

## Ontario Renews Commitment to 4R Nutrient Stewardship with a Third-Term Agreement

Guelph, ON, January 22, 2026

The Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, Fertilizer Canada, Grain Farmers of Ontario, the Ontario Agri Business Association, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture along with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness have renewed the Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) for the 4R Nutrient Stewardship program for a third term.

The renewed agreement reinforces the shared commitment of industry and government to advance sustainable agricultural practices that protect Ontario's soils and water, while supporting farm profitability. Ontario's approach to 4R nutrient stewardship revolves around a 4R certification program. This voluntary initiative evaluates and certifies nutrient service providers, including agricultural retailers, and certified professionals, on their implementation of 4R Nutrient Stewardship practices through independent third-party audits.

In 2025, the program certified over 1.4 million acres across Ontario, demonstrating strong uptake of these science-based practices.

4R Nutrient Stewardship is a science-based framework built on four principles for optimal fertilizer application: Right Source, Right Rate, Right Time, and Right Place. These practices help growers apply nutrients more efficiently, supporting strong crop performance while minimizing nutrient losses to the environment.

Building on Ontario farmers' recognized leadership in sustainability, this renewed MOC continues to advance nutrient stewardship province-wide through best management practices that reflect Ontario's diverse agricultural production systems and unique regional climatic, soil, and operational conditions. The program supports growers in reducing environmental impacts while maximizing crop yields and economic returns.

Through continued collaboration among industry, government, and farm organizations, the initiative improves soil health, protects water quality, and reduces greenhouse gas emissions in support of climate-smart agriculture. By certifying agricultural retailers, engaging qualified professionals, and measuring progress, the MOC enhances sustainability and delivers long-term economic and agronomic benefits for Ontario farmers.

Trevor Jones, Minister  
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness

*"Through this renewed Memorandum of Cooperation, Ontario is supporting farmers in practicing sustainable nutrient management, helping to protect water bodies, maintain soil health and increase profitability. Our government is honoured to be part of the 4R initiative and continue working with our partners toward a stronger, more resilient agri-food sector."*

Crosby Devitt, Chief Executive Officer  
Grain Farmers of Ontario

*"This agreement is a powerful example of what can be achieved when farmers, industry, and government work together. Its renewal reflects our continued commitment to nutrient management practices that protect the environment while supporting productive, resilient grain farms across Ontario."*

Paul Maurice, Executive Member  
Ontario Federation of Agriculture

*“Stewardship of the land is a responsibility we take seriously, and Ontario farmers have long been implementing practices that can mitigate our impact on the environment, like 4R Nutrient Stewardship. OFA is pleased to continue working with other farm and commodity organizations, along with OMAFA, to raise awareness of the benefits of 4R Nutrient Stewardship in the agricultural community.”*

Russel Hurst, Executive Director  
Ontario Agri Business Association

*“By reaffirming this agreement, OABA members, who serve as fertilizer suppliers and trusted advisors, underscore that science-based nutrient management is not just good practice, but fundamental to the long-term sustainability of Ontario’s farms, watersheds, and environment. The continued implementation of a third party verified auditing component allows our sector to rigorously document, verify, and demonstrate our commitment to 4R implementation to support healthy soils, clean water, and thriving agricultural economies across the province.”*

Michael Bourque, President and CEO  
Fertilizer Canada

*“The renewal of this agreement underscores Ontario’s leadership in adopting science-based nutrient management. 4R Nutrient Stewardship gives farmers practical tools to improve efficiency, protect water and soil resources, and strengthen the long-term resilience of the province’s agricultural sector. We value the continued partnership with government and farm organizations to advance measurable, accountable sustainability across Ontario.”*

Paul Bootsma, Policy Advisor  
Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario

*“As we strive to keep our soils healthy and productive, and diligently care for the environment around us, so that generations to come can continue to provide food for themselves and others; the 4R program assists us in achieving these goals. The Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario is pleased to support this program and encourages its practices on Ontario farms. CFFO looks forward to continuing to work collaboratively with those organizations that support this initiative.”*

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