



Michigan Agri-Business Association

1501 North Shore Drive, Suite A
East Lansing, Michigan 48823

www.miagbiz.org

Telephone (517) 336-0223

Fax (517) 336-0227

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CONTACT: Chuck Lippstreu, Byrum & Fisk Communications, 517-333-1606

Michigan Agri-Business Association announces new results, new education on water quality

*Hundreds of fertilizer applicators certified; additional
education programs will emphasize best practices*

LANSING –The **Michigan Agri-Business Association (MABA)** today announced that hundreds of fertilizer application professionals have earned formal certification through a program designed to help protect water quality, and detailed the launch of a new, statewide water quality education campaign to share information on best practices with everyone in Michigan agriculture.

“The Great Lakes are a precious resource for all Michiganders, and our agriculture sector is serious about doing our part to protect water quality,” said **Jim Byrum**, president of **MABA**. “Most farmers, crop advisers and others throughout agriculture are doing the right thing, using the latest technology, and protecting our environment while becoming more productive, and we want to build on that progress.”

MABA made the following water quality announcements today:

Hundreds of Professionals Certified: Already in 2017, more than 350 fertilizer applicators have attended training events under MABA’s Certified Fertilizer Applicator Program, a professional training opportunity designed to help protect water quality. In 2016, the program’s first year, 450 applicators accumulated credits, representing 38 individual agribusinesses and 45 large farms. 270 applicators have achieved full accreditation in the program. In addition, new online training modules were launched early in 2017 to provide new and more accessible training opportunities for nutrient applicators and farmers.

Byrum also noted plans to add a certification programs for those who apply manure, beginning in Spring 2017.

New Educational Campaign Announced: Beginning this month, MABA will encourage farmers and agronomy professionals to take “*5 Steps to Protect Water Quality*” as part of a new educational campaign. The effort is designed to provide information on the basic steps to help protect water quality –

steps that everyone in agriculture should know and follow. Throughout the spring and summer, the association will release detailed information on key water quality practices, including:

- ✓ Soil testing regularly, and following soil test results
- ✓ Utilizing new technology to optimize fertilizer use
- ✓ Stepping up management with cover crops
- ✓ Planning nutrient application with weather conditions in mind
- ✓ Working with Certified Crop Advisers (CCA) to get the job done right

These core practices will be emphasized through MABA's certification programs, member communications and beyond.

“Water quality is a complex problem with many causes, and in agriculture, we want to keep the momentum going to identify and employ new solutions,” said **Dr. Tim Boring**, vice president of **MABA**. “That means constantly monitoring our results, while stepping up to the plate with new certification and educational opportunities throughout agriculture.”

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