

NEWS RELEASE

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USDA Invests in Crop Insurance Education Awarding Nearly \$700,000 throughout the Pacific Northwest

SPOKANE, Wash., December 5, 2012 ---- The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Risk Management Agency (RMA) Spokane Regional Office today announces \$651,954 in partnership agreement awards that will support crop insurance education and outreach to ensure that small and underserved producers get the information they need to effectively manage their risk and remain productive.

RMA is committed to providing farmers and ranchers in the region the tools and information to help ensure they can effectively manage their agriculture risks from hardships and setbacks due to extreme weather conditions and market volatility." Dave Paul, Director of RMA's Spokane Regional Office stated, "We are very excited about the diversity of these partnership agreements and believe, through these programs, many Pacific Northwest farmers and ranchers will be better equipped to address the many risk management related challenges they face on their farms and ranches."

RMA accepted proposals from public and private entities, including colleges and universities; Federal, State, and local agencies; non-profit and for-profit organizations; and others. All cooperative agreements were competitive and awarded based on merit. The following awardees represent approved projects in the RMA Spokane Regional Office area only (representing Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington).

Education and Outreach Program – \$697,205

RightRisk LLC "*Crop Insurance and Risk Management Training, New, Socially Disadvantaged, Women, Transitional, and other Ag Producers of Livestock, Forage, Barley, and Specialty Crops.*" Promote sustained profitability for agricultural producers through effective risk management decision making.

Washington State Department of Agriculture "*Serving Washington state with bi-lingual video and radio resources on production, marketing and human risk management strategies for specialty crop producers, new/beginning, women and Hispanic producers.*" Develop and extend innovative tools for outreach to currently underserved farmers.

Seattle Tilth Association "*Seattle Tilth Farm Works: Teaching Risk Management through Good Farming Practices to New, Beginning, and Limited Resource Small Acreage Producers of Specialty Crops.*" Assist participants in understanding and managing production, marketing, financial, human and risk through education workshops.

Washington State University "*Building Business Planning, Financial Management and Marketing Skills among Small, Limited Resource, Beginning, Women, and Immigrant Farmers.*" Offer management solutions in a community-based, multilingual, and participatory learning format.

RightRisk LLC ***“Building to the Future: Helping Alaska Specialty Crop, New, Women and Other Farmers Understand and Prepare to Implement Crop Insurance and Other Risk Management Strategies.”*** Provide crop insurance education and risk management training to 20-30 Alaskan farmers.

Organic Seed Alliance ***“Specialty Crop. Climate Risk Management Publication and Training for Organic and Specialty Vegetable Seed Producers – including Hispanic Producers.”*** Train vegetable seed producers to manage climate-related risk through publication and trainings.

Prune Bargaining Association ***“Promoting Financial Tools and Planning among Oregon Specialty Crop Producers.”*** Provide risk management education, information, and consultation to specialty crop producers focusing on financial tool planning.

Adelante Mujeres ***“Emerging Farmers Training Project for New, Beginning, and Hispanic Farmers in Willamette Valley, OR.”*** Provide outreach, training and assistance on risk management strategies to immigrant and emerging farmers in the upper Willamette Valley and Portland, OR metropolitan area stressing Special Emphasis Topics of production, marketing, and finance.

Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticide ***“AGR-Lite, Marketing Strategies, and Financial Tools for Specialty Crop Producers in Idaho and Oregon.”*** Provide training tools to assist specialty crop producers in managing their production, marketing, financial and human risk associated with accessing these new markets.

Northwest Natural Resource Group ***“Forest Management and Marketing Strategies for Small Acreage Forest Producers in San Juan County.”*** Mitigate production and marketing risk for small forest producers in the San Juan Islands of Washington State through educational workshops and training sessions.

Federal Crop Insurance and Risk Management Education and Outreach programs together provide a safety net to ensure that farmers and ranchers will survive the perils of nature and the marketplace and continue in business, thus ensuring the food supply. RMA administers these partnership projects as well as the Federal crop insurance program, with funding and authority from the Federal Crop Insurance Act. For more information about these and other agreements, please see the RMA web site at: <http://www.rma.usda.gov/aboutrma/agreements/>

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