

NEW SECTION

WAC 232-36-120 Valuation methods for crop damage assessment.

Several methods may be used to determine the extent of a crop damaged by deer and elk and the lost value of the crop resulting from the damage. Assessment methods used by qualified crop adjustors licensed by the state and certified by the federal crop insurance service will be accepted by the department. Evaluation of crop losses must consider other impacts to crop production, including fertilization, irrigation, precipitation, weather, timing of planting or harvest, and weed control. The following methods are listed in preferred order based on reliability:

(1) Amount consumed - relies on wildlife-proof exclosures in the field; clipping similar sized plots inside and outside of exclosures; then comparing yields.

(2) Amount of stored crops consumed or damaged - determine the bales or pounds of stored crops consumed or destroyed; then determine replacement value.

(3) Replacement value of horticultural trees lost as a result of damage; partial loss due to damage can be estimated per tree based on the percentage destroyed.

(4) Damage vs. undamaged areas - using random sampling methods to compare the yields of damaged to undamaged portions of a field or two similar fields can provide an estimate of loss. Comparing

similar fields assumes the fields are truly "similar" (soil type, aspect, slope, irrigation, fertilization, stand age, etc.).

(5) Animal use - count the number of animals causing damage and the number of days they were present; then estimate the percentage of daily intake provided by the crop (generally less than fifty percent), and the amount of waste, trampling, or trailing; the result should also consider the timing of the damage and potential recovery of the vegetation prior to crop harvest.

(6) Decrease from average yield - historic yields can be used for comparison; the difference between average yield and current yield may shed light on the extent of damage; changing weather or crop growing conditions from one year to the next make this technique less reliable.

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