



FERTILIZER CANADA

FERTILISANTS CANADA

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June 17, 2021

The Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau  
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food  
1341 Baseline Road  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0C5

Dear Minister Bibeau,

Canada's fertilizer industry has a significant role to play in achieving both the government's target to net-zero emissions by 2050 and reaching \$85 billion in agri-food exports by 2025. For the last decade, the fertilizer industry and Canadian farmers have worked proactively to develop methods of reducing their environmental impact, without compromising farmers' competitiveness. The issue of nitrous oxide emissions from fertilizer application is not new to our industry, nor farmers. Together, with leading scientists, national agricultural associations, and provincial governments, we have developed 4R Nutrient Stewardship. **Now is the time for the Government of Canada to formally recognize 4R Nutrient Stewardship and focus more attention and resources on the opportunities this kind of program can bring to Canada's agricultural community.**

Recently, the Government of Canada has signaled that reduction of nitrous oxide is a policy priority, beginning development of an emissions reduction strategy from fertilizer of 30% below 2020 levels. It is critical that the Government of Canada work collaboratively with the agriculture industry to set the right goals and identify mechanisms to achieve those goals.

4R Nutrient Stewardship is a science-based, industry-led program that has the seal of approval from main crop-producing provinces, including Memorandums of Cooperation with farm organizations and provincial governments in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and PEI. The program is also integrated into many of these jurisdictions' environmental plans as a standard for nutrient management, including Manitoba's *Climate and Green Plan*, as well the *Canada-Ontario Lake Erie Action Plan*. Saskatchewan has also set a target of having 25% of provincial acres under 4R management by 2025 and farmer organizations are setting 4R related-targets highlighting the acceptance of this program as a solution to both increased productivity and reduced environmental impacts.

Including this year, there are only nine growing seasons remaining to 2030. Solutions such as 4R Nutrient Stewardship and the 4R Climate-Smart Protocol must be at the core of any plan to reduce agricultural emissions to ensure that farmers are rewarded, not punished. Efforts to increase adoption of 4R Nutrient Stewardship over the last five years have increased significantly and adoption is growing. As of 2020, there are approximately 4 million validated 4R acres under Fertilizer Canada's agronomy programming with agri-retailers. Soil scientists across Canada agree that



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adoption of the 4R Climate-Smart Protocol at an advanced level results in a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by as much as 35%. If this were implemented across Western Canada alone, it would reduce emissions by 2-3 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e annually and would reward farmers with over \$500 million in credits at \$150/t.

**The agricultural community calls on you to immediately recognize the valuable role of 4R Nutrient Stewardship in proper nutrient management in Canada by entering into a Memorandum of Cooperation with Fertilizer Canada. This agreement could develop a National Ag Committee which would discuss 4R uptake and implementation, so that we can continue to make progress.**

It is critically important that your government proceed with the memorandum as soon as possible and does not wait for the finalization of the federal strategy on fertilizer emissions. Any strategy will likely not be complete for a number of years and operationalizing it could take even longer. Farmers, industry, and government must work on this together, as soon as possible.

There is consensus in the agricultural community that 4R Nutrient Stewardship must play a central role in any effort to reduce emissions; it presents a solution that is rarely found: farmers are more profitable, emissions are reduced, and industry remains competitive. While other jurisdictions need to only feed themselves, Canada must help feed the world. We ask the Government of Canada to listen to its agricultural sector and immediately proceed with a 4R Nutrient Stewardship Memorandum of Cooperation.

Sincerely,

Karen Proud  
*President & CEO*  
*Fertilizer Canada*