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USDA Expands Pasture, Rangeland, and Forage Crop Insurance to Hawaii

News Release |

Washington DC

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April 30, 2024

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WASHINGTON, April 30, 2024 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is expanding Pasture, Rangeland, and Forage (PRF) rainfall index insurance to include Hawaii beginning in 2025. The PRF insurance option protects livestock producers against feed loss due to lack of precipitation, providing producers on the Big Island of Hawaii with coverage for grazing acres. This expansion is part of USDA’s Risk Management Agency (RMA) efforts to increase and enhance insurance options in Hawaii.

“We are always looking at the unique needs and situations that our producers have in different parts of the country so that we can adjust and develop crop insurance resources for their particular situations,” said RMA Administrator Marcia Bunger. “Rather than relying on a blanket across-the-country approach, we looked at ways to collect and analyze weather information and outcomes specific to our producers in Hawaii.”

PRF is designed to provide insurance coverage on pasture, rangeland or forage acres. The program uses a rainfall index to determine precipitation for coverage purposes and does not measure production or product loss.

The PRF in Hawaii will use Hawaii Climate Data Portal information and will utilize a five-kilometer by five-kilometer grid. The program will also use a new county base value methodology due to minimal hay production on the island and limited data on grazing lease rates of the Hawaiian cattle industry.

Pasture, rangeland and forage cover approximately 55% of U.S. land. Forage grows differently in various areas, so farmers and ranchers need to know which types and techniques work best in their region. The program helps protect a producer's operation from forage loss risks due to the lack of precipitation. It does not insure against ongoing or severe drought, as the coverage is based on expected precipitation during specific intervals.

Similar to PRF in the contiguous 48 states, producers on Hawaii's Big Island must select at least two and up to six intervals to insure their acres.

The first sales closing date is Dec. 1, 2024.

More Information

The PRF expansion is part of other efforts to increase and enhance insurance options for Hawaii producers. For example, in 2023, RMA launched a targeted outreach effort in Hawaii to raise awareness of Whole-Farm Revenue Protection and Micro Farm. This year, RMA also hired Cristin Cantan, who focuses on the state of Hawaii and resides on the Big Island. She brings a wealth of knowledge to RMA through her employment with other USDA agencies.

Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance agents. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers and online at the [RMA Agent Locator](#). Producers can learn more about crop insurance and the modern farm safety net at rma.usda.gov or by contacting their [RMA Regional Office](#).

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under the Biden-Harris administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit usda.gov.

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