

Nutrient Stewardship Research Fund to Receive \$6 Million

Fertilizer Industry Renews Commitment, Invests \$6 Million to Measure Economic and Environmental Benefits of 4R Nutrient Management Practices

WASHINGTON, March 7, 2018 – The North American fertilizer industry is pledging an additional \$6 million to fund research on ways that farmers can strengthen fertilizer best management practices (BMPs) to reduce nutrient loss to the environment. Donors intend that this funding be leveraged with public sector dollars to maximize the reach of limited resources. To that end, Fertilizer Canada is urging the Canada's provincial and federal governments to make funding for 4R Nutrient Stewardship research and conservation incentives a high priority through the Growing Forward 3 framework.

Since 2013, the industry has contributed \$5.8 million toward 4R nutrient stewardship research that currently supports 25 projects in the United States and Canada. The fund has generated an additional \$7 million in research funds by leveraging public and private dollars. The 4R Research Fund was established by The Fertilizer Institute (TFI), Fertilizer Canada, and the International Plant Nutrition Institute (IPNI). The 4R Nutrient Stewardship concept promotes using the right fertilizer source, at the right rate, at the right time, and in the right place (4R). For fertilizer use to be sustainable, it must support cropping systems that provide economic, social, and environmental benefits.

“There is a delicate balance between reducing nutrient losses through nutrient management while maintaining or improving soil carbon and thus soil health,” explained IPNI President Terry Roberts. “Across the U.S. and Canada, the fertilizer industry is partnering with universities, watershed stakeholders, and government agencies to expand the data linking agronomic and environmental performance of 4R practices.”

While the 4R principles are the same globally, how they are put into practice locally varies depending on each farm. Therefore, 4R Research Fund projects are reviewed and selected by a technical advisory group consisting of industry, academic, and government agency experts in agronomy, environmental sciences, sustainability, government relations, and communications. Successful efforts qualify and quantify the impact of using the 4Rs to give certainty to farmers and sound guidance to environmental programs and policy decision makers.

“The driving force for the 4R Research Fund has always been to measure and monitor on-farm stewardship practices,” said Fertilizer Canada President Garth Whyte. “Our industry has an opportunity and we are investing to advance our knowledge of science-based solutions that meet both crop production and environmental quality challenges.”

Priorities of the newly committed 4R Research Fund resources include: 1) assessment of source, rate, time, and placement effects of enhanced efficiency and advancing technologies for nitrogen and phosphorus fertilizers on water and air quality, crop yield, crop nutrient content, and soil health from the same site during the same project, and 2)

evaluation of 4R practices in more geographic locations, over longer time periods, and more cropping systems relative to their effect on productivity and the environment using coordinated controls across multiple site years.

“While the industry is heavily invested in research through the 4R Research Fund, we need to leverage these dollars with additional funding from the public sector to make the most efficient use of these limited resources,” explained Chris Jahn, President of The Fertilizer Institute. “TFI supports public funding and incentives that encourage farmers to adopt 4R Nutrient Stewardship practices on their land.”

To learn more about the current projects supported by the 4R Research Fund, visit <https://fertilizercanada.ca/nutrient-stewardship/4r-research-network/>.

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***The Fertilizer Institute** represents the nation’s fertilizer industry. Producers, wholesalers, retailers and trading firms which comprise its membership are served by a full time Washington, D.C., staff in various legislative, educational and technical areas as well as with information and public relations programs. Further information on the Institute is available at www.tfi.org.*

***Fertilizer Canada** is an industry association representing manufacturers, wholesale and retail distributors of nitrogen, phosphate, potash and sulphur fertilizers. Our mission is to be the unified voice of the Canadian fertilizer industry by promoting the responsible, sustainable and safe production, distribution and use of fertilizers. Our industry employs 12,000 Canadians and contributes \$12 billion annually to Canada's economy. Our products contribute to the supply of safe, nutritious food in Canada and around the world. Further information is available at <https://fertilizercanada.ca/>.*

***The International Plant Nutrition Institute** is a not-for-profit, science-based organization dedicated to the responsible management of plant nutrition for the benefit of the human family. Further information on IPNI is available at www.ipni.net.*