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Committees and Partners

The 4R Nutrient Stewardship Certification Program is governed and guided by the Nutrient Stewardship Council, a diverse set of stakeholders from business, government, university and non-governmental sectors with a common goal of maintaining agricultural productivity while also improving the quality of Lake Erie and its contributing watersheds.

View a complete list of partners and funders at 4Rcertified.org/contact

Servicing over 1 million acres in the Western Lake Erie Basin.
Certified locations through 2015:



Smithville, Ohio



Attica, Ballville, Crestline & Norwalk, Ohio*



Fremont, Ohio



Loudonville, Smithville & Sullivan, Ohio



Berkey, Bradner & Graytown, Ohio



Attica & Hamler, Ohio
Blissfield & Morenci, MI



Caledonia, Ohio



Arcadia, Arlington, Custar, McComb & Pandora, Ohio*



Ohio City, Ohio

*All company's agronomy facilities are certified.



Using the Right Source of Nutrients at the Right Rate and Right Time in the Right Place



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info@oaba.net



614-326-7520



Program administered by the Ohio AgriBusiness Association on behalf of the Nutrient Stewardship Council.



4R NUTRIENT STEWARDSHIP CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Voluntary program for agricultural retailers & nutrient service providers implementing the 4Rs

About

In March 2014, the agriculture community launched a proactive, responsible commitment aimed at the long-term improvement of Lake Erie's water quality.

The 4R Nutrient Stewardship Certification Program encourages agricultural retailers, nutrient service providers and other certified professionals to adopt proven best practices through the 4Rs, which refers to using the Right Source of Nutrients at the Right Rate and Right Time in the Right Place.

This approach provides a science-based framework for plant nutrition management and sustained crop production, while considering specific individual farms' needs.



This voluntary, third-party auditor verified program provides a consistent, recognized standard for agricultural retailers in Indiana, Michigan and Ohio where surrounding waters drain into Lake Erie.

As regulations are being considered, it's critical retailers and their grower customers adopt best practices to realize long-term improvements.

Why



2011 Lake Erie Algal Bloom
Credit: Brenda Culler, ODNR Coastal Management

Lake Erie is a source of drinking water for millions, home to more than half the fish in the Great Lakes and a draw for tourists.

Harmful algal blooms in Lake Erie and other bodies of water have been on the rise leading to increased water treatment costs and negative impacts on fishing and tourism.

Despite the many actions farmers have taken to improve soil health and reduce fertilizer runoff, nutrients leaving fields and entering streams and lakes continue to contribute to water quality problems.

How

The 4R Nutrient Stewardship Certification Program outlines 41 cumulative criteria to be implemented, staggered over a three year period. Each criterion will be re-evaluated each year by a private, third-party auditor, via an in-person or desk audit, to maintain certification. Depending on the services provided by the Nutrient Service Provider, some criteria will not be applicable.



2011 Lake Erie Algal Bloom
Credit: NOAA Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory

CERTIFICATION PROGRAM GOALS	THIRD-PARTY VERIFIED	STANDARD REQUIREMENT SECTIONS
Maximize crop nutrient uptake and minimize losses	Audits review training and education, recommendations to growers and application records	Initial training and on-going education
Positively impact local water bodies	Third-party auditor verification occurs every year	Monitoring of 4R implementation
Provide up-to-date information on nutrient stewardship		Nutrient recommendation and application
Help the agricultural sector adapt to new research and technology		

Download complete requirements and details at 4Rcertified.org/resources.

Voluntary program for agricultural retailers & nutrient service providers for implementing the 4Rs: using the Right Source of nutrients at the Right Rate and Right Time in the Right Place.



RIGHT SOURCE

- All sources of fertilizer are accounted for in the nutrient recommendation.



RIGHT RATE

- Soil tests, used to make nutrient recommendations are less than four years old.
- Nutrient application equipment is calibrated annually.



RIGHT TIME

- The timing of fertilizer application avoids spreading on frozen or snow-covered fields.
- Nutrients are not broadcast applied prior to a predicted heavy rainfall.



RIGHT PLACE

- Phosphorus is applied below the soil surface whenever possible.
- Nutrient application setbacks are followed in sensitive areas.



For more information visit 4Rcertified.org