



# *2017 4R Advocate Application*

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Raising awareness and adoption of 4R nutrient stewardship is a top priority for The Fertilizer Institute (TFI). Currently, TFI is educating agricultural stakeholders, policy makers and the public about the 4Rs through a series of outreach efforts. While 4R messages from the fertilizer industry are being well received, TFI recognizes that engaging agricultural producers and sharing 4R success stories from the field play a critical role in adoption of 4R nutrient stewardship practices.

The 4R Advocate program recognizes agricultural retailers and their grower customers who are leading the way when it comes to implementing 4R nutrient stewardship on the farm. For more details about the program and past 4R Advocate growers and retailers, visit [nutrientstewardship.com/4r-advocate](http://nutrientstewardship.com/4r-advocate).

**Nominations are due on October 31, 2016.**



## 4R Advocate Program

### How Will the Program Work?

In order to identify grower customers throughout the country who are working with agricultural retailers to utilize 4R consistent products and services, TFI needs input and support from its retail members. Retailers are encouraged to complete the 4R Advocate program nomination form. Nominations will be accepted from August 1 through October 31, 2016. Applications received by October 31<sup>st</sup> will be reviewed by a panel of judges responsible for selecting the winners.

The 2017 4R Advocate winners will be announced in mid-December. In accordance with the rules of the 4R Advocate Program award, winning nominating retailers, growers, and a grower's guest must be able to participate in an expense paid trip to the 2017 Commodity Classic which takes place March 2-4, 2017 in San Antonio, Texas. The 2017 4R Advocate growers and nominating retailers will be recognized during a TFI awards banquet at the Commodity Classic, in supporting media releases and on [nutrientstewardship.com](http://nutrientstewardship.com).



### 2016 4R Advocate Program Winners



#### APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Written Essay
- ☐ Grower Contact Information
- ☐ Retailer/Agronomist Information

**Learn More Online.** More information regarding 4R nutrient stewardship and profiles of past winners are available at [nutrientstewardship.com](http://nutrientstewardship.com). The 4R website is designed to serve as an online clearinghouse for information on 4R-related tools and resources and will serve as the cornerstone for a multi-faceted nutrient stewardship initiative. In addition to introducing the 4R concept, [nutrientstewardship.com](http://nutrientstewardship.com) offers information regarding a wide range of agronomic topics related to nutrient management, and provides a how-to guide for implementing the 4Rs on the farm.

## 4R Advocate Award Program

### Rules for Participation

The following are the rules for participation in the 4R Advocate Award Program as defined by The Fertilizer Institute (the "Sponsor"). Applicants must be over 18 years of age and there must be a collaborative relationship between the nominating retailer and the grower when applying for this award program. By submitting a nomination, I affirm and agree to the following:

- I will become knowledgeable about the 4R program;
- I will be available to be a 4R advocate/spokesperson in the Sponsor's booth at the Commodity Classic for a total 2 hours over the 2.5 day exhibit period;
- Be available if requested to farm media during the Commodity Classic; and
- Be available for an interview with a reporter and pose for a photo with the retailer nominator to develop an article about the award.
- I will be present at the TFI 4R Advocate Awards banquet taking place at the Commodity Classic.

Being aware of the dangers inherent in travel by air, ground, ocean or otherwise, and willing to assume the risk of injury, death, damage, harm, loss and/or incident that may result therefrom, winners will release and forever discharge the Sponsors and the Sponsor Affiliates from and against any and all actual and potential, known and unknown, suspected and unsuspected claims, demands, causes of action, taxes, liabilities and damages for personal

injuries, death, damage or loss to personal property, or other harm or loss of any nature whatsoever sustained in connection with the receipt, ownership or use of the Award, or by reason of my travel by air, ground, ocean or otherwise to and from the vacation destination.

Further winners will grant to the Sponsors, throughout the universe and in perpetuity, the right, without reservation and freely assignable, to use and publish their name, voice, likeness, photograph, biographical and Award information by any and all means, devices, processes and technology, and in all media, now known or hereafter invented, contemplated or devised, for advertising, promotional and/or other purposes related to the Award without notice to me and without further compensation.

### 4R Advocate Program – Award Details

- Roundtrip airfare to The Commodity Classic held March 2 – March 4, 2017 in San Antonio, Texas or if driving, mileage will be reimbursed to and from place of residence to The Commodity Classic. TFI will assist winner and companion with travel arrangements as well as participation in the Commodity Classic events.
- Roundtrip ground transport between airport and hotel.
- A hotel room at the Commodity Classic March 2 through March 4, 2017.
- Daily meal allowance during Sponsor award travel period
- Payment of Commodity Classic registration fee and the costs of admission to the 4R Advocate Program awards banquet
- Any incidental costs, in addition to the foregoing, are the responsibility of the winner and/or companion, including the payment of any applicable taxes.

## 4R Advocate Award Program

### Written Nomination

Retailers can nominate multiple growers; however, we suggest multi-outlet entities use an internal vetting process to select the best nominations for submission. Nominating organizations should work with their grower nominee to prepare a written submission (1,000 words or less) that provides the following:

- Describe the farming operation;
- Describe the working relationship between the retailer and the nominated grower;
- Describe the 4R related products, services and practices being implemented at the grower's farm;

- Explain why the nominated grower should be selected as a 4R Advocate (please note that the nominee should be comfortable serving as a 4R spokesperson);
- Include grower comments addressing how 4R implementation helps the grower achieve their economic, social and environmental objectives;
- Provide metrics quantifying improvements achieved through 4R implementation, example metrics include:

- Nutrient use efficiency (NUE), (Yield/Amount of Fertilizer Applied).  
Ex. 2013, 0.96 lb N/bu with a 234 bu/acre average yield for corn.  
2006-2012, 1.2-1.3 lb N/bu with an average yield for corn of 193 bu/acre.

- Economic cost savings of proper nutrient optimization, (\$/acre).  
Ex. Compared to historical use of fall N application, our savings range from \$20-\$30/acre. Ex. Use of variable rate dry fertilizer resulted in savings ranging from \$10-\$20/acre.

Need Help? Use the tutorial on the following page to make sure you have filled out your application correctly.

## 4R Advocate Award Program

### Nomination Contact Information

**Instructions:** To complete the nomination process, please provide the contact information for the nominating retailer and the nominated grower, and prepare a written submission as described on the following page. Completed nominations should be submitted by October 31<sup>st</sup> to Peyton Harper via email at [pharper@tfi.org](mailto:pharper@tfi.org).

#### GROWER INFORMATION

Name of grower customer that is being nominated:

Number of acres:

Type of crops produced:

Mailing address:

City:

State/ZIP:

#### RETAILER/AGRONOMIST INFORMATION

Name of nominating retailer/agronomist:

Name of nominating organization:

Mailing address:

City:

State/ZIP:

Phone number:

Email:

Retailers can nominate multiple growers; however, we suggest multi-outlet entities use an internal vetting process to select the best nominations for submission. Please send questions regarding the nomination

process and/or completed nominations to TFI Manager of Sustainability and Stewardship Peyton Harper via telephone 202-515-2717 or email at [pharper@tfi.org](mailto:pharper@tfi.org).



# Make Your 4R Advocate Nomination A Winner!

Raising awareness and adoption of 4R nutrient stewardship is a top priority for the fertilizer industry. Part of raising awareness is showcasing real world examples of how farmers and retailers are successfully implementing the 4Rs, increasing yield and profits, while also reducing environmental impact. We need help to tell your story, and the first step is in making sure you have a top-notch 4R Advocate application!

Here are guidelines that will help you create a nomination form that is complete and fully represents each nominee. Remember, 4R Advocates are chosen as a grower and retailer pair. The best applications are those that include information from both parties. Nomination forms are due Monday, October 31, 2016.

## The Requirements

### Please include:

- Include both nominees' (producer and retailer's) mailing addresses
- Delivery addresses if different than mailing addresses
- Office, home and mobile phone numbers
- Email addresses
- If available farm websites and social media platforms are helpful. If the nominee uses a social media platform for routine connections, please include it and their username. Please give the same information for the retailer.

## What We Need – The Essay

A 1,000-word or fewer narrative about how a grower and retailer pair work together to apply the 4Rs in a farming operation. Follow these suggestions to ensure your application is as complete as possible.

### The Basics

*The narrative should present:*

- A basic description of the farm – number of acres, crops grown, unique environmental considerations, family involvement, etc.
- Describe the relationship between the retailer and the grower and how they have been able to work together in an effective manner.
- Explain why these nominees should be selected as 4R Advocates. Please feel free to use examples and speak about the nominees' qualifications both on and off the farm.

Use your own words. This should be an honest portrayal of the operation, the grower's approach and a recognition of family members involved in the business. The story can be told from the grower's or retailer's perspective or in third person.

## Need help?

We're glad to bounce around ideas or simply discuss the program in general. Call or email **Peyton Harper** at 202-515-2717, [pharper@tfi.org](mailto:pharper@tfi.org).

## The Details of Applying The 4Rs

This is where you really tell the story of the operation within those 1,000 words. Dive into detail. Include the grower's description about how the 4Rs help him achieve economic, social and environmental objectives. Also, explain the retail advisor's engagement and how they see value in the 4Rs.

- Present the 4R-related products, services and practices practiced on the farm. Tell how they've been applied and continue to be refined. Brand names are allowable.
- Include the retailer's descriptions of how the 4Rs strengthen their relationships with growers. Explain how you may plan better than before using a 4R system.
- List best management practices used.
- Describe any conservation practices that are being used to support on farm stewardship.
- Tell how 4R practices improve farm income.
- Describe how 4R practices help with economic, social and environmental goals.
- Feel free to include yield maps or other examples that help paint a picture of how the 4Rs have played a role in the operation.
- Show pictures. Include up to six photos with short descriptions of each in each narrative.

If you have other activities that help make a good 4R Advocate, add them in 100-word or fewer additions. These may include radio interviews, community presentations, TV interviews, online videos or other activities.

## The Proof

Here's where the rubber meets the road. Show metrics that quantify gains from using the 4Rs. For example:

- Show nutrient use efficiency (NUE) and yield/amount of fertilizer applied.
  - Examples: For corn, N use efficiency is as low as 0.83 lb/bu, a 17 percent improvement from 2015. 0.96 lb N/bu with a 234 bu/ac average corn yield. It has increased using split application going from 1.2 lbs of N/bu to 0.8 lbs of N/bu of corn
- Demonstrate cost savings
  - Examples: Compared to fall application in 2014 and 2015, savings range from \$20 to \$30/acre. Using variable-rate dry fertilizer saved \$15/ac in 2015 and \$20/ac in 2016.

- Need examples? Look at how other advocates have quantified their improvements here: [nutrientstewardship.com/advocates](http://nutrientstewardship.com/advocates)

Show average yield per acre for each crop and units (tons, bushels etc.). If yields have improved over the years, show data to support the claims. The more you can share, the better. However, don't let only a couple years' worth of data concern you. 4R practices have to begin somewhere.

## Sum It Up

Wrap up with a paragraph or two that summarize why the nominees will make strong 4R Advocates. You can highlight farming practices, a willingness to work with media, a willingness to strengthen community relations or achievements already made.

## 4Rs of Nutrient Stewardship

# What Are the 4Rs?

4R nutrient stewardship provides a framework to achieve cropping system goals - increased production, increased farmer profitability, enhanced environmental protection and improved sustainability. To achieve those goals, the 4R concept incorporates the:



RIGHT SOURCE



RIGHT RATE



RIGHT TIME



RIGHT PLACE

*Right fertilizer source at the right rate, at the right time and in the right place.*

Properly managed fertilizers support cropping systems that provide economic, social and environmental benefits. On the other hand, poorly managed nutrient applications can decrease profitability and increase nutrient losses, potentially degrading water and air.

4R nutrient stewardship requires the implementation of best management practices (BMPs) that support the use of the right fertilizer source, at the right rate, right time, and in the right place. The goal of fertilizer BMPs is to match nutrient supply with crop requirements and to minimize nutrient losses from fields. Selection of BMPs varies by location, and those chosen for a given farm are dependent on local soil and climatic conditions, crop, management conditions and other site specific factors.

Other agronomic and conservation practices, such as no-till farming and the use of cover crops, play a valuable role in supporting 4R nutrient stewardship. As a result, fertilizer BMPs are most effective when applied with other agronomic and conservation practices.

## 4Rs of Nutrient Stewardship

# The 4R Philosophy

The 4R philosophy is an innovative and science-based approach that offers enhanced environmental protection, increased production, increased farmer profitability, and improved sustainability. The concept is to use the right fertilizer source, at the right rate, at the right time, with the right placement. For fertilizer use to be sustainable, it must support cropping systems that provide economic, social, and environmental benefits. Implications of the 4R nutrient stewardship system will spread far and wide through agriculture and society as a whole.

To help address this challenge, The Fertilizer Institute (TFI) has been working collaboratively with the International Plant Nutrition Institute (IPNI), the International Fertilizer Industry Association and the Fertilizer Canada (FC) to advance the 4R nutrient stewardship initiative. Two goals within the initiative include establishing 4Rs as a recognizable strategy for economic, social, and environmental sustainability and expanding the adoption of 4R nutrient stewardship as well as the awareness of these efforts to federal and state program officials.

## 4R Objectives

4R nutrient stewardship can help farmers achieve a wide range of economic, social and environmental objectives. The following lists provide examples of commonly identified grower goals:

### ECONOMIC GOALS

- Improve net farm income
- Contribute to improved regional economic development

### SOCIAL GOALS

- Improve the quality of farm family housing, diet, and education
- Improve productivity of farm labor by appropriate use of emerging technologies that increase efficiencies of field operations and reduce costs per unit of crop harvested
- Improve access to sources of information to assist in farm management decision making

### ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS

- Maintain or reduce unwanted losses of nutrients to the environment
- Reduce soil erosion of nutrient containing soil particles
- Reduce volatile ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>) emissions
- Reduce nitrification/de-nitrification losses of nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) and di-nitrogen (N<sub>2</sub>)
- Reduce energy use per harvested unit of farm production
- Improve recycling of crop nutrients from crop residues and livestock manures

## 4Rs of Nutrient Stewardship

# What Does It Mean to Implement the 4Rs?

Implementing the 4R nutrient stewardship framework means defining the right nutrient source, at the right rate, the right time, and in the right place for plant nutrient application as those producing the economic, social, and environmental outcomes desired by stakeholders in the soil-plant system. The 4R approach is based on using best management practices (BMP) derived from the best available science to manage nutrient resources in ways that increase sustainability. The items below should be considered when implementing the 4Rs. Addressing these items allows producers, service providers, educators, and policy makers to be assured their efforts embrace 4R nutrient stewardship. The following list should be used as you consider the 4R practices, products and services being implemented on the nominated grower's farm.

- Balance the three areas of sustainability – economic, social, and environmental.
- Include BMPs that integrate solutions for all 4R performance areas – source, rate, time and place.
- Provide site-specific recommendations that address specific regional soil, climate and operational issues.
- Balance nutrition to ensure that N, P, K, secondary nutrients and micronutrients are in adequate supply to meet crop production expectations.
- Use appropriate tools such as soil testing, tissue testing, and nutrient balance to assess nutrient requirements.
- Consider all sources of nutrients (fertilizer, soil organic matter, manure, crop residue etc.) during planning and recommendation development.
- Comply with applicable nutrient management regulations in the grower's region.
- Measure the effectiveness of selected BMPs and use assessments to support continuous improvement.
- Use concepts and terminology consistent with defined 4R standards.
- Provide and maintain clear documentation of the nutrient management plan and its implementation.