

USDA streamlines acreage reporting dates for ag programs

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Improvements reduce ARDs from over 50 to 15.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced establishment of 15 common Acreage Reporting Dates (ARDs) for farmers and ranchers participating in USDA programs.

The common reporting dates will reduce the reporting burden on producers and also help to reduce USDA operating costs by sharing similar data across participating agencies. USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) and Farm Service Agency (FSA) each rely on ARDs to administer their programs.

"Implementation of common acreage reporting dates is a major step by our agencies to assist American producers and help build a better, stronger and more efficient USDA," said RMA administrator William Murphy. "This change does not reduce or modify the programs or services that RMA or FSA provides, but will enable most crop insurance agents and FSA County office staff to collect information in a more uniform and efficient manner."

In the past year, a joint RMA-FSA review team undertook an exercise—known as the Acreage Crop Reporting Streamlining Initiative (ACRSI)—to examine the ARDs across both RMA and FSA. Before the streamlining, RMA had 54 ARDs for 122 crops, and FSA had 17 ARDs for 273 crops. The review team consolidated all of them into the 15 common ARDs.

RMA and FSA will implement the July 15, 2012, and August 15, 2012, ARDs for certain commodities during the 2012 crop/program year. The remaining common ARDs will be implemented during the 2013 crop/program year.

U.S. agriculture is currently experiencing one of its best years in decades thanks to the productivity, resiliency, and resourcefulness of our producers.

Today, net farm income is at record levels while debt has been cut in half since the 1980s. Overall, American agriculture supports 1 in 12 jobs in the United States and provides American

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consumers with 86% of the food we consume, while maintaining affordability and choice.