Wenatchee, operates apple orchards for Limon and Sons Orchard Company. He also worked for the Auvil Fruit Company in Orondo, WA, starting in 1982 until 1995 and has been an advisor for the FSA Chelan County Committee.

Don Olmstead Jr. from Grandview, is president of Olmstead Orchards. He was a member of the Grandview Planning Commission for nearly 20 years. He has also served on the Washington State Fruit Commission since the early 1980s.

2010 Direct and Counter-Cyclical (DCP) Signup

Signup has begun for the 2010 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP). Producers who participated last year have received their DCP contracts in the mail for signature. If, as you review these documents, you find that there have been any ownership changes or other farm changes, please let us know as soon as possible. Otherwise, please sign and return the DCP contracts, obtain owner's signatures or complete lease certifications as instructed in your letter. If you did not receive a 2010 DCP contract and believe you should have, please give us a call.

Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP)

The Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) was authorized by Title IX of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, as amended by Title IX of the Food, Conservation, and Energy of 2008 Act (2008 Farm Bill). BCAP assists agricultural and forest land owners and operators with matching payments for the amount paid for the collection, harvest, storage and transportation (CHST) of eligible material by a qualified Biomass Conversion Facility (BCF).

The CHST Matching Payment Program will provide eligible material owners matching payments for the sale and delivery of eligible material to a CHST-qualified BCF. These payments will be available to eligible material owners at the rate of \$1 for each \$1 per dry ton paid by the CHST-qualified BCF to the eligible material owners, limited to a maximum of \$45 per dry ton and limited to a 2-year payment duration. In Skagit County, currently there is one eligible facility for delivery; however there are other facilities in nearby Counties as well. Material owners should apply for this program in the FSA County office where their business is located, regardless of which County the materials are delivered to. You **MUST** submit a copy of your contract with the Biomass Conversion Facility, and apply at the FSA office prior to beginning participation in this program. There are more requirements and details, so if you are interested in this program, please call our office and request information. Another good source of information is the BCAP website, which is located at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/bcap> or it can be reached via the Energy Programs link from our FSA home page, at www.fsa.usda.gov.

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