



CANADIAN FERTILIZER INSTITUTE
INSTITUT CANADIEN DES ENGRAIS



The Right Step Forward: 4R Nutrient Stewardship for Island Farmers

Charlottetown, PEI (January 30, 2015) – As on-farm sustainability continues to emerge as a key topic of discussion in the province, Island farmers are keen to show that they are ahead of the curve when it comes to reducing nutrient losses into the environment. This commitment was formalized today through an extension of a 4R Nutrient Stewardship Memorandum of Understanding between the Canadian Fertilizer Institute (CFI); the Department of Agriculture and Forestry; the Department of Environment, Labour and Justice; the PEI Federation of Agriculture; the PEI Potato Board and the Kensington North Watershed Association.

“We have seen three successful years of 4R Nutrient Stewardship implementation on Prince Edward Island farms,” says Clyde Graham, Acting President at the Canadian Fertilizer Institute. “We are thrilled to see the partners of this provincial agreement sign on for an additional three years to work alongside Island farmers to increase uptake and adoption of the 4R framework.”

The goal of the program is simple—helping to ensure producers apply fertilizer using the right source, right rate, right time and right place methodology. PEI was the first province to sign on to the program, which is spearheaded by CFI.

Through this agreement several initiatives will be expanded across the Island’s landscape, funded by CFI, over the next three years. These include training materials and workshops, an initiative that will provide 4R designation to agronomists and agri-retailers, field extension events and field trials.

Steve Watts, of Genesis Crop Systems Inc., conducted 13 demonstration trials on potato farms for the program in 2014. The demonstration farms are intended to compare various 4R best management practices with practices currently popular among PEI potato growers.

Applicable trials conducted at numerous sites during the 2013 and 2014 growing seasons have demonstrated that introducing subtle changes to the way the crop is fertilized can produce crops with at least as much economic value as the current level of management while lessening potential environmental risk.

“The best result of the work so far is that all participating growers have faith in the results and believe there can be a better way to feed their crops,” explains Watts. “Growers are not hesitant to continue to try to identify and evaluate ways to do so.”

“The 4R program is a perfect fit for PEI potato farmers that are committed to economic and environmental sustainability”, notes PEI Potato Board Chairman Alex Docherty. “Improved marketable yield with less impact on the environment is a win - win situation for everyone.”

The field trials evaluated to date have helped increase grower awareness of the 4R approach. The main objective is to continue to identify and demonstrate new and modern methods of fertilizing the potato crop that will meet the goals of the producer, the environment and society.

Resources, such as 4R training and field trial results, are available online at farming4Rfuture.ca.



CANADIAN FERTILIZER INSTITUTE

INSTITUT CANADIEN DES ENGRAIS



-30-

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Elizabeth Smith
Manager, Communications
Canadian Fertilizer Institute

esmith@cfi.ca

(613) 786-3039

Ryan Barrett
Research & Communications Coordinator
Prince Edward Island Potato Board

ryan@peipotato.org

(902) 892-6551