



United States Department of Agriculture

Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services
Risk Management Agency

BULLETIN NO.: MGR-99-007

TO: All Reinsured Companies
All RMA Field Offices

FROM: Kenneth Ackerman /s/ Ken Ackerman 2-25-99
Administrator

SUBJECT: Watermelon Pilot Crop Insurance Provisions for the 1999 Crop Year

BACKGROUND:

The Raleigh, Valdosta, and Oklahoma City Regional Service Offices have received questions concerning insurability requirements and the definition of "Acre" in the 99-040 Watermelon Pilot Crop Provisions.

Special provisions in Alabama, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, and North Carolina restrict growers from purchasing insurance who have not grown at least 10,000 pounds of watermelons per acre on the unit during the base period. The requirement should not have referred to the unit, but rather, should have required growers to have grown at least 10,000 pounds of watermelons per acre at any location (the production is not limited to the county of insurance) during the base period. The Special Provisions in these States also prohibit insurance from attaching on any acreage that has been planted two seeds per hill unless thinned to one plant. RMA has been advised by the Cooperative Extension Service that it is an acceptable cultural practice in these areas to plant two seeds per hill without thinning to one plant.

In Texas, many growers have certified their acreage with FSA using a procedure to convert from skip row planting patterns to a solid planted basis. RMA has been advised that it would be burdensome, and in some cases impossible, to convert from the FSA calculated yields to yields as defined using the definition of "Acre" in the Watermelon Crop Provisions.



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The Risk Management Agency Administers and Oversees
All Programs Authorized Under the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation

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ACTION:

Effective for the 1999 crop year, the following revisions to the Watermelon Pilot Crop Insurance plan are:

1. Special Provisions for Alabama, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, and North Carolina are amended as follows: (a) Watermelons planted two seeds per hill without thinning to one plant are insurable. (b) To be eligible to purchase insurance, growers must have grown at least 10,000 pounds of watermelons per acre at some location (the production is not limited to the county of insurance) during the base period.
2. For Texas: In lieu of "ACRE" as defined in Section 1 (Definitions) of the Crop Provisions, watermelon acreage determinations for APH, Acreage Reporting and Loss Adjustment may be based on Farm Service Agency procedure (attached).

If you have any questions about this memorandum, please contact Vondie O'Conner, Director, Research and Evaluation Division at (816) 926-6343, or the applicable Regional Service Office.

DISPOSAL:

This Bulletin is effective until November 30, 1999. Watermelon Crop Provisions and Special Provisions will be changed for the 2000 crop year.

Attachment

E
Skip-Row and
Sled-Row Patterns

This table provides State Committee policy to determine the area devoted to vine crops.

REPORTED ACREAGE:		
If the planting pattern is...	And the distance from plant to plant in the strip is...	Then...
Strips of 2 or more rows alternating with idle land...	4 normal rows or less	Consider the entire area devoted to the crop
	More than 4 normal rows	Consider 4 normal rows beyond the strips of crop devoted to the crop
Single rows alternating with idle land	144 inches or less	Consider the entire area devoted to the crop
	More than 144 inches	Consider 144 inches devoted to the crop

A normal row for this purpose is defined as row crops (30 to 40 inch rows).

Vine crops for this purpose are defined as pumpkins, watermelons, cantaloupes, honeydew melons, and cucumbers.

