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Sales Closing Date Nears for Crops Eligible for SCO and STAX

New Tools Available to Help Farmers Make Decisions on New Farm Safety Net Options

WASHINGTON, Jan. 21, 2015 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture reminds producers that they must sign up for the Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO) and Stacked Income Protection Plan for Upland Cotton (STAX) before the sales closing dates for eligible 2015 Spring crops. The sales closing dates may be as early as Jan. 31, 2015, for certain crops and counties. However, the sales closing date for the majority of spring crops is March 15, 2015.

A provision of the 2014 Farm Bill, SCO is a county-level policy endorsement that covers a portion of the producer's deductible of their underlying multi-peril crop insurance policy. SCO is available for corn, cotton, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, spring barley, spring wheat, and winter wheat in select counties for the 2015 crop year. STAX, another Farm Bill provision, is an area-based revenue policy that is only available for upland cotton beginning with the 2015 crop year. It may be purchased as a stand-alone policy, or as an endorsement to an underlying multi-peril crop insurance policy.

“We worked hard to offer these new risk management provisions in time for farmers to make the decisions they need to make to protect their businesses,” said Risk Management Agency (RMA) Administrator, Brandon Willis. “We want to be sure they have the right tools to strengthen the safety net for their farms.”

Producers interested in learning how SCO and STAX can help them manage risk can find maps showing 2015 crop year availability, fact sheets, frequently asked questions, policy information and more at RMA's Farm Bill website

www.rma.usda.gov/news/currentissues/farmbill/index.html.

To help farmers better understand how SCO and STAX interact with traditional crop insurance, RMA developed an online Crop Insurance Decision Tool, which is also available as an app for use on smartphones.

This user-friendly resource, located at prodwebnlb.rma.usda.gov/apps/CIDT/, and available as a free download from the Apple iTunes store and Google Play store, demonstrates how the SCO and STAX plans work, including how coverage is determined, when insurance indemnity payments are triggered, approximate premium costs, and how SCO and STAX interact with an underlying multi-peril crop insurance policy. The online tool and the mobile app can help producers quickly explore and understand the variety of coverage options that these new

products offer. Producers must consult their crop insurance agent for detailed information and to obtain a specific premium quote.

Federal crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private insurance agents. Contact a local insurance agent for more information about the program. A list of insurance agents is available at all RMA regional offices and on the RMA agent web page at www3.rma.usda.gov/apps/agents/.

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