



News release

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AG RETAILERS REAFFIRM COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Ankeny, Iowa — With more than a decade focused on proper nutrient applications and reduced nutrient loss, Agriculture's Clean Water Alliance's (ACWA) 12 agriculture retailer members reaffirmed their agreement to the Environmental Code of Practice for 2015.

“Water quality is a hot topic today, yet we've been focused on environmental stewardship and proper nutrient management for more than 15 years,” said Dan Dix, NEW Cooperative CEO and ACWA president. “The Code of Practice is a fundamental aspect of ACWA membership. Each year, we reevaluate it to ensure we remain committed to our objectives and align with the Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy (INRS).”

The INRS is a science-based initiative that seeks to reduce nitrate and phosphorous loads in Iowa waterways by 45 percent from point and nonpoint sources.

Staying in line with the strategy, 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.

“The Code of Practice demonstrates that the agriculture supply chain has aligned — voluntarily — with environmental conservation programs such as the INRS and is invested in its success,” said Roger Wolf, ACWA executive director. “ACWA members hold each other accountable to abide by these standards, and each retailer notifies the group when fall fertilizer applications begin.”

Not only do 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 Harry Ahrenholtz, ACWA chairman. “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/.

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The ACWA is an association consisting of 12 ag retailers and three associate members operating in the Des Moines and Raccoon River basins. ACWA focuses on creating a better understanding how water, weather, landscape and farm management interrelate. Their work on direct, targeted watershed projects create a baseline for current conditions and enable measured evaluation of new or change practice implementation. Since 1999, ACWA members have invested more than \$1.5 million in funding for water quality monitoring in the Raccoon River and, since 2008, in the Des Moines River and their largest tributaries.