

USDA Unveils New Improvement to Streamline Crop Reporting

Update Lets Farmers and Ranchers Report Common Acreage Information Once

WASHINGTON, May 31, 2016 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced that farmers and ranchers filing crop acreage reports with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and participating insurance providers approved by the Risk Management Agency (RMA) now can provide the common information from their acreage reports at one office and the information will be electronically shared with the other location.

This new process is part of the USDA Acreage Crop Reporting Streamlining Initiative (ACRSI). This interagency collaboration also includes participating private crop insurance agents and insurance companies, all working to streamline the information collected from farmers and ranchers who participate in USDA programs.

"If you file your report at one location, the data that's important to both FSA and RMA will be securely and electronically shared with the other location," said FSA Administrator Val Dolcini. "This will avoid redundant and duplicative reporting, and we expect this to save farmers and ranchers time."

"Accuracy in crop reporting is a key component for crop insurance, because an error in this information can affect premiums or claims. This is going to greatly improve efficiencies and reduce mistakes," said RMA Administrator Brandon Willis.

Since 2009, USDA has been working to streamline the crop reporting process for agricultural producers, who have expressed concerns with providing the same basic common information for multiple locations. In 2013, USDA consolidated the deadlines to 15 dates for submitting these reports, down from the previous 54 dates at RMA and 17 dates for FSA. USDA representatives believe farmers and ranchers will experience a notable improvement in the coming weeks as they approach the peak season for crop reporting later this summer.

More than 93 percent of all annual reported acres to FSA and RMA now are eligible for the common data reporting, and USDA is exploring adding more crops. Producers must still visit both locations to validate and sign acreage reports, complete maps or provide program-specific information. The common data from the first-filed acreage report will now be available to pre-populate and accelerate completion of the second report. Plans are underway at USDA to continue building upon the framework with additional efficiencies at a future date.

Dolcini also reminded farmers and ranchers that they can now access their FSA farm information from the convenience of their home computer. "You can see your field boundaries, images of your farm, conservation status, operator and owner information and much more," said Dolcini.

The new customer self-service portal, known as FSAFarm+, gives farmers and ranchers online access to securely view, print or export their personal farm data. To enroll in the online service, producers are encouraged to contact their local FSA office for details. To find a local FSA office in your area, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Since 2009, USDA has worked to strengthen and support American agriculture, an industry that supports one in 11 American jobs, provides American consumers with more than 80 percent of the food we consume, ensures that Americans spend less of their paychecks at the grocery store than most people in other countries, and supports markets for homegrown renewable energy and materials. USDA has also provided \$5.6 billion of disaster relief to farmers and ranchers; expanded risk management tools with products like Whole Farm Revenue Protection; and helped farm businesses grow with \$36 billion in farm credit. The Department has engaged its resources to support a strong next generation of farmers and ranchers by improving access to land and capital; building new markets and market opportunities; and extending new conservation opportunities. USDA has developed new markets for rural-made products, including more than 2,500 biobased products through USDA's BioPreferred program; and invested

\$64 billion in infrastructure and community facilities to help improve the quality of life in rural America. For more information, visit www.usda.gov/results.

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