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## **Ag Retailers Reaffirm and strengthen commitment to Environmental Stewardship**

**Ankeny, Iowa** — The 11-member agriculture retailers of Agriculture’s Clean Water Alliance (ACWA) have reaffirmed their agreement to the Environmental Code of Practice for 2016 and strengthened their commitment to proper nutrient application through the 4R framework.

“For over 15 years, we have focused on proper nutrient management and environmental stewardship and now is no exception,” said Dan Dix, NEW Cooperative general manager and ACWA president. “The Code of Practice is a fundamental aspect of ACWA membership, and we are glad to be a 4R Partner. The 4R principles are globally accepted standards of best practices for cropping systems and we are proud to enhance our focus and offerings through them.”

4R Nutrient Stewardship focuses on fertilizer application with the consideration of the right source, right rate, right time and right place. The 4R Partner program, administered by The Fertilizer Institute, is a nationwide program with over 130 participants aimed at expanding awareness and implementation of fertilizer best management practices.

“Our Code of Practice aligns with the 4Rs and there is synergy in the guidelines,” said Harry Ahrenholtz, ACWA chairman. “We whole-heartedly adhere to these principles and are now part of a nationwide agribusiness community that does as well. ACWA members hold each other accountable to abide by these standards, and each retailer notifies the group when fall fertilizer applications begin.”

In the Code of Practice, ACWA members agree to delay fall anhydrous applications without a nitrification inhibitor until soil temperatures are 50 degrees Fahrenheit and trending lower. Members use the county soil temperature and forecast maps compiled by Iowa State University as a decision-tool for beginning fall fertilizer applications.

Like the ACWA Code of Practice, the 4R program stresses timing. The program also encourages the consideration of all nutrient sources and soil tests, both of which are in the ACWA Code of Practice.

“Agriculture retailers are an essential part of the path to progress when it comes to nutrient optimization and management,” said Lara Moody, senior director of stewardship and sustainability at The Fertilizer Institute. “We applaud ACWA members for their dedication to not only the 4Rs, but also their commitment to stewardship of the Iowa environment.”

Not only do ACWA members agree to follow nutrient best management practices during the fall, but also in the spring and throughout the growing season.

ACWA supports adoption of nutrient management technologies to maximize nutrient use efficiency and help protect water quality. These technologies include nitrogen stabilizers, slow release fertilizers, incorporation or injection, soil nitrate testing and other tools that minimize loss of nitrogen to water sources.

Furthermore, ACWA encourages farmers to implement additional conservation and edge-of-field practices to reduce nitrate flow from tile systems including bioreactors, constructed wetlands, conservation stream buffers and fall cover crops.

“Members are dedicated to helping farmers manage nutrients to enhance both environmental quality and crop production,” said Roger Wolf, ACWA executive director. “The agriculture community remains committed to implementing practices that have a positive impact on environmental and water quality as well as improving crop production.”

For more information about the ACWA, visit [www.acwa-rrws.org/](http://www.acwa-rrws.org/).

For more information about 4R Partners, visit [www.nutrientstewardship.org](http://www.nutrientstewardship.org).



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**The ACWA** is an association consisting of 11 ag retailers and five associate members operating and supporting farmer customers in the Des Moines and Raccoon River basins. The ACWA mission is to help agriculture identify and implement solutions that reduce nutrient loss to Iowa waters. From 2001 – 2016, ACWA members and sponsors have invested more than \$3.2 million in the Raccoon and Des Moines River watersheds, with over \$1.9 million directly for projects and programs supporting water quality monitoring, edge-of-field practice demonstration and evaluation, and targeted watershed implementation efforts on farms.