



# Overview of Requirements for 4R Nutrient Stewardship Certification FOR NUTRIENT SERVICE PROVIDERS IN THE LAKE ERIE WATERSHED

The 4R Nutrient Stewardship Certification Program outlines an initial three-year plan for Nutrient Service Providers. A brief summary of standard requirements during the first three years is provided below.

## YEAR 1

Nutrient Service Providers and their grower customers shall be educated and trained on the principles of 4R Nutrient Stewardship, and support the adoption of new research and technologies for nutrient management.

- Education of staff on 4R Nutrient Stewardship
- Maintain records with soil test at least every four years, recommendations based on university recommendations and actual applications reviewed with client
- Account for all sources of nutrient applied
- Identify sensitive areas of nutrient applied

## YEAR 2

The implementation of 4R principles and practices are recorded and monitored. Records of implementation are checked by the Nutrient Service Provider to evaluate progress of the implementation of 4R principles and practices over time.

- Continued education on 4R Nutrient Stewardship internally to staff and to growers through meetings or materials
- Maintain records of conditions at time of application and consider pre-application weather conditions
- Have digital field boundary maps and identify sensitive features with soil tests and yield maps
- Soil test no larger than 25 acres

## YEAR 3

Nutrient recommendations and application are made with the goal of maximizing crop uptake (with goals for crop yields calculated and included) and minimizing nutrient losses to the environment. Records are maintained for customers and their nutrient recommendations. Soil testing must be based on appropriate sampling frequency and intensity. Recommendations and application must be consistent with the Tri-State Fertilizer Recommendations or other recommendations recognized and supported by a land-grant university, allowing for adaptive management based on documented on-farm data showing reasonable expectations of improved crop yield without increased risk of harm to water quality.

Nutrient recommendations and application must observe setbacks to water bodies and other features. Nitrogen and phosphorous must not be applied on frozen ground. All sources of nutrients must be accounted for in the recommendation and must be reviewed by a certified professional. Variable Rate Application is used when justified. Nutrients are not applied at more than a two-year application rate.

- Field records include watershed information for fields
- Customer signature on 4R Nutrient Stewardship support
- Geo-referred soil testing
- Include weather criteria as part of application planning
- Use of variable rate planning
- Use of variable rate technology

Download complete requirements and details at [4Rcertified.org/how](https://4Rcertified.org/how).



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