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Crop Insurance Changes for Soybeans and Grain Sorghum

News Release |
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Springfield, Ill., Feb. 25, 2020 – The USDA’s Risk Management Agency (RMA) made changes for the 2020 crop year to improve crop insurance for Illinois soybean and grain sorghum producers. It’s important for producers to be aware of these changes as they look at applying for crop insurance coverage or making changes to their current policy because March 15 is the deadline.

First, the earliest plant date for soybeans was moved from April 20 to April 15 for the central parts of Illinois to reflect changing agronomics. This change doesn’t affect when producers can plant soybeans, as the policy does not restrict how early producers plant. However, soybeans planted prior to the earliest plant date are not eligible for replant coverage.

Another date change benefits soybean producers who plant Following Another Crop (FAC), or double crop soybeans. The final planting date for FAC soybeans was June 20, the same as first crop or Not Following Another Crop (NFAC) soybeans. For 2020, the final planting date has been moved to July 5 to better correlate with the planting of FAC soybeans that typically follows wheat.

Finally, soybean and grain sorghum producers are now able to insure their NFAC and FAC crops with separate enterprise units or optional units in counties where both practices are insurable.

“We continually listen to producers and other stakeholders in developing our crop insurance policies, and we make adjustments to these policies when necessary,” said RMA Administrator Martin Barbre. “With these changes, we believe grain sorghum and soybean producers will have more flexibility.”

These changes are important because they:

- Allow producers to better manage the unique risks of each practice by having separate FAC and NFAC units.
- Producers may now be indemnified independently by FAC and NFAC units. A gain on one of the cropping practices will not be offset by the loss on the other cropping practice.

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. Learn more about crop insurance and the modern farm safety net at rma.usda.gov.

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