

MGR-26-001: Claims Advisory - 2026 Freeze Damage to Blueberries in Florida and Georgia

[View PDF](#)

Date

February 17, 2026

To

All Approved Insurance Providers

All Risk Management Agency Field Offices

All Other Interested Parties

From

Patricia Swanson, Administrator /s/ Patricia Swanson

Subject

Claims Advisory - 2026 Freeze Damage to Blueberries in Florida and Georgia

BACKGROUND:

Several southeastern states experienced a rare freeze event that started on January 31 and lasted through early February causing catastrophic damage to blueberries in Florida and Georgia. According to local agricultural experts, freeze-damaged blueberries require producers to act quickly to spray recommended fungicides to help prevent infection, to prune to remove dead and damaged tissue to promote new, healthy growth, and to take other recommended steps depending on crop type and variety.

ACTION:

Approved Insurance Providers (AIPs) should begin appraising the impacted crop as soon as possible and releasing the acreage, as appropriate, so that producers can follow recommended good management practices to prevent disease and mitigate reduced production in the bushes or trees for future years. If producers elect to

prune blueberry acreage by mowing to the ground, refer to the applicable statements in the Blueberry Crop Provisions (CP) and Special Provisions.

Any acreage impacted by the freeze that the AIP determines will not produce harvestable fruit may be released with zero appraised production to count. AIPs are encouraged to work with the grower and local agricultural experts to determine whether the insured acreage will produce any harvestable blueberries for the crop year. In accordance with Section 9 of the Blueberry CP, insured producers must not sell or dispose of the damaged crop until AIPs have given written consent to do so.

Section 10(f) of the Blueberry CP provides that there is a percentage reduction to the indemnity for failure to not properly utilize frost protection equipment. This provision is not applicable if the AIP determines that the use of frost protection equipment during this rare freeze event would have resulted in further damage of the blueberry crop. AIPs are encouraged to work with the grower and local agricultural experts when making this determination.

DISPOSAL DATE:

December 31, 2026