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USDA Invests in Crop Insurance Education throughout the Pacific Northwest and Alaska

SPOKANE, Wash., October 28, 2013 — The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Risk Management Agency (RMA) Spokane Regional Office today announces \$620,499 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 them 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 said. "We are very excited about the diversity of these partnership agreements. Through these projects, many Pacific Northwest and Alaska farmers and ranchers will be better equipped to address risk management related challenges 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 awarded based on merit. The projects below were awarded in the RMA Spokane Regional Office area (representing Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington).

"Managing Marketing Risks for Small Acreage Forest Producers in San Juan County." This project includes three educational workshops for forest producers that address market risks so forest producers can sell timber produced through active management into local markets.

"Financial and Production Risk Management Training for Organic and Specialty Crop Growers in Oregon and Idaho." This project delivers financial and production risk management training for organic and specialty crop producers in Oregon and Idaho. The training's focus will be on a new microloan program through the Farm Service Agency and organic pest management.

"Reduce Agricultural Risk through Soil Health Education." This project will deliver soil health and crop insurance education to producers and students in Oregon and Washington.

"Grower Training for Food Safety Risks and Global GAP Certification." This project will provide risk management education focused on compliance with the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), Global GAP (good agricultural practices) certification, and USDA crop insurance programs to cherry and other specialty crop growers.

"Wholesale Success: Crop Insurance and Risk Management Education for Spokane Region Specialty Crop Farmers." This project focuses on working with partners to engage small-scale, limited-resource, and bilingual Washington, Oregon, and Idaho farmers who are exploring new markets.

"Expanding Financial Risk Management Education for Underserved Farmers in Washington State." This project offers a semester-long "Cultivating Success Business Planning and Entrepreneurship" course in seven locations statewide, including two bilingual sites in Spanish.

"Risk Management Training for Beginning, Refugee, and Native American Vegetable Growers." This project will provide risk management training for advanced beginning farmers in their second to fourth year of production.

"2013-14 Risk Management Education for Women and Strikeforce Producers in Alaska, Idaho, and Oregon and Livestock Producers in Idaho and Oregon." This project will train agricultural producers in Alaska, Idaho and Oregon to sustain profitability by using effective risk management decision making.

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 nation's food supply. RMA administers these partnership projects as well as the Federal crop insurance program. For more information about these and other agreements, please see the RMA website at: www.rma.usda.gov/aboutrma/agreements/

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