



## 4R DESIGNATION

### CORPORATE ADOPTION TOOLKIT 2020

ALBERTA, SASKATCHEWAN, MANITOBA



The following Toolkit is meant to be seen as a guide, and contains messaging surrounding nutrient management planning under the 4R Designation 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 Designation program. As a 4R Designated 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 Designated.

For assistance implementing this toolkit, please contact McKenzie Smith, Fertilizer Canada's Director, Stewardship & Regulatory Affairs, at [msmith@fertilizercanada.ca](mailto: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.

### What is 4R Designation?

Farmers are increasingly facing pressures from the supply chain and the general public to demonstrate on-farm stewardship and the 4R Nutrient Stewardship framework helps growers meet those challenges. 4R Nutrient Stewardship provides a framework to

achieve cropping system goals - increased production, increased farmer profitability, enhanced environmental protection and improved sustainability. 4R Nutrient Stewardship requires the implementation of best management practices (BMPs) that optimize the efficiency of nutrients in the field. The goal of 4R Nutrient Stewardship BMPs is to match nutrient supply with crop requirements which minimizes nutrient loss and increase crop nutrient uptake. Selection of BMPs varies by location, and those chosen for a given farm are dependent on local soil and climatic conditions, crop, management conditions and other site-specific factors.

**Sustainable farming is the future. In many cases, that future is already underway.** We want to demonstrate Canada's leadership in sustainable farming to the world by getting Canadian agri-retailers and crop advisors 4R Designated and counting millions of acres under 4R Nutrient Stewardship.

## **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. Fertilizer Canada will ask 4R Designated Agronomists to collect and compile 4R acres and submit these acres to Fertilizer Canada by end of year.

**To ensure we are capturing all the work being completed by our 4R Designated agronomists, Fertilizer Canada asks each company involved in the 4R program to submit acres by November 1, 2020.**

### **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 4R Designated Agronomists**

Identify the 4R Designated Agronomist(s) at your company who will support implementation of 4R Designation by providing 4R agronomic advice and reporting acres under their recommendations. The 4R Designated Agronomist(s) are responsible for the creation of fertilizer plans for their grower customers that align with science-based 4R BMPs.

**Name:**

**Location:**

## **3. Complete training and attestations for 4R Designated Agronomists**

In order to become a 4R Designated Agronomist, you are required to be a Certified Crop Adviser (CCA). In certain provinces where both a CCA and Professional Agrologist (PAg) designation are required (i.e. Saskatchewan) having both a CCA and PAg will be recognized. This minimum requirement ensures that each 4R Designated agronomist has completed a baseline training, education, and study in the area of nutrient management.

Your first step to becoming a 4R Designated Agronomist is education. A CCA can complete their 4R training in two ways. The first is through successful completion of the CCA 4R Nutrient Management Specialty (4R NMS) exam. Being a 4R NMS CCA automatically qualifies a CCA to become a 4R Designated Agronomist after completion and submission of the Validation form. The second way to become 4R Designated is through completion of Fertilizer Canada's 4R Nutrient Stewardship Training. The course is offered through Fertilizer Canada's eLearning platform and requires successful completion of all 3 sections and successfully passing the quiz for each section.

### **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 Adviser 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](http://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 Adviser, 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”

## Validating Acres

Now that you have completed your training and education on the 4R’s, do not forget that the submission of acres will require sign-off by an assigned 4R Designated Agronomist who has submitted a 4R Validation form to Fertilizer Canada.

The validation form is used by Fertilizer Canada to ensure both your CCA credentials and training have been completed. By signing the 4R Validation form, an agronomist is formalizing their commitment to 4R Nutrient Stewardship and identifying themselves as a 4R Designated agronomist who will provide growers with 4R Nutrient Stewardship recommendations that can be tracked as 4R acres.

Once the 4R Validation form is sent to Fertilizer Canada, you are ready to start reporting 4R acres. Again, Fertilizer Canada never sees the plans developed with your customers

as that stays between you and your customer – all we are looking for are the acres, crop and province they are located in. There is an optional field on the form for producer information and this is intended to provide specific recognition to producers. This is something Fertilizer Canada can help work with you on, if you choose to do so.

The 4R Validation form and acre report can be submitted to [4rdesignations@fertilizercanada.ca](mailto:4rdesignations@fertilizercanada.ca) or [msmith@fertilizercanada.ca](mailto:msmith@fertilizercanada.ca)

*\*Some organizations have internal forms used to collect and submit acres planned under the 4R Designation program. 4R Designated Agronomists should inquire their company as to which form should be used to submit acres*

#### **4. Equip 4R Designated Agronomists with supporting 4R materials (see list)**

The following documents provide 4R Designated Agronomists with science-based 4R BMPs to guide their recommendations and describe what a 4R acre entails.

#### **4R Guidance Tables**

#### **4R Grower Plan**

#### **Provincial Templates**

#### **Manitoba**

#### **Saskatchewan**

#### **Alberta**

#### **5. Set an annual 4R Acre Target**

The Designation process offers us the opportunity to capture acres planned under 4R Nutrient Stewardship, thus quantifying the industry's commitment to sustainable agriculture solutions. By setting company-specific acre targets, your company contributes to the total 4R acres and aids in creating a national standard endorsed by federal and provincial governments.

*\*To ensure we are capturing all the work being completed by our 4R Designated agronomists, Fertilizer Canada asks each company involved in the 4R program to submit acres by November 1, 2020.*

**2020 4R acres:**

**2021 target 4R acres:**

## 6. Communicate 4R Designated Status

The 4R Designation 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 intended to help promote that your company is 4R Designated.

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 Designated 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 Designated** Company.

[#Whatsinit4RMe](#) [@FertilizerCA](#)

[#Whatsinit4RMe](#) [@FertilizerCA](#)

A few other great touch points to share in 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](mailto:bthibadeau@fertilizercanada.ca) or (613) 786-3043.

[4R Infographic](#)

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

[4R Poster](#)

[4R Designation Brochure](#)

[4R Pocket book](#)

[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-designation/>

## **CONTACT**

### **General program inquiries**

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