

 **Servicing Over 2.5 Million**  
acres in the Western Lake Erie Basin and Ohio

Certified locations through December 2022:



Fostoria, Fremont, &  
Gibsonburg, OH; Waterloo, IN  
Litchfield, MI



Milford Center, OH



Edon, OH



Leipsic, OH



Continental, Martin &  
McCutchenville, OH



Kenton, Sycamore &  
Upper Sandusky, OH



Milford Center, OH



Gomer, OH



Arcadia, Arlington, Custar  
McComb & Pandora, OH



LUCKEY FARMERS, INC.  
Berkey, Bradner &  
Graytown, OH



Maria Stein, OH



Ohio City & Payne, OH



Bascom, Cygnet, Plymouth, &  
Tontogany, OH



Caledonia & Morral, OH



Bryan, OH



Attica, Delphos, Findlay,  
Hamler, Leipsic, Polk, Upper  
Sandusky & Washington CH, OH  
Blissfield, Morenci & Saline, MI



Maria Stein, OH



Attica, Ballville,  
Crestline, Norwalk, Osgood,  
South Charleston & Uniopolis, OH



Smithville, OH



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

For free consultation services or to schedule an audit,  
please contact Andrew at the Ohio AgriBusiness Association.



[4Rcertified.org](http://4Rcertified.org)



[/4Rcertified](https://www.facebook.com/4Rcertified)



[@4Rcertified](https://twitter.com/4Rcertified)



[aheilers@oaba.net](mailto:aheilers@oaba.net)



614-326-7520



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

Made possible through funding by:



View a complete list of partners at [4Rcertified.org](http://4Rcertified.org)

**We All  
Play A  
ROLE**



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 certification program aimed at the long-term improvement of Lake Erie's water quality.

The 4R Nutrient Stewardship Certification Program encourages agricultural retailers and independent crop consultants "nutrient service providers" 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 nutrient service providers in the Western Lake Erie Basin (Indiana, Michigan and Ohio) where waters drain into Lake Erie.

In January 2017, the 4R Nutrient Stewardship Certification Program expanded to the full state of Ohio, offering all Ohio-based nutrient service providers the opportunity to participate in efforts to improve the quality of Ohio's waterways.

As of December 2022, 55 nutrient service providers earned certification status within the program, with 45 servicing farmers in the Western Lake Erie Basin.

# Why

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

Algal blooms in Lake Erie and the Ohio River 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.



2014 Lake Erie Algal Bloom  
Credit: Dave Zapotosky, The Blade

# The 4Rs

**Voluntary program for agricultural retailers & nutrient service providers based on the 4R framework: using the Right Source of nutrients at the Right Rate and Right Time in the Right Place.**



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



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



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



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

# How

The 4R Nutrient Stewardship Certification Program outlines 31 cumulative criteria to be implemented, staggered over a three year period. Each criterion is re-evaluated each year by a private, third-party auditor, via an in-person or remote audit, to maintain certification.



GOALS	THIRD-PARTY VERIFIED	REQUIREMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximize crop nutrient uptake and minimize losses</li> <li>Positively impact local water bodies</li> <li>Provide up-to-date information on nutrient stewardship</li> <li>Help the agricultural sector adapt to new research and technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audits of training and education, recommendations to growers and application records</li> <li>Third-party auditor verification occurs every year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial training and on-going education</li> <li>Monitoring of 4R implementation</li> <li>Nutrient recommendation and application</li> </ul>

**For more information visit [4Rcertified.org](http://4Rcertified.org)**

