



**United States Department of Agriculture**

Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services  
Risk Management Agency

**INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** All Reinsured Companies  
All Risk Management Agency Field Offices  
All other Interested Parties

**FROM:** Kenneth D. Ackerman /s/ Ken Ackerman 6-29-00  
Administrator

**SUBJECT:** Texas Cotton Advisory, Yield Conversion Factors for Qualifying Skip Row Patterns

**BACKGROUND:**

The Cotton Crop Provisions define skip row as cotton planted in a pattern that qualifies as skip-row as defined by the Farm Service Agency (FSA). Questions have been raised about whether skip-row yield conversion factors should be used when non traditional skip-row or mixed row planting patterns are determined to be non-qualifying skip-row patterns by FSA for acreage determination purposes.

Skip-row planting patterns are common non-irrigated planting practices for cotton in many areas of Texas. This practice consists of a pattern of alternating rows of cotton and idle land throughout the field. This year, indications are that producers will be employing a number of skip-row planting patterns not normally used in the lower Rolling Plains and Edwards Plateau regions of West Texas. Producers have been reporting an unprecedented number of such cases to the County FSA Office in order for FSA to determine the acreage considered devoted to the crop.

County FSA Offices in conjunction with the State Office have been deciding, on a case by case basis, which patterns qualify as skip-row for acreage determination purposes. In the case of mixed row patterns containing a combination of single and double or multiple rows, FSA looks at the entire pattern, not the individual rows within the pattern, to determine if the overall pattern qualifies. If the mixed row pattern qualifies as skip-row, the FSA - 578 will reflect acres considered planted and acres considered fallow for the field based on the overall pattern.



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Tables 2 & 3 of Exhibit 17 in the Crop Insurance Handbook and Tables 2 & 3 of Exhibit 4 in the AUP and ELS Cotton Loss Adjustment Handbook list yield conversion factors that apply to specific planting patterns if recognized by FSA as qualifying skip-row patterns. The planting patterns listed are those typically used in the states and counties identified. These factors allow for yield increases over solid planted acreage if the planting patterns listed qualify and are planted by the insured.

Although Tables 2 & 3 list yield conversion factors for **single skip-row** patterns of less than 32 inches, FSA currently considers these patterns solid planted. FSA and RMA have agreed to reconcile this difference for 2001. In addition, Tables 2 & 3 may list individual patterns contained in a mixed row pattern that qualify for yield increase where FSA has determined the overall pattern solid planted.

**ACTION:**

**For the 2000 crop year:**

- 1 In **all instances** that FSA determines the planting pattern is a non-qualifying skip-row pattern, including mixed patterns, the planted acreage is not reduced for crop insurance purposes and a skip-row yield conversion factor is not applied to the Actual Production History (APH) yield. (If a yield conversion factor is required for data processing purposes, 1.00 must be used.)
- 2 For a mixed planting pattern that FSA determines to be an overall qualifying skip-row pattern but contains a portion of the planting pattern that does not qualify as a skip row pattern (e.g, a single skipped row less than 32 inches), apply skip-row yield conversion factors (**greater than 1.00**) only to that portion of the pattern that qualifies under FSA rules.

This clarification is consistent with the Cotton Crop Provisions' definition of skip-row, FSA skip-row acreage determination rules, and provisions contained in the AUP and ELS Cotton Loss Adjustment and Crop Insurance Handbook.