



Michigan Agri-Business Association

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New fertilizer certification program will emphasize best practices, water quality

MABA Certified Fertilizer Applicator Program ramps up training on nutrient management

LANSING – Beginning this fall, the **Michigan Agri-Business Association** will provide a new training and certification program for fertilizer applicators, a step intended to emphasize best management practices and nutrient stewardship that help to protect water quality in the Great Lakes and across the region. **MABA** vice president **Tim Boring** said the program, which will be available in September 2015, is an effort by Michigan’s agribusiness community to continue to be proactive and lead on water quality issues.

“Our industry has been proactive on water quality issues, but that doesn’t mean we shouldn’t continue doing more. Making sure those that handle and apply fertilizer have the proper training and latest information is a logical next step,” said **Boring**. “Fertilizer is important for agriculture – without it, we simply can’t grow what we grow. We also know fertilizer needs to be used properly. In addition to water quality issues, not using nutrients correctly can actually reduce yields, so it helps farmers when applicators know exactly what they’re doing.”

“Our people do a good job already, but it never hurts to continue to make sure applicators and fertilizer handlers are up to date on technology, issues and other factors related to fertilizer use,” said **Jim Byrum**, president of **MABA**. “It is also important to recognize these people who are committed to helping protect water quality through enhanced professional development and training.”

MABA will run the statewide program, which will kick off in September 2015. Both MABA and others that do work with fertilizer will promote the program, as well as offer continuing education credits for applicators for their programs throughout the year.

Boring said the program aims to reinforce the fundamentals of nutrient application, cover safety issues, and reinforce the link between practices, water quality, and production outcomes. These issues are relevant for all parts of the fertilizer supply chain and the program is designed to provide important information on nutrient application and stewardship to varied experience levels.

“It’s important that we continue building our suite of tools to protect and improve water quality,” said **Boring**. “Michigan agribusiness has a history of leading the way and embracing modern practices – and MABA wants to help share the latest research and information with all those interested.”

Additional Information on Certification:

Certification is based on the annual accumulation of credits obtained from training and educational sessions. The certification year begins on April 1 of each year and is issued based on credits accumulated during the past 12 months. Certification requires 10 credits annually. Certification credits will be available for any training session covering relevant content. Companies may apply for certification credits for events through the MABA office. In addition, MABA will offer 10-20 credits of training annually, between the Winter Conference and in-season sessions.

Details on obtaining meeting credits are available at www.miagbiz.org or by calling the MABA office at 517-336-0223.

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