

Canada Can Reduce GHG Emissions from Fertilizer Use Without Jeopardizing Food Security, New Report Says

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ottawa, ON, September 7th, 2022 – Canada’s agricultural exports are crucial to global food security. A new report released today from Fertilizer Canada and the Canola Council of Canada (CCC) shows Canada can continue to increase crop yields while significantly reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from fertilizer application using available tools and technology. Supporting farmers to increase crop yields is vital to meeting Canada’s agriculture export targets and global demand.

The report shows a 14 per cent reduction in GHG emissions by 2030 can be achieved without jeopardizing food security through the adoption of aggressive, but attainable levels of 4R best management practices (BMPs). 4R BMPs (Right Source @ Right Rate, Right Time, Right Place®) help producers optimize fertilizer to reduce environmental impacts while maximizing economic outcomes.

In a time when global food insecurity is on the rise, Canada must balance its fertilizer emission reduction goals with the need to increase vital food production. Over the next 50 years, farmers will need to produce more food than has been grown in the last 10,000 years.

Fertilizer is responsible for half of the world’s current food production. It is important to Canada’s role in fighting food insecurity and to the economic viability for farmers to be able to continue to increase crop yields. This is reflected in a recent public opinion poll conducted by Abacus Data where 64 per cent of Canadians say they agree that Canada should focus on food production, even if means we can’t reach a 30 per cent reduction in fertilizer emissions.

“We support the federal government’s strong push to reduce Canada’s GHG emissions, but we cannot sacrifice food productivity,” says Karen Proud, President and CEO, Fertilizer Canada. “The approach to 2030 must be realistic, balance agricultural emission reductions with food production, and

remain voluntary. Farmers are stewards of the land, and most Canadians believe they are best suited to understand the needs of their crops and their impact on the environment.”

The report looked at three scenarios for major Canadian cropping systems across Canada and built a path forward to 2030 based on broader implementation of 4R practices. The study looked at the impact of 4R BMPs on GHG emissions and the economic impact to growers.

By increasing crop yields and reducing fertilizer emissions through the adoption of an aggressive, but attainable level of 4R BMPs farm incomes would increase by \$4.3 billion dollars by 2030. The cost to implement the necessary level of 4R BMPs would be \$495 million per year.

The level and type of BMP adoption needed, and therefore cost, varies by region. Government policies and programs to encourage 4R adoption must take this into consideration by working with provinces, farm groups, and the fertilizer industry.

“We are not starting at zero and many Canadian farmers have already adopted BMPs to reduce fertilizer emissions. Fertilizer Canada along with partners like CCC have championed the adoption of 4R BMPs for over 15 years,” says Proud. “With this report we now have a better picture of what is possible, and we look forward to working in partnership with the federal government towards an ambitious, but realistic emission reduction target.”

“There is no one-size-fits-all approach to reducing fertilizer emissions, and it must be balanced with farm productivity and economic viability,” says Jim Everson, President, CCC. “This report helps underscore the need to work collaboratively with farmers and industry across regions to ensure farmers have the flexibility and support to use the practices that are best suited to their farms and injects some new science-based data and economic analysis into this ongoing discussion.”

For government programs to be effective the data used to measure emissions reduction targets must be improved and focus on an intensity-based approach rather than an absolute reduction. Emissions intensity reduction focuses on reducing the emissions it takes to produce a bushel of crop whereas an absolute reduction would put a cap on the amount of fertilizer

farmers are able to use and therefore limit the amount of food they are able to grow.

Conclusion

For additional information please see the following resources.

- [Brief of the report](#)
- [Executive Summary of the report](#)
- [FAQ](#)
- [Fertilizer Canada's response to the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's discussion paper: *Reducing emissions arising from the application of fertilizer in Canada's agriculture sector.*](#)

The polling was conducted with 1,500 Canadian residents aged 18 and over from August 16th to 20th, 2022. The margin of error for a comparable probability based random sample of the same size is +/- 2.53%, 19 times out of 20.

About Fertilizer Canada:

Fertilizer Canada represents manufacturers, wholesale and retail distributors of nitrogen, phosphate, potash and sulphur fertilizers. The fertilizer industry plays an essential role in Canada's economy and is committed to supporting the industry through innovation, sustainability, stewardship, safety and security. As the foundation of Canada's agri-food sector, we apply innovative solutions that positively impact the environment, the economy, and the social fabrics of Canadian life.

About Canola Council of Canada:

The Canola Council of Canada is a full value chain organization representing canola growers, processors, life science companies and exporters. Keep it Coming 2025 is the strategic plan to ensure the canola industry's continued growth, demand, stability and success – targeting 52 bushels per acre to meet global market demand of 26 million metric tonnes by the year 2025. For more information, visit canolacouncil.org or follow CCC on Twitter [@canolacouncil](https://twitter.com/canolacouncil).

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