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USDA Adds Risk Management Flexibility for Oyster Producers in Two Massachusetts Counties

News Release |
Raleigh, North Carolina
|
September 11, 2026
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(Raleigh, N.C., Sept. 11, 2026) – The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Risk Management Agency (RMA) approved a flexibility through the Shellfish crop insurance program in select Massachusetts counties. The program provides yield-based coverage for container-grown oysters commercially cultivated for the fresh, half-shell market.

Beginning with the 2027 crop year, oyster producers in Barnstable and Plymouth counties may add the Winter Removal Option (WRO), reducing the cost of their insurance, if they remove oysters from the water and place them in storage to protect them during severe cold.

"By providing this option, we are strengthening program resilience and supporting a regional industry," said RMA Administrator Pat Swanson. "This addition puts Farmers First and gives growers more flexibility to make the best choice for their operation when facing severe winter weather."

Producers looking for coverage should contact a crop insurance agent prior to the sales closing date, Nov. 30, 2026, to enroll for the 2027 crop year. Additional information and resources can be found on RMA's website.

More Information

RMA secures the future of agriculture by providing world class risk management tools to rural America through Federal crop insurance and risk management education programs. RMA provides policies for more than 130 crops and is constantly working to adjust and create new policies based on producer needs and feedback.

Contact a crop insurance agent to see how Federal crop insurance can meet the specific needs of your operation. Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance

agents. A list of crop insurance agents is available 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. RMA's Basics for Beginners provides information for those new to crop insurance.

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