United States Department of Agriculture

Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services
Risk Management Agency

BULLETIN NO.: MGR-00-015

TO: All Reinsured Companies
All Risk Management Field Offices

FROM: Kenneth D. Ackerman /s/ Ken Ackerman 4-12-00
Administrator

SUBJECT: Fall Seeding of Canola, Spring Wheat, and Sugar Beets

BACKGROUND:

Excessive precipitation in area of Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota over the past several years have prevented or delayed spring planting efforts. As a result, farmers have sought alternative methods of assuring a crop is planted. Dormant seeding is a practice of planting spring varieties in the fall where they remain dormant during the winter, then germinate in the spring once conditions are favorable. Typically, plants emerge three to four weeks ahead of normal spring planting. New seed coating technology for canola and a very mild fall drew numerous questions regarding the insurability of dorman-seeded canola. There are reports that other spring crops such as sugar beets and spring wheat were also planted during the fall on a limited basis.

Current procedures allow insurance to attach only with an approved written agreement. Risk Management Agency (RMA) is providing criteria and procedure for reinsured companies to insure certain fall-seeded spring crops with adequate stands without going through the written agreement process.

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<u>ACTION</u>:

Beginning with Crop Year 2000, fall-seeded (dormant) spring crops in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota can be insured provided that the following criteria and procedure are met:

(1) The insured producer must request dormant-seeded coverage for canola, spring wheat, or sugar beets in writing from the insurance provider no later than April 30, 2000. Requests postmarked later than April 30, 2000, must be denied.

(2) The insurance provider must conduct an inspection to verify that there is an adequate stand. After an inspection has taken place, the insurance provider must agree in writing that the acreage has an adequate stand in the spring to produce the Actual Production History (APH) yield for the unit for insurance to attach.

(3) If the acreage does not have an adequate stand, or adverse growing conditions exist, it will be uninsurable unless the insurance provider agrees it is practical to replant and the acreage is replanted. No replant payments will be allowed on acreage replanted under these circumstances, since the original acreage was planted in the fall, which is prior to the Initial Planting Date listed on the Special Provisions of Insurance.

(4) Inspections to determine an adequate stand will be made:

  (a) for spring wheat and sugar beets using existing appraisal methods as contained in the applicable crop loss adjustment standards handbooks; or

  (b) for canola, by determining that the number of plants for the acreage equals or exceeds 3 plants per square foot. If the acreage has an adequate stand, the number of plants in the sample row will be used to complete item 7 of the canola/rapeseed appraisal worksheet for any future appraisals used to determine a loss.

  Example: A 10 foot sample row (using 6 inch rows) contains 5 square feet. There are 15 total plants in the sample row. The number of plants per square foot is 3 (15 ÷ 5). If subsequent damage to the crop occurs and the crop is appraised, the entry in item 7 of the appraisal worksheet will be 15.

  Inspections should not be made until after the initial planting date identified on the actuarial or April 30, 2000, whichever is later. All inspections must be completed by the final planting date.

(5) The insurance provider will document the determinations contained in (4) above on the inspection and Statement of Facts and provide copies to the insured. The insurance provider must retain a copy of the inspection and Statement of Facts in the insured's folder.

DISPOSAL:

This bulletin will remain in effect until December 31, 2000.