



FERTILIZER CANADA

FERTILISANTS CANADA

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Toolkit Simplifies 4R Certification for Ontario Agri-Retailers

OTTAWA, ON – Canadian agri-retailers and their accredited professional staff play an integral role in supporting growers to achieve productivity goals for safe and nutritious food. With sustainability, environmental stewardship and water quality in the Great Lakes also at the forefront of Canadian conversation, growers in Ontario are turning to their agri-retailers for ways to reduce their impacts while maintaining yields and profitability.

With the launch of the new Ontario 4R Certification program, a [toolkit](#) has been created to help agri-retailers align their businesses with the principles of 4R Nutrient Stewardship – a globally-recognized Canadian-made program that encourages growers to use the right source of fertilizer at the right rate, right time and in the right place.

Developed by 4R Ontario and facilitated by Fertilizer Canada, 4R Certification is a voluntary program that allows agri-retailers to solidify their commitment to sustainable agriculture through 4R Nutrient Stewardship via a third-party audit of 37 standards.

“The launch of the 4R Certification program in Ontario represents a strengthened commitment by agri-retailers to environmental stewardship to improve water quality in the Great Lakes,” said Dave Bутtenham, CEO of the Ontario Agri-Business Association. “The unified efforts of 4R Ontario and Fertilizer Canada have created this opportunity to advance Ontario growers as leaders in sustainable agriculture.”

Becoming a 4R Certified agri-retailer takes just four steps:

- 1. Learn More About 4R Certification:** The 4R Certification program verifies alignment with 4R Nutrient Stewardship through a third-party audit of 37 standards, as outlined in the Standards Manual resource included within the toolkit.
- 2. Gather the Required Evidence for Your 4R Certification Audit:** The resources included in the toolkit will help agri-retailers prepare for their 4R Certification Audit and become 4R Certified.
- 3. Book Your 4R Certification Pre-Audit:** The 4R Certification Pre-Audit is a training session, offered by Warriner Ag, that allows agri-retailers to participate in a trail run of the audit process and learn more about the 37 standards.



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4. Schedule Your 4R Certification Audit: Agri-retailers can now schedule their official 4R Certification Audit – the last step to becoming 4R Certified.

Fertilizer Canada offers the program as a better measure of performance to address economic, environmental and social considerations. Further, food companies and sustainable supply chain initiatives recognize the value of the 4R Nutrient Stewardship framework to assist growers in accessing new markets for their products and realize the vision of moving from the world's fifth to its second largest agriculture exporter.

"4R Nutrient Stewardship is quickly gaining recognition with decision makers, agriculture groups and growers as the gold-standard for on-farm nutrient management for stewardship in the Great Lakes basin," said Garth Whyte, President & CEO of Fertilizer Canada. "The framework has been identified by the International Joint Commission as an indicator of water quality, encouraging farmers to adopt 4R practices to reduce nutrient losses. Getting agri-retailers 4R Certified is the first step in expanding the reach of 4R Nutrient Stewardship to Ontario growers."

By aligning their businesses with 4R Nutrient Stewardship and by becoming 4R Certified, agri-retailers are also helping to quantify the advancement of sustainable agriculture in Canada. Acres advised by 4R Certified retailers are counted toward Fertilizer Canada's goal of capturing 20 million acres under 4R Nutrient Stewardship by 2020.

"Capturing 20 million acres across Canada under 4R Nutrient Stewardship represents one quarter of our farmland being managed sustainably," Whyte said. "By reaching this goal, we will ensure Canada remains a leader in on-farm environmental stewardship."

For more information, or to find out how to become 4R Certified, visit www.4rcertified.ca.

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4R Ontario represents a group of stakeholders implementing 4R Nutrient Stewardship in the province through a Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) with Fertilizer Canada, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and the Ontario Agri Business Association (OABA). Additional collaboration under this agreement includes the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change; Grain Farmers of Ontario; the Ontario Federation of Agriculture; the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario; Conservation



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Ontario; The Nature Conservancy – OHIO; the International Plant Nutrition Institute; the Ontario Certified Crop Advisor Board and Ontario agri-retailers.

Fertilizer Canada represents manufacturers, wholesale and retail distributors of nitrogen, phosphate, potash and sulphur fertilizers. The fertilizer industry plays an essential role in Canada's economy, contributing \$23 billion in economic activity annually and over 76,000 jobs. The association is committed to supporting the fertilizer industry with innovative research and programming while advocating sustainability, stewardship, safety and security through standards and Codes of Practice. Please visit **fertilizercanada.ca**.

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