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

News Release |
Washington DC
|
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RMA Authorizes Self-Certification Replant Inspections and Waives Witness Signatures

WASHINGTON, April 3, 2020 – USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) is authorizing self-certification on replant inspections and waiving witness signatures in certain situations as part of a broader suite of flexibilities to support producers during the coronavirus pandemic. Specifically, Approved Insurance Providers (AIPs) may allow the use of self-certification replant inspections for certain crops with 100 gross acres (before considering share) per unit in lieu of 50 acres, and they may waive the witness signature requirement for approval of Assignment of Indemnity through July 15, 2020, for applicable crop years.

"RMA recognizes the challenges the crop insurance industry and America's farmers and ranchers face," RMA Administrator Martin Barbre said. "We will continue to provide flexibility that supports the health and safety of all parties while also ensuring the Federal crop insurance program continues to serve as a vital risk management tool."

Many state and local governments have issued "stay-at-home" orders in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which may prevent loss adjusters from completing on-the-farm replant inspections and obtaining associated signatures required for replant

certification purposes. In the absence of “stay-at-home” orders, loss adjusters and policyholders may also be prevented from meeting in person due to concerns of spreading COVID-19.

Replant Self-Certification

For the 2020 crop year only, AIPs are authorized to allow self-certification replant inspections for up to 100 gross acres (before considering share) per unit in lieu of 50 acres.

Authorized crops for self-certification of up to 100 acres for replant include: barley and wheat not covered by the Winter Coverage Endorsement (both initially planted winter and spring crops), buckwheat, canola and rapeseed, corn, dry beans, flax (spring-seeded only), grain sorghum, mustard, oats (spring-seeded only), popcorn (including popcorn revenue), peanuts, safflowers, soybeans, sugar beets and sunflower seed.

Assignment of Indemnity

AIPs are authorized to waive the witness signature requirement for approval of Assignments through July 15, 2020. The insured’s and creditor’s signature on the Assignment will be required in a pen and ink signature and in the hand of the person whose signature is required or an acceptable electronic (digital) signature in accordance with the AIPs’ established Electronic Business Implementation Plan and applicable RMA procedures.

More Information

RMA [announced on March 27](#) other flexibilities, including 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.

RMA staff is 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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