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USDA Adds Flexibilities for Crop Insurance to Support America's Farmers and Ranchers

News Release |
Washington DC
|
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RMA Offering Remote Assistance and Authorizing Additional Flexibility for Producers

WASHINGTON, D.C., March 27, 2020 – USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) is authorizing additional flexibilities due to coronavirus while continuing to support producers, working through Approved Insurance Providers (AIPs) to deliver services, including processing policies, claims and agreements. These flexibilities include: enabling producers to send notifications and reports electronically, extending the date for production reports and providing additional time and deferring interest on premium and other payments.

"Crop insurance will continue to support farmers through the challenges ahead, and our RMA team is here to support them," RMA Administrator Martin Barbre said. "We are working with the AIPs to continue to deliver crop insurance and to respond to farmer needs."

Electronic Notifications Allowed for Required Reports

Producers may send notifications and reports electronically for written agreement issues, acreage and production reporting and upcoming sales closing dates (deadlines to buy crop insurance). Notice of the policyholder's election may be

provided over the phone with appropriate documentation of the call or using electronic methods followed by their confirmation of such election in writing (a signed, or e-signed, form) no later than July 15, 2020.

Production Reporting Date Extended

For the 2020 crop year, AIPs may accept production reports through the earlier of the acreage reporting date (ARD) or 30 days after the production reporting date (PRD) for crops insured under the Common Crop Insurance Policy Basic Provisions with a PRD of March 15, 2020, or later. Generally, the PRD for crops insured under the Common Crop Insurance Policy Basic Provisions is the earlier of the ARD or 45 days after the cancellation date.

Additional Time Given and Interest Deferred on Premium Payments, Written Payment Agreements

AIPs are authorized to provide additional time for policyholders to make payment of premium and administrative fees. Interest accrual on premium payments and administrative fees will be waived to the earliest of an additional 60 days from the scheduled payment due date or the termination date on policies with premium billing dates between March 1, 2020, and April 30, 2020. AIPs are also authorized to provide additional time for policyholders to make payment for Written Payment Agreements due between March 1, 2020, and April 30, 2020. Payments may be extended up to 60 days from the scheduled payment due date and considered a timely payment.

RMA staff are working with AIPs and other customers by phone, mail and electronically to continue supporting crop insurance coverage for producers. Farmers with crop insurance questions or needs should continue to contact their insurance agents about conducting business remotely (by telephone or email).

For the most current updates on available services, visit farmers.gov/coronavirus.

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Risk Management Agency:

1400 Independence Ave. SW Washington, DC 20250

Contact:

FPAC Press Desk

FPAC.BC.Press@usda.gov