



## *Mexican Officials Conduct Exporting Workshop*



Mexican Officials, Coop members and Center staff conclude the four-hour training

President Fox kept to his word! Consul Jorge Madrazo facilitated the official visit of a Mexican delegation to Yakima on Sept 29. The purpose was to conduct an apple exporting workshop on the “how to’s” of being certified to export their

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apples and the application process. Lics. Pedro de Leon, Javier Mendoza and Raul Fernandez were accompanied by Gabriela Michan from the Consulate office. Coop members attending were Sergio Marquez, Lauriano Barajas and Evaristo Silva. Part of the discussion centered on what is defined as “dumping” by the Mexican courts. Much work is needed and the Center staff will work with the coops in preparing all the documentation as outlined by the Mexican officials.

## *Center Staff Attend Partners Meeting in D.C.*

Luz Bazan Gutierrez , RCDR President and Eric Alegria, Center Manager were part of a group of 135 persons from throughout the US that attended the Third Annual USDA Partners Meeting held from August 2 –4 in DC. The study session was organized by the USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, with the purpose of engaging farmers, representatives of community based organizations and agency personnel in dialogue concerning issues faced by traditionally underserved farmers. The 2007 Farm Bill, next year’s Agriculture Census and how they relate to “the future and status of small farms” were highlighted. Center officials were present to speak on behalf of Latino farmers. Legislation, governmental agency policies and programs will be affected by the dialogue brought about as a result of the meeting.



Luz Bazan Gutierrez, Eric Alegria were delighted to meet Maria Moreira, recently appointed by Sec Johann to the Secretary’s Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers.

**Center for Latino Farmers  
Yakima, WA**



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## Spanish Workshops in 2006

| Workshop/Training          | Date (s)                        | Time           | Location   |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|--|
| Crop Insurance             | October 3                       | 6:00pm-8:30pm  | RCDR- 22 S. 3rd Ave. Yakima                              |
| Computer Basics            | October 9-12 &<br>October 16-19 | 6:00pm-8:30pm  | Radio KDNA- 121 Sunnyside Ave. Granger                   |
| FSA Borrower Training      | November 6-9                    | 5:00pm-9:00pm  | RCDR- 22 S. 3rd Ave. Yakima                              |
| Pesticide Recertification  | November 20                     | 8:30am-12:30pm | Washington State Department of Agriculture in Yakima     |
| Farm Real Estate           | November 29                     | 6:00pm-8:30pm  | El Conquistador Restaurant- 612 E. Edison Ave. Sunnyside |
| Rural Development Programs | December 6                      | 6:00pm-8:30pm  | RCDR- 22 S. 3rd Ave. Yakima                              |

|                     |  |                |                      |
|---------------------|--|----------------|----------------------|
| *Monthly Radio Show | October 19<br>November 16<br>December 21 | 4:00 - 5:00 pm | Radio KDNA - FM 91.9 |
|---------------------|--|----------------|----------------------|

**Space is limited, to register call (509) 453-3157 or (509) 453-5133**

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## *Local Farmers Qualify for Disaster Relief*

The United States Department of Agriculture has designated 12 counties in Washington State as natural disaster areas following severe thunderstorms and hail that damaged crops earlier this year. The decision makes farmers in Yakima, Okanogan, Chelan, Grant, Douglas and Franklin counties eligible for low-interest emergency loans from the federal government.

Growers of both fruit trees and field crops reported losses

during a severe storm July 4-6. Heavy rain, high winds, hail and lightning, followed in some areas by excessive heat, hurt crops. Midway through the summer, growers in north-central Washington alone estimated weather-related losses at \$90 million (Yakima Herald Republic, September 7th).

For more information or to apply for emergency loans call USDA's Farm Service Agency at 454-5746.

## *Testimony to Support Beginning Farmers*

On July 11-12<sup>th</sup> a two-day meeting was held in Washington D.C. to discuss United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) policies and their effect on beginning farmers and ranchers. Specifically, the committee held the public hearing to discuss the farm credit system lending to beginning farmers, bank lending to beginning farmers and opportunities for beginning farmers with USDA's Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service (CSREES).

The Center submitted testimony on behalf of Latino Farmers. The testimony recommended that the USDA increase the direct farm ownership limit from \$200,000 to \$400,000, increase the distribution of bilingual information, increase partnerships between community based organizations and land grant colleges and increase grant funding periods from one-year to five-year terms.

## *FSA Workshop Held*

Farmers learned the how to's of USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) Loan Process & Obligation during a workshop on September 27<sup>th</sup> at USDA's Yakima office. Crispin Garza, FSA Loan Specialist instructed the very productive training that was attended by ten area farmers. The attendees learned what FSA loans could be used for

and how to obtain them. The responsibilities and requirements that accompany FSA loans were also covered.

For more information regarding the workshop or FSA loans contact Blanca Alvitres, Outreach Financial Specialist at 509-453-3157.

## *FSA Loans Continue to Increase*

The Center continues to take many requests for technical assistance in helping fill out and process FSA applications. As of September 30 it shows that:

- 10 different farmers applied for 25 loans
- 9 different farmers were approved for loans (13 Operating loans & 2 Farm Ownership loans) for 18 different loans for a total of \$943,423.

- 4 loans were denied

If you are interested in obtaining a loan please call the Center to obtain the list of information needed for an appointment. No appointments can be made without the required information. Now is the best time to start your application for the 2007 crop year. Call 453-3157.



## *Resources for Farmers!*

The Center was approved to continue its efforts in supporting Latino farmers. A small proposal entitled “The New Generation of Farm Owners—Mexican Immigrants” was submitted in June to the United States Department of Agriculture Risk Management Agency. The proposals’ objectives are to provide a risk management promotional

program, increase risk management outreach, provide trainings and increase participation in the two existing marketing cooperatives. The grant is effective from October 1, 2006 until September 30, 2007. The Center will expand its outreach efforts as a result of the grant by hiring an Outreach Risk Specialist in October.



### *RMA Training for Center Staff*

On September 19-20 a Risk Management Agency (RMA) Training Seminar was held in San Antonio, Texas. The meeting was attended by RMA officials and various land grant colleges and community based organizations who are the 2006-2007 Commodity Partnership Grant recipients. Eric Alegria, Center Manager attended the two-day meeting to learn about the RMA’s Education division (RME). Issues related to the obligation of grantees were discussed such as the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 and financial issues related to RMA grants.

Alegria indicated that he is “happy and delighted to reinforce a partnership between the Center and RME.” He went on to say that he “hoped this would be just the ” of the relationship between the two.

### *HEB Grocery Store Reps. Visit Center*

After two years of discussion with Center staff, HEB, a large grocery store chain from Texas, sent representatives to express interest in working with the Center. HEB representatives made it clear that they are interested in working with the Center & cooperatives of Latino farmers, not individual farmers, to establish a long term sustainable relationship that will benefit all parties involved. HEB representatives identified an inspection of the packing warehouse as the next step in the process towards the purchasing of Coop products.

Eric Alegria, Center Manager said that he felt that “this could be the marketing break we have been looking for to stimulate the increased development of cooperatives.”

## *NRCS Programs Workshop*



The Center facilitated a 2 1/2 hour USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) workshop on Sep-

tember 20<sup>th</sup> at NRCS’ office in Zillah. Sergio Paredes, NRCS instructed a workshop that was attended by nine area farmers. The attendees learned about NRCS programs that assist farmers in their transition to newer irrigation systems, environmentally friendly pesticide uses and effective pest management practices.

For more information regarding the workshop or NRCS programs contact Oscar Tobias of NRCS Zillah Office at 509-829-3003.