

USDA's New Crop Insurance for Tropical Storms Benefits Producers Impacted by Idalia

News Release | Washington DC | September 20, 2023

WASHINGTON, Sept. 20, 2023 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) recent expansion of its hurricane crop insurance policy to cover tropical storms this year has already provided farmers with \$85.4 million to help them recover from Hurricane Idalia. USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) rolled out the new Tropical Storm Option for its Hurricane Insurance Protection-Wind Index (HIP-WI) Endorsement earlier this year after working directly with farmers to improve coverage. Additionally, through HIP-WI, producers have received \$84.8 million in indemnities for hurricane-related losses for a total of over \$170 million in crop insurance payments that will directly help farmers and rural communities recover from Hurricane Idalia. This coverage was unavailable this time last year.

"I commend farmers and their organizations for reaching out to RMA to discuss new coverage, and our staff for promptly working on creative solutions to make this coverage a reality," said RMA Administrator Marcia Bunger. "This is just one of many examples of farmers and RMA working together to improve the lives of farmers and the rural economies that depend upon agriculture."

So far, indemnities by state include:

- Georgia: \$72.7 million for hurricanes, and \$5.7 million for tropical storms;
- Florida: \$12.1 million for hurricanes;
- North Carolina: \$40.1 million for tropical storms;
- and • South Carolina: \$39.6 million for tropical storms.

Earlier this year, RMA added the Tropical Storm Option to this endorsement to cover named tropical storms, as reported by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), with maximum sustained winds exceeding

34 knots and precipitation exceeding six inches over a four-day period.

Farmers do not need to file a claim to receive payment. If a county is triggered, then the Approved Insurance Provider will issue a payment in the coming weeks.

Producers can find a list of triggered counties on RMA's Product Management Bulletins webpage. This is in addition to coverage provided under a farmer's crop policy. The standard notice of loss and claims process applies to these policies, and Approved Insurance Providers are working to process these claims.

HIP-WI was first available for purchase for the 2020 hurricane season and covers a portion of the deductible of the underlying crop insurance policy when the county, or an adjacent one, is hit with sustained hurricane-force winds from a named hurricane based on data from the National Hurricane Center at NOAA.

The HIP-WI endorsement, including the new Tropical Storm Option, is available in select counties in Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Vermont, and Virginia.

During the past three years, HIP-WI has been a successful risk management tool for many in effected areas, with nearly \$736 million paid in indemnities to date.

More Information

Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance agents, and producers interested in HIP-WI or the Tropical Storm Option should contact an agent. 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 or by contacting your RMA Regional Office.

Risk Management Agency:
1400 Independence Ave. SW Washington, DC 20250
Contact:
FPAC Press Desk FPAC.BC.Press@usda.gov