

Prevented Planting Insurance Provisions Drought

Fact Sheet



Drought and Prevented Planting

Prevented planting is the failure to plant an insured crop with the proper equipment by the final planting date or during the late planting period, if applicable. To qualify, you must be prevented from planting by an insured cause of loss that is general to the surrounding area and that prevents other producers from planting acreage with similar characteristics. Final planting dates and late planting periods vary by crop and by area. Prevented planting coverage is available for most crops and covers lack of precipitation and drought that occur during the insurance period.

The provisions for each crop specify whether prevented planting is available. Crop insurance policies with prevented planting provisions provide you with valuable coverage when drought prevents planting on non-irrigated acreage, or causes a failure of the irrigation water supply, failure or breakdown of irrigation equipment or facilities, or the inability to prepare the land for irrigation using your established irrigation method for irrigated acreage. Because farming is complex, and because conditions vary significantly between geographic areas, eligibility for a prevented planting payment must be determined on a case-by-case basis. In general, an insured cause of loss must have occurred within the insurance period on eligible acreage. To be eligible, your acreage must meet all applicable policy provisions.

Your prevented planting coverage will be a percentage specified in the actuarial documents of your guarantee for timely planted acreage. If you have additional coverage and pay an additional premium, you may increase your prevented planting coverage by the sales closing date (unless a cause of loss that could or would prevent planting is evident when your application for increased coverage is completed). For both yield and revenue protection, prevented planting payments are based on the projected price.

For crops that do not have revenue protection, prevented planting payments are based on the price election. There is no prevented planting coverage available for area risk protection policies.

Notice of Prevented Planting

If you are prevented from planting your acreage, you are required to provide a notice to your insurance agent that you were prevented from planting an insured crop within 72 hours after:

- The final planting date, if you do not intend to plant the insured crop during the late planting period, or if a late planting period is not available; or
- You determine you will not be able to plant the insured crop within an available late planting period.

Your crop insurance provider must determine whether the cause of loss is insurable and may ask you for additional documentation from agricultural experts to support your prevented planting claim.

Carryover Policies

If you had a policy the year before (carryover policyholder), you are eligible for a prevented planting payment if the insured cause of loss occurred on or after the sales closing date for the previous crop year, provided insurance was in force continuously since that date, and all other prevented planting requirements are met.

New Policies

If you are buying a policy for the first time, you are eligible for a prevented planting payment if the insured cause of loss occurred on or after the sales closing date for the current crop year and all other prevented planting requirements are met.

For example, the sales closing date for the crop year is March 15. An insured cause of loss occurs on or after March 15. For the current crop year, both types of policies (new and carryover) cover prevented planting for the current crop year. However, if a cause of loss that prevents planting in the current crop year occurred between March 15 of the previous crop year and March 14 of the current crop year, only a carryover policy would cover prevented planting.

Prevented Planting for Non-Irrigated Acreage

To be eligible for prevented planting on non-irrigated acreage due to drought, the area that is prevented from being planted must, on the final planting date (or within the late planting period, if you choose to try to plant during this period), have insufficient soil moisture for seed germination.

Prevented Planting for Irrigated Acreage

Prevented planting payments may be made on irrigated acreage when, on the final planting date (or within the late planting period, if you choose to try to plant during this period), there is no reasonable expectation of having adequate water available to carry out an irrigated practice due to an insured cause of loss that occurred during the prevented planting insurance period.

Guidance documents lack the force and effect of law, unless expressly authorized by statute or incorporated into a contract. USDA may not cite, use, or rely on any guidance that is not available through their guidance portal, except to establish historical facts.



Prevented Planting Options

You should base your decision whether to plant using agronomically sound and well-documented drought management practices. You may choose to:

- Plant fewer irrigated acres, based on the amount of adequate irrigation water available and claim prevented planting on the remaining acreage for which adequate water is not available;
- Plant and report the acreage without adequate water as non-irrigated, if a non-irrigated practice is available for the crop in your county and do not claim prevented planting on the irrigated and non-irrigated acreage;
- Not plant the acreage if adequate water is not available and claim a prevented planting payment;
- Plant and report the acreage as uninsurable if a non-irrigated practice is not available for the crop in the county; or
- Plant a cover crop. As long as the cover crop is not harvested for grain or seed, there is no prevented planting payment reduction.

Keep Detailed Records

For irrigated acreage, good documentation is key to receiving prevented planting payments. Because prevented planting claims can depend on whether there is adequate irrigation water expected for the crop year, if you have irrigated acreage you should keep all documentation regarding how much water you will receive for the crop year and any justifications provided for reductions in the allocation. You should work with your insurance agent to determine what documentation is needed for your specific prevented planting claim. Documentation may also be available from local water authorities including:

- The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- State Departments of Water Resources
- USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service
- County Extension Services

- Other sources responsible for collection of water data or regulation of water resources (water allocations) that indicate what expected water allocations will be if average snow-pack/precipitation occurs during the prevented planting insurance period.

To be eligible for prevented planting on non-irrigated acreage, you must be able to verify a prolonged period of drought. Sources that record and study weather conditions include the National Weather Service's local weather reporting stations.

Payment Reductions May Not Apply

If you meet the double-cropping requirements specified in the policy, the 65-percent payment reduction does not apply to a prevented planting payment for the first insured crop when a second crop is planted after the final planting date or, after the end of the late planting period, if applicable, for the first insured crop. The double-cropping requirements specified in the policy are:

- The practice of planting two or more crops for harvest in the same crop year on the same acreage is generally recognized by agricultural experts (including organic agricultural experts) for the area;
- The second or additional crops are customarily planted after the first insured crop for harvest on the same acreage in the same crop year in the area;
- Additional insurance coverage is offered under the authority of the Federal Crop Insurance Act and is available in the county on the two or more crops that are double cropped; and
- You provide records showing the number of acres double-cropped in 2 of the last 4 crop years the crop prevented from planting was grown or show the applicable acreage was double-cropped in at least 2 of the last 4 crop years in which the crop prevented from planting was grown on it.

Where to Buy Crop Insurance

Contact a crop insurance agent to see how Federal crop insurance can meet the specific needs of your operation. Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance agents. A list of crop insurance agents is available online at rma.usda.gov/agent-locator.

More Information

Producers can learn more about crop insurance and the modern farm safety net at rma.usda.gov or by contacting their RMA Regional Office.

RMA fact sheets give only a general overview of Federal crop insurance programs, not complete policies. For further information and an evaluation of your risk management needs, contact a crop insurance agent.

Guidance documents lack the force and effect of law, unless expressly authorized by statute or incorporated into a contract. USDA may not cite, use, or rely on any guidance that is not available through their guidance portal, except to establish historical facts.