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## 4R RESEARCH FUND AWARDS FIRST GRANTS

**April 29, 2014 – Peachtree Corners, Georgia, U.S.** – The 4R Research Fund recently announced it has awarded US\$273,500 in grants for five research proposals aimed at identifying the current state of knowledge and existing research gaps regarding fertilizer best management practices. The Fund, supported by the fertilizer industry and other stakeholders, is a science-based research initiative aimed at improving agricultural sustainability by expanding knowledge of 4R Nutrient Stewardship (use of the right fertilizer source, at the right rate, at the right time and in the right place).

With guidance from an industry and academic technical advisory group, the fund's management committee selected the following five proposals:

- An analysis of 4R Nutrient Stewardship implementation on drained land was awarded to a project partnership between The Conservation Fund and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Research Service (ARS).
- A meta-analysis of nitrogen losses and 4R Nutrient Stewardship in U.S. corn-based systems was awarded to researchers at Duke University.
- A meta-analysis of phosphorus fertilizer placement and tillage interactions for corn and soybeans in the U.S. was awarded to researchers at Kansas State University.
- An assessment of the effects of conservation practices and fertilizer application methods on nitrogen and phosphorus loss from farm fields was awarded to a project partnership between the University of Toledo and USDA ARS.
- A meta-analysis of enhanced efficiency fertilizers in corn systems in the Midwest was awarded to researchers at Southern Illinois University.

These projects are scheduled to be finished within a nine-to-12 month time frame. When complete, details from the analyses will be made available for review by all interested stakeholders.

Understanding research gaps is an initial priority of the 4R Research Fund. To ensure future funding is directed at addressing unmet research needs, the first 4R Research Fund request for proposals (RFP) solicited literature reviews of topics related to 4R Nutrient Stewardship on a national, regional, or cropping system basis utilizing meta-analyses. A meta-analysis is a method of analyzing the results of a systematic literature review that allows quantitative estimation of effect size and uncertainty.

“Recognizing knowledge gaps helps to avoid needless and costly duplication of previous research and helps to inform industry, academia, and agencies of areas that need to be addressed with future research,” said International Plant Nutrition Institute (IPNI) President Dr. Terry Roberts. “These meta-analyses will help position the 4R Research Fund to provide resources to projects that will expand knowledge of 4R-related practices.”

“In addition to identification of gaps in what we already know, these reviews and analysis will provide more informed evaluation of past research,” said Dr. Paul Fixen, IPNI Senior Vice President and Director of Research. “That evaluation will serve as the basis for improved nutrient management recommendations and better nutrient stewardship on our farms. A critical element of 4R Nutrient Stewardship is continual improvement and these projects will enable that improvement.”

Created in 2013, by The Fertilizer Institute (TFI), the Canadian Fertilizer Institute (CFI) and the IPNI, the Fund is providing resources for a multi-year research effort aimed at measuring and evaluating the economic, social and

The mission of IPNI is to develop and promote scientific information about the responsible management of plant nutrition for the benefit of the human family.

environmental impacts of 4R Nutrient Stewardship. The fund supports U.S. and Canadian projects in partnership with land-grant universities, watershed stakeholders and government agencies, as well as through industry initiatives. Last year, the North American fertilizer industry pledged US\$7 million to fund this multi-year research effort.

The fund management committee is in the process of selecting proposals submitted for a second RFP for research and demonstration projects. Future RFPs will be announced and posted as they become available.

For additional details about the awarded projects, the 4R Research Fund, or contributors to the fund visit <http://www.nutrientstewardship.com/funding>

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Ref. # 14049