

# 4R Nutrient Stewardship Certification Program

**What is the 4R Nutrient Stewardship Certification Program?** This program was first developed based on a program piloted in Ohio for the Western Lake Erie Watershed. It encourages agricultural retailers and independent crop consultants (nutrient service providers or NSPs) 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. Program standards deal with the following categories;

- Training of staff and grower customers
- Recommendations for Nutrient Management (when applicable)
- Applications of Nutrients on to soil (when applicable)
- Documentation of training, application, and recommendations.

**What is a Nutrient Service Provider?** *General term that refers to entities covered under the scope of the 4R Nutrient Stewardship Standard, including agricultural retailers, agricultural service providers, and independent consulting businesses. For the purposes of the Standards, the relevant functions of NSPs are to provide nutrient recommendations and/or apply nutrients for grower customers.*

When the program first launched in 2018, it was championed by full-service agri-retailer locations. Since then, 40 sites have gone through a pre-audit and 23 sites through a full-audit. In 2021, the opportunity to be certified is being offered to NSPs who are not applying/selling fertilizers but are making Nutrient Management recommendations. With this change, independent agronomic consulting businesses are now able to work through the audit program to certify their recommendations and nutrient management plans as 4R.



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## What are the differences between the 4R Certification Program vs the Certified Crop Advisors 4R Nutrient Management Specialty Certification (CCA- 4R NMS)?

4R Nutrient Stewardship Certification Program	CCA Specialty Certification in 4R Nutrient Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This program certifies a business's performance in recommending, applying and training their staff and customers on the 4R Nutrient Stewardship.</li> <li>• At the end, the business being audited is certified as following 4R's- not an individual.</li> <li>• 4R Certified Sites are audited every two years.</li> <li>• This program quantifies the number of acres and growers to which a company is recommending/applying 4R Nutrient Stewardship.</li> <li>• To be a 4R Certified Nutrient Service provider you need a CCA working at your site. (By 2023 the goal is for all sites to have 1 4R NMS CCA)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This program is based on certifying that an individual Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) is knowledgeable on the topic of 4R Nutrient Management.</li> <li>• An individual, not the business they work/own, becomes certified as being knowledgeable on the application of 4R Nutrient Stewardship to Ontario crop nutrition practices.</li> <li>• Certification requires experience, passing the exam, signing a code of ethics, and continuing education to ensure continual learning and expansion of their Nutrient Stewardship Knowledge.</li> </ul>

**How to get involved in the programs?** To learn more about the 4R Nutrient Stewardship Certification program for your business you can visit the [4R Certification page](#) which outlines the steps for a business to become 4R Certified.

To learn more about the CCA Specialty Certification in 4R Nutrient Management you can visit the CCA Boards [webpage](#) which outlines the exams performance objectives and study material.

**Please Contact Kelsey Hill ([khill@fertilizercanada.ca](mailto:khill@fertilizercanada.ca), 613-294-4726) if you would like more information on the 4R Nutrient Stewardship Certification Program here in Ontario.**

