



News release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 27, 2023

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Agriculture's Clean Water Alliance Reaffirms Commitment to Safeguard Iowa Waters

Ankeny, Iowa — Members of Agriculture's Clean Water Alliance (ACWA) have reaffirmed their annual commitment to help protect Iowa's waterbodies.

At their recent board meeting, ACWA members agreed to the Environmental Code of Practice for Nitrogen Fertilization, which states they will delay fall anhydrous applications without a nitrification inhibitor until soil temperatures are 50 degrees Fahrenheit and trending lower. This reduces nitrate loading in water leaving farm fields before it enters Iowa's rivers and streams.

"For 24 years now — since ACWA's founding in 1999 — our members have agreed to this Code of Practice," said Dan Dix, NEW Cooperative general manager and ACWA president. "Membership of ACWA is comprised of ag retailers across the state. Although we are direct competitors, we are united in the mission to help farmers improve their environmental impact as well as their agronomic performance. Following the Code of Practice is one more example of this commitment."

Because of the members' locations, ACWA's footprint touches 81 of Iowa's 99 counties, enabling the Code of Practice to have a greater impact on water quality than ever before.

As a membership requirement, ag retailers self-report to ACWA to validate their conformance to the Code of Practice, which takes place usually in mid to late October, depending on the region. Colder

soils hinder the conversion of ammonium nitrogen to nitrate, which reduces leaching, or denitrification, and keeps ammonium in the soil.

ACWA uses the county soil temperature and forecast maps published by Iowa State University as a decision tool for beginning fall fertilizer applications. The maps can be found at: <https://www.mesonet.agron.iastate.edu/agclimate/soilt.php>.

In addition, ACWA members encourage the use of nitrogen stabilizers, slow-release fertilizers, incorporation or injection, soil nitrate testing and other tools that minimize loss of nitrogen to water sources. Farmers and landowners can use conservation practices including no-till, cover crops, bioreactors and saturated buffers, which keeps nutrients and soil in farm fields and reduces loading into waterbodies.

“ACWA members are dedicated to helping farmers manage nutrients to enhance both environmental quality and crop production,” said Roger Wolf, ACWA Executive Director. “Last year, every member reported implementing Code of Practice requirements, and 95% of our members reported using a nitrogen stabilizer. The organization’s footprint continues to expand, enabling members to reach more farmers and landowners for a greater positive impact on water quality.”

ACWA also endorses 4R Plus, which focuses on nutrient stewardship using fertilizer from the Right Source, at the Right Rate, the Right Time, and the Right Place. The Plus refers to conservation farming practices for soil health and water quality improvement. 4R Plus is guided by a coalition of agricultural and conservation organizations to support farmers’ efforts to implement these practices.

For more information about the ACWA and the Code of Practice, visit www.acwaiowa.com

For more information about 4R Plus, visit 4rplus.org.

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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.acwaiowa.com

Regular members include: AgState, Central Valley Ag, Gold-Eagle Cooperative, Heartland Co-op, Helena Agri-Enterprises, Landus Cooperative, NEW Cooperative, Inc., Nutrien Ag Solutions, Pro Cooperative, Van Diest Supply