Commissioner Fried Advising Farmers to Utilize New Flexibilities on Crop Insurance Due to COVID-19

Mar 27, 2020

Tallahassee, Fla. – Today, Florida **Agriculture Commissioner Nikki Fried** and the **Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services** (FDACS) is advising farmers to utilize new flexibilities for crop insurance announced by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Risk Management Agency (RMA).

"Our team has been in constant communication with agriculture producers, industry leaders, and the USDA throughout the coronavirus outbreak — we have relayed concerns and challenges facing the industry here in Florida, including the need for crop insurance flexibilities," shared **Commissioner Nikki Fried.** "We're thankful for this support from the USDA and we are advising producers to utilize these new flexibilities. As our agriculture community works to meet demand for fresh food and ensure the public's needs are met, we are committed to supporting them in every way possible — we will continue coordinating with the USDA in case further support is needed."

The USDA will continue supporting producers and working through Approved Insurance Providers (AIP). Producers can continue to work with their AIP on policies, claims, and agreements. Farmers with crop insurance questions or needs should continue to contact their insurance agents about conducting business by telephone or email.

The new flexibilities include:

Electronic Notifications Allowed for Required Reports:

Producers may send notifications and reports electronically for written agreement issues, acreage and production reporting and upcoming sales closing dates (deadlines to buy crop insurance). Notice of the policyholder's election may be provided over the phone with appropriate documentation of the call or using electronic methods followed by their confirmation of such election in writing (a signed, or e-signed, form) no later than July 15, 2020.

Production Reporting Date Extended:

For the 2020 crop year, AIPs may accept production reports through the earlier of the acreage reporting date (ARD) or 30 days after the production reporting date (PRD) for crops insured under the Common Crop Insurance Policy Basic Provisions with a PRD of March 15, 2020, or later. Generally, the PRD for crops insured under the Common Crop Insurance Policy Basic Provisions is the earlier of the ARD or 45 days after the cancellation date.

Additional Time Given and Interest Deferred on Premium Payments, Written Payment Agreements:

AIPs are authorized to provide additional time for policyholders to make payment of premium and administrative fees. Interest accrual on premium payments and administrative fees will be waived to the earliest of an additional 60 days from the scheduled payment due date or the termination date on policies with premium billing dates between March 1, 2020, and April 30, 2020. AIPs are also authorized to provide additional time for policyholders to make

payment for Written Payment Agreements due between March 1, 2020, and April 30, 2020. Payments may be extended up to 60 days from the scheduled payment due date and considered a timely payment.

For updates on available services from the USDA, visit Farmers.gov/Coronavirus (http://www.Farmers.gov/Coronavirus)

For updates from FDACS, visit FDACS.gov/Coronavirus (https://www.fdacs.govhttp://www.FDACS.gov/Coronavirus)

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Press Releases

2022 Press Releases (https://www.fdacs.gov/News-Events/Press-Releases/2022-Press-Releases)

2022 Press Releases (Spanish) (https://www.fdacs.gov/News-Events/Press-Releases/2022-Press-Releases-Spanish)

2021 Press Releases (https://www.fdacs.gov/News-Events/Press-Releases/2021-Press-Releases)

2020 Press Releases (https://www.fdacs.gov/News-Events/Press-Releases/2020-Press-Releases)

2019 Press Releases (https://www.fdacs.gov/News-Events/Press-Releases/2019-Press-Releases)

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