

Agricultural Policy and Risk Management Brief

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In the Aftermath of Hurricane Florence: What do Farmers with Crop Insurance need to do?

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In the aftermath of Hurricane Florence hitting North Carolina and South Carolina last week, this brief aims to provide information about actions that hurricane-affected farmers with crop insurance coverage ought to do to facilitate the claims process and recovery.

Actions to take Post-Hurricane Florence

- (1) Contact your crop insurance agent and follow-up in writing (keeping a copy for your records). Producers with USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA) administered crop insurance coverage, such as Yield Protection (YP) or Revenue Protection (RP) Plans, should report hurricane-related damage within 72 hours of damage discovery and follow-up in writing within 15 days.
- (2) If you have crop damage that affect your overall yield and crop value, you may be eligible to file a claim. It is your responsibility to call your crop insurance agent and initiate this process. When the claim is initiated, the crop insurance company will arrange for a loss adjuster to inspect your crop.
- (3) **IMPORTANT:** While you wait for the adjuster, remember the following: Do NOT destroy any of your crop. Do NOT Disk. Do NOT replant. Do nothing to destroy your crop until you have permission and clear direction from the claims adjuster or an insurance company representative (preferably in writing). Keep representative samples of damage if possible. If applicable, you must continue to care for undamaged acreage until harvest or until your company appraises the crop and releases the acreage.
- (4) Find and prepare all crop insurance policy materials. Review you insurance coverage, insurance acres, elected options or endorsements, locations of insured areas, etc. Make sure you have multiple copies of policy documents.
- (5) You may also need to find planting records, seed purchases and other evidence to show that you planted and/or cared for the insured crop prior to the hurricane. Having photos of production before the storm would be helpful. You may also need schedule F of your past tax records, as well as other sales records to further facilitate the claims process.
- (6) Take pictures and document the extent of damage.
- (7) After you contact your agent, the crop insurance adjuster should contact you and schedule an appointment for an inspection. You should try to be present when the adjuster comes over to inspect the damage. The adjuster expects and welcomes your presence. Be sure to tell the adjuster what you want to say about the extent of the damage and your situation. The adjuster will ask a number of questions. In the end, the adjuster will determine whether your yield or revenue falls below the guarantee stated in your policy. Because conditions vary between geographic areas, loss determinations are based on each producer's circumstances.
- (8) After the loss adjuster inspection, diligently follow-up with your insurance agent until you receive your indemnity payments. Some indemnity payments may take a while, and so be patient and plan for potential delays.

FOR MORE INFORMATION (links):

USDA RMA Crop Insurance Policies:

<https://www.rma.usda.gov/policies/>

Factsheets for NC Crops covered by Crop Insurance:

https://www.rma.usda.gov/aboutrma/fields/nc_rso/nc/#factsheets

Natural Disasters and Crop Insurance Factsheet:

https://www.rma.usda.gov/pubs/rme/natural_disasters.pdf

USDA FSA Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP): <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/noninsured-crop-disaster-assistance/index>

USDA FSA Disaster Programs:

<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/index>

USDA FSA Disaster Program Factsheet:

https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdfiles/FactSheets/2017/fsa_disaster_assistance_programs_at_a_glance_march2017.pdf

USDA Rural Development Disaster Assistance:

<https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/services/rural-development-disaster-assistance>

Related NCSU Briefs:

What to do Before and After a Hurricane?

Programs and Resources Available for North Carolina Agricultural Producers:

https://cals.ncsu.edu/are-extension/wp-content/uploads/sites/27/2018/03/AgPolicy_Brief_2017_09_13_hurricane.pdf

One Year after Hurricane Matthew:

Remembering the Decision-Making Process for Flood-Damaged Crops:

https://cals.ncsu.edu/are-extension/wp-content/uploads/sites/27/2018/09/AgPolicy_Brief_2017_10_18.pdf

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Note: This publication can be downloaded at the *Crop Insurance Resources* website of the Dept. of Ag. and Resource Economics:

<https://cals.ncsu.edu/are-extension/business-planning-and-operations/crop-insurance/>