



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 28, 2021

Contact: Kristen Dearden, 515-334-1482, kristen@acwaiowa.com

Ag Retailers Reaffirm Commitment to Environmental Stewardship

Ankeny – Agriculture's Clean Water Alliance (ACWA) members have reaffirmed their commitment to following a Code of Practice for fall application of Nitrogen fertilizer.

The purpose of the ACWA Code of Practice is to establish and implement reasonable and practical guidelines for nitrogen fertilization applications to reduce nitrate loss from farm fields, which is a foundational aspect of working with farmers to protect Iowa's water resources.

Effective management of nutrients on farms is one of the keys to enhancing both environmental quality and profitable crop production. Consistent with the Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy, this ACWA Code of Practice provides information and guidelines adopted by the ACWA members as a condition of membership and has been a requirement of membership since 2001.

"ACWA requires members to self-report conformance with the Code of Practice and members review compliance with the code annually," Roger Wolf, ACWA Executive Director said. "This helps ensure that all members are using a common playbook when it comes to basic nitrogen management principles."

As of 2021, ACWA members' trade area covers over 70 percent of Iowa as the ACWA expanded its membership statewide. This is an expansion from previous years. Because of this expansion, ACWA will have more records than ever.

Each year, weather and soil temperatures vary across the state. According to Iowa State University, nitrogen applied with soil temperatures above 50 degrees Fahrenheit can be susceptible to loss. In past years, soil conditions across Iowa were not at 50 degrees until mid to late October. Farmers can purchase nitrogen stabilizing products which help to prevent these losses.

To find out the soil temperature, members can use the county soil temperature and forecast maps published by Iowa State University Extension and the ISU College of Agriculture and Life Sciences on their website found at

extension.agron.iastate.edu/NPKnowledge. The website shows the three-day, four-inch depth soil temperature estimates for every Iowa county. Members can also measure soil temperature directly in the field as a decision tool for beginning fall fertilizer applications.

Another aspect of ACWA's tracking is following 4R Plus. 4R Plus combines the 4Rs of nutrient stewardship — the Right Source of fertilizer, applied at the Right Rate and Right Time and in the Right Place — Plus, in-field and edge-of-field conservation practices that can increase productivity, bolster soil health and improve water quality. Examples of in-field practices are cover crops, strip-till and no-till, and edge of field practices such as bioreactors, saturated buffers and wetlands.

ACWA endorses the widely supported 4R Plus Nutrient Management campaign. Led by the Nature Conservancy, 4R Plus is guided by a coalition of agricultural and conservation organizations to support farmers' efforts to implement precise nutrient management and conservation practices.

"By implementing 4R nutrient stewardship practices, you optimize the nutrients you apply to maximize plant uptake and minimize field losses. Using the 4Rs allows you to keep the nutrients in the root zone and available when the crop needs them the most during the growing season," according to 4R Plus.

Application Guidelines for the Code Practice can be found on ACWA's website. For more information about the ACWA, visit www.acwa-rrws.org. For more information about 4R Plus, visit 4rplus.org.

—

Agriculture's Clean Water Alliance (ACWA) is a non-profit association whose mission is identifying and advancing solutions that reduce nutrient loss, build healthier soils, and improve Iowa's waters. ACWA is recognized for its ability to build upon its members' extensive relationship with farmers across Iowa. www.acwa-rrws.org/

Regular Members Include: Ag Partners LLC, First Cooperative Association, Gold-Eagle Cooperative, Heartland Co-op, Helena Agri-Enterprises LLC - Midwest Division, Landus Cooperative, NEW Cooperative, Inc., Nutrien Ag Solutions, Pro Cooperative, Van Diest Supply