



4R CERTIFICATION

CORPORATE ADOPTION TOOLKIT 2020

ONTARIO AND PRICE EDWARD ISLAND



The following Toolkit is meant to be seen as a guide, and contains messaging surrounding nutrient management planning under the 4R Certification program presented by Fertilizer Canada.

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This toolkit provides guidance to companies in the recognition of 4R Nutrient Stewardship and their continued commitment to meet the conditions outlined under the 4R Certification program. As a 4R Certified Agri-retailer, companies have both the technical expertise and procedures in place to successfully submit 4R acres. Enclosed in the toolkit you will find the steps required and supporting resources for an agri-retailer to become 4R Certified.

For assistance implementing this toolkit, please contact McKenzie Smith, Fertilizer Canada's Director, Stewardship & Regulatory Affairs, at msmith@fertilizercanada.ca or (613) 786-3044.

BACKGROUND

4R Nutrient Stewardship has been promoted and applied across Canada through a number of provincial and regional programs and initiatives. 4R Nutrient Stewardship is currently being practiced in Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick, Saskatchewan, and Prince Edward Island.

To fertilize properly and achieve the benefits of an abundant and healthy crop, professionals should follow the 4Rs of fertilizer use: Right Source @ Right Rate, Right Time, Right Place ®.

Canada's diverse soils have helped to shape current farm practices. National projects help amplify the importance of applying 4R Nutrient Stewardship to farms. Provincial programs tailored to each region help farmers understand what practices best suit their conditions.

For example, what may be a recommended practice in Western Canada may not be recognized as a beneficial practice in Atlantic Canada. Factors, such as soil, climatic conditions, crops, application rates, and timing vary greatly across the country. It is for this reason 4R Nutrient Stewardship is a site-specific program based on available science pertaining to land, air and water.

A number of environmental concerns related to agriculture are evident across Canada from excessive phosphorous loading, to nitrate levels in drinking water, to soil conservation, and greenhouse gas emissions. As Canadians, we understand the importance of sustainable environmental solutions and one of the key benefits of 4R Nutrient Stewardship is minimizing environmental concerns related to agriculture.

The 4R Certification Program is a voluntary program for Nutrient Service Providers, which include agricultural retailers, agricultural service providers, and certified professionals. The 4R Certification program translates 4R Nutrient Stewardship into a

set of auditable criteria. To become 4R Certified, a Nutrient Service Provider must complete a third-party audit every two years to maintain certification. The Agrichemical Warehousing Standards Association (AWSA) is the third-party audit body conducting 4R Certification Program audits in Canada.

The 4R Certification program evaluates retailers on sustainable 4R Nutrient Stewardship practices in the areas of training & education, nutrient recommendations & nutrient application and documentation.

The 4R Certification program was first brought to Canada through implementation of the program in Ontario in close collaboration with the Nutrient Stewardship Council, the Ohio Agri-Business Association and The Fertilizer Institute in the U.S. to ensure alignment between cross-border efforts.

In addition to Ohio, New York and Florida, the program is now available and implemented in the following Canadian provinces: Ontario and Prince Edward Island.

REQUIRED CONDITIONS

Fertilizer Canada retail member companies submitted over 700,000 acres under 4R Designation and Certification in 2019. This information allows Fertilizer Canada to communicate the number of 4R acres in the country, which demonstrates the industry's commitment to sustainable nutrient management and environmental stewardship.

Through our 4R retailer programming, you can track and report acres that are implementing 4R best management practices, which helps us demonstrate the sustainable efforts of our industry.

The 4R Certification program in Ontario is comprised of 37 auditable standards. Of that total: six address training and education, 12 address nutrient recommendations, 10 address nutrient application and nine address maintenance of proper documentation. Each standard and the corresponding evidence to meet those standards will be re-evaluated on a two-year cycle by a private, third-party auditor, via an in-person audit, to maintain certification. Once an agri-retail facility completes and passes a third-party 4R Certification audit, acres influenced by the 4R Certified site are counted as 4R Acres in Canada.

1. Identify lead contact(s) at company

Identify a lead contact within your company who will be responsible for implementation of the program and serve as the lead contact for correspondence with Fertilizer Canada. It is recommended to provide a secondary contact who will support the implementation of the program and compile company-wide 4R acres for annual submission to Fertilizer Canada. Note, these are guidelines for oversight of the program and communication

with Fertilizer Canada – a company can assign as many leads or supports as they require.

Lead:

Support:

2. Identify facilities and managers

Identify facilities and facility managers at your company who participate in the 4R Certification process. The 4R Certification program certifies on a facility basis making these facility managers key contacts for implementation of the program.

Name:

Location:

3. Complete information training session for facility managers/lead contacts

According to the 4R Certification standards, any staff providing nutrient recommendations must complete 4R Nutrient Management training. For Certified Crop Advisors (CCAs) the program requires five hours of continuing education units in nutrient management per year. Any staff who are not certified professionals but are providing recommendations should provide evidence of training attended including: list of training session, meeting agendas, training material covered and attendance verification.

If you are looking for places to attend 4R training, Fertilizer Canada provides an online eLearning platform. It is recommended any staff making 4R recommendations take the three-part 4R Nutrient Stewardship Training. This training provides 5.5 continuing education units to CCAs and is an excellent resource as a baseline for 4R Nutrient Stewardship.

eLearning

Getting started with Fertilizer Canada's eLearning platform is simple. The only requirement is a computer with internet access. Registration on the site only takes a minute and users will have immediate access to the training module. Students learn at their own pace and on their own schedule.

Fertilizer Canada's eLearning was developed to provide continuing education to fertilizer industry workers. If you are a new eLearning member, please register at the link below – it only takes a second. If you are a returning member, please use your username and password to login below.

If obtaining CEUs are not a concern, the course is **FREE** with the following promo codes:

- **Part 1 Exam: Farmer1**
- **Part 2 Exam: Farmer2**
- **Part 3 Exam: Farmer3**

A Certified Crop Advisor will get 5.5 Continuing Education Credits (CEUs) under Nutrient Management upon completion of all three modules of the course and the exam for a \$50 fee.

4R Nutrient Stewardship Training

This three-section course takes an in-depth look at the principles, practices and planning required to develop and implement a 4R Nutrient Stewardship plan on-farm. Students wishing to obtain a certificate of completion and/or CCA CEUs must complete all of the section quizzes.

- Go to **elearning.fertilizercanada.ca**
- Select “Register” at the bottom of the page
- Complete all the fields in order to register for eLearning
 - *Note: if you are not a Certified Crop Advisor, you may leave the “CCA Certification Number” blank
- Select “Submit Registration”

You are now registered and can begin taking courses.

Fertilizer Canada’s eLearning course list will appear on your screen.

You may begin taking the 4R Nutrient Stewardship Training - Part 1 by scrolling down to the course and selecting “Launch”

For more information regarding eLearning please contact info@fertilizercanada.ca

4. Equip facility managers with steps to become 4R Certified

Follow these steps to become a 4R Certified Retailer in Ontario

1. Learn More About 4R Certification

4R Certification is a voluntary program designed to allow agri-retailers in Ontario to align their business practices with the sustainability principles of 4R Nutrient Stewardship, as verified by a third-party based on 37 auditable standards as outlined in the standards manual below.

- **Standards Manual Version 1.3**

2. Gather the Required Evidence for Your 4R Certification Audit

The below resources will help you organize for your 4R Certification Audit and become 4R Certified.

- [Retailer Guidelines Summary](#)

Supporting documents referenced in the summary will be provided upon request

3. Book Your 4R Certification Pre-Audit

Your 4R Certification Pre-audit is a training session, offered by Warriner Ag, that allows agri-retailers to participate in a trial run of the audit process and learn more about the 37 standards.

- [Coach Postcard](#)

[Book Your Pre-Audit Now](#)

4. Schedule Your 4R Certification Audit

Now is the time to schedule your official 4R Certification Audit – the last step to becoming 4R Certified!

- [Auditor Postcard](#)

Book your audit now with one of our auditors below:

[Bernie Benoit](#)

[Cheryl Garniss](#)

Follow these steps to become 4R Certified in PEI

1. Learn More About 4R Certification

4R Certification is a voluntary program designed to allow agri-retailers in PEI to align their business practices with the sustainability principles of 4R Nutrient Stewardship, as verified by a third-party based on 37 auditable standards as outlined in the standards manual below.

- [PEI Standards Manual](#)

2. Gather the Required Evidence for Your 4R Certification Audit

The below resources will help you organize for your 4R Certification Audit and allow your retail to be 4R Certified.

- [link needed](#)

Supporting documents referenced in the summary will be provided upon request

3. Book Your 4R Certification Pre-Audit

Fertilizer Canada and the Agrichemical Warehousing Standards Association (AWSA) provide a free, half-day pre-audit to each PEI agri-retail company. The pre-audit is a

training session that goes through the 38 standards in PEI to ensure that the agri-retailer is prepared and as successful as possible during their full 4R Certification audit.

To inquire about a 4R Certification Pre-audit session, please contact McKenzie: [McKenzie Smith](#)

4. Schedule Your 4R Certification Audit

Now is the time to schedule your official 4R Certification Audit – the last step to becoming 4R Certified!

- [Auditor Postcard \(link coming\)](#)

5. Supporting 4R materials (see list)

These documents provide a reference point to defining required competencies to becoming 4R Certified.

Ontario

[4R Certification Standards Manual 1.3](#)
[4R Certification Pre-Audit Information](#)
[4R Certification Guidance Document](#)
[4R Certification Audit Information](#)
[Applicable Federal and Provincial](#)
[Setback Distances](#)

[Tertiary Lake Erie Watershed](#)
[Boundary Map](#)
[T1-4R-ON-Certification -Sales-](#)
[Application-Staff-PPT-Template](#)
[Grower Sign off sheet](#)
[Grower Plan – Ontario](#)

PEI

[PEI Standards Manual](#)
[Brochure](#)
[4R Grower Plan Template](#)

[4R Guidance Tables](#)
[Grower Sign Off Sheet](#)

6. Set an annual 4R Certification Target

The Certification process offers us the opportunity to capture acres managed under 4R Nutrient Stewardship, thus quantifying the industry's commitment to sustainable agriculture solutions. By setting a target goal that will increase the number of 4R Certified sites, your company will contribute to the total number of verified 4R acres. This supports Fertilizer Canada in creating a national standard that is endorsed by federal and provincial governments.

2020 4R Certified sites:

2021 Target 4R Certified sites:

7. Communicate 4R Certified Status

Now that your company has completed and passed an audit to become fully 4R Certified, we want to help you and your company get the word out.

The 4R Certification program is designed to provide innovative, science-based programs for Canadians to demonstrate their commitment to sustainable nutrient management and ultimately environmental sustainability.

In this toolkit we have provided resources and tips designed to help promote you are 4R Certified.

Regarding promotion, it would be greatly appreciated if you were to participate on social media by taking a picture of your facility and sharing that you are 4R Certified with your social following.

Use the following hashtags and accounts on Twitter to help reach a wider audience

[@FertilizerCA](#) and use the hashtags [#4R](#) and [#Whatsinit4RMe](#)

Suggested Twitter Posts

1. Nutrient management planning by [@Company](#) is based on using [#4R](#) Best Management Practices derived from the best available science to manage nutrient resources in ways that increase on-farm sustainability.
2. [@Company](#) recognizes [#4R](#) Nutrient Stewardship as an industry & company priority and has committed to continuously meet the following conditions to be recognized as a **4R Certified** Company.

[#Whatsinit4RMe @FertilizerCA](#)

[#Whatsinit4RMe @FertilizerCA](#)

A few other great touch points to share in the 4R success is by communicating with your audiences and stakeholders by utilizing internal and external newsletters or by ensuring retail advertisement.

PROMOTIONAL RESOURCES

These resources are available in hard copy from Fertilizer Canada, and are available for production, distribution and/or posting on your company website. For assistance implementing these resources, please contact Brittany Thibaudeau, Fertilizer Canada's Communications Specialist, at bthibadeau@fertilizercanada.ca or (613) 786-3043.

[4R Infographic](#)
[4R Poster](#)

[4R Pocket book](#)
[Coach Postcard](#)

[Auditor Postcard](#)
[What's in it 4R me? Brochure](#)

[4R Certification Brochure](#)
[Fertilizer Use Brochure](#)

FIND OUT MORE

Click the link below to find out more about how your company can participate in using Best Management Practices derived from the best available science to manage nutrient resources in ways that increase on-farm sustainability.

<https://fertilizercanada.ca/nutrient-stewardship/4r-certification/>

CONTACT

General program inquiries

McKenzie Smith

Director, Stewardship & Regulatory Affairs

msmith@fertilizercanada.ca

613-786-3044

Communications inquiries

Brittany Thibaudeau

Communications Specialist

bthibaudeau@fertilizercanada.ca

613-786-3043