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USDA Announces Improvements to Forage Seeding and Forage Production Crop Insurance Provisions for the 2021 Crop Year

News Release |
Springfield, Illinois

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Springfield, Ill., May 7, 2020 — USDA’s Risk Management Agency (RMA) announced changes to the Forage Seeding and Forage Production crop insurance programs starting with the 2021 crop year. Changes include expanding coverage to new regions and counties, expanding coverage to fall-planted forage and changing the method for loss adjustment.

“These changes will expand coverage to new places, better reflect current agricultural practices, and better protect forage producers from losses,” Brian Frieden, RMA Regional Office Director for Michigan said. “This will also enable forage producers to better secure loans and provide continuity to their forage production operations.”

Specifically, the changes:

- Establish coverage of forage seeding for producers in 19 more Michigan counties.
- Expand coverage to fall-planted forage and align forage seeding cancellation and termination dates with the dates for other fall planted crops in each state.
- Revise loss-adjustment procedures to rely upon the number of live alfalfa stems rather than the number of live plants for making loss determinations for forage containing more than 60 percent alfalfa.

These changes are further described in a final rule, now available on the *Federal Register* at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov). Interested parties are invited to comment on the rule for 60 days.

These changes take effect for crop year 2021 with policies that have a contract change date of April 30, 2020, or later. Sales closing dates follow the contract change date and vary across the country. Producers should contact a crop insurance agent for their specific sales closing date. Crop years reflect the normal growing season and are identified by the year of harvest.

These policy changes affect the following counties in Michigan:

Allegan, Alpena, Barry, Chippewa, Clare, Delta, Hillsdale, Huron, Ionia, Jackson, Kent, Lapeer, Mecosta, Menominee, Missaukee, Montcalm, Newaygo, Ottawa, Washtenaw

In addition, counties in Michigan that already offer forage seeding coverage will now have the fall-planted practice available.

Producers can use the RMA [Cost Estimator](#) to get a premium amount estimate of their insurance needs online.

USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) is authorizing additional flexibilities due to coronavirus while continuing to support producers, working through Approved Insurance Providers (AIPs) to deliver services, including processing policies, claims and agreements. These flexibilities include 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 are 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). More information can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance agents. A list of crop insurance agents is available online using the RMA [Agent Locator](#). Learn more about crop insurance and the modern farm safety net at rma.usda.gov.

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