

Doing RIGHT today, 4R Tomorrow!



## 4R Tomorrow Program Guide



[www.4RTomorrow.com](http://www.4RTomorrow.com)

# 4R Tomorrow: Doing **RIGHT** today, 4R Tomorrow!

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## I. Introduction

As conservationists, we are focused on doing the right things to keep our natural resources sustainable and vibrant for tomorrow! Today, Ohio's faced with numerous resource challenges - including the growing threat of toxic algae blooms and impaired waterways due to nutrient overload and other pollutants.

The **4R Tomorrow Program** was developed to provide guidance and action in an effort to resolve the increasing impacts facing our society and our natural resources -- food demand to address the growing world population, the increase need for energy, and water quality issues, and other resource demands. Furthermore, the goal of this program is to help Ohio's SWCDs, conservation partners, and other interested individuals to learn, work together, and join efforts to be a part of the solution so that conservation efforts are utilized today so that tomorrow's resources are sustainable.

### Facts

- Demand for food continues to increase drastically as population increase of 2 billion people is expected by 2050.
- Seed industry predicts 3-4% yield growth per year.
- There are 14,000 nutrient related surface water impairment listings in 49 states.
- Over 47 percent of streams contain medium to high levels of N and P.
- U.S. EPA says, "All major sources of nutrients must be held accountable for their contribution to the problems."
- Thus, pressure to limit the use of fertilizers is increasing.

## II. Program Outcomes

To keep this program focused, it is important to incorporate local information into your presentation, develop your own goals and strategies that enable you to treat this effort like you do with your other "locally led conservation efforts" and local media opportunities. This **Guide** provides recommendations only and should additional assistance be needed, please contact Mindy Bankey in the OFSWCD office at 614.784.1900 or [mindybankey@ofswcd.org](mailto:mindybankey@ofswcd.org). The guide and materials can also be found at [www.4RTomorrow.org](http://www.4RTomorrow.org).

### Overall Goals

In developing the **4R Tomorrow Program**, two specific programs were created to date centered on the issue of nutrient management stewardship: *Backyard Conservation* and *4R Nutrient Stewardship*. As shared in the introduction, these programs were developed with the purpose of "**Doing RIGHT today, 4R Tomorrow!**"

### Backyard Conservation

*Backyard Conservation: Lawns and the Environment Program* is an outreach and educational program targeting anyone with a lawn. The program focuses on practical lawn management techniques that promote soil conservation and protect water resources. This program may be viewed as more appropriate for those living in the "urban" environment – although the best management practices shared are for anyone with a lawn – thus can be used anywhere. Backyard Conservation offers the best management practices which include proper mowing, grass clipping and leaf management, soil and water conservation and nutrition – all of which can help protect natural resources through the development of healthy lawns and improved water quality.

## 4R Nutrient Stewardship

*4R Nutrient Stewardship* is an outreach and educational program targeting the farming or land management community. The program focuses on practical nutrient management stewardship techniques following the 4R Principles: Right Source, Right Rate, Right Time, and Right Place. This program may be viewed as more appropriate for those living in the “rural” environment – although the best management practices are consistent conservation practices – thus can be used anywhere. 4R Nutrient Stewardship offers techniques and guidance as to how 4R principles and other conservation stewardship practices that improve soil fertility and productivity, reduce erosion, improve water quality and provide positive impacts to the environment.

## Program Goals for Your Community

Our natural resources are experiencing greater challenges as a result of nutrient runoff and impaired waterways. And although some areas around the state are facing greater impacts than others – nutrient management should be a focus of each county SWCD throughout Ohio. Districts are truly focused on delivering locally-led conservation practices and the **4R Tomorrow Program** was developed to address the local needs and concerns of your community. The desired outcome of this overall program should be the following:

- Increased awareness about nutrient management challenges throughout the state;
- Increased awareness about conservation programs and best management practices that can be used to make a positive impact;
- Motivate others to become involved in conservation stewardship through the “**4R Tomorrow Team**.” Most individuals want to see clean water, abundant food and energy supplies, and a good quality of living – so the “**4R Tomorrow Team**” is an appropriate team to join!
- Education and outreach! We want to grow in partners and numbers to help spread the conservation message!

## Program Strategies for Your Community

To achieve the conservation goals established above, develop creative strategies for successful outreach and media placement. Some basic strategies for your program effort:

- Form a local coalition of advocates who have the time and who may sponsor or provide additional support to this effort. Your coalition might include key persons from your local Farm Bureau, OSU Extension, local leaders, health district, engineer or others.
- Or use your LOCAL WORKGROUP to assist since many of these folks mentioned above already serve on your LWG team!
- Identify a media "champion," who may be willing to provide significant coverage of the program, preferably a local outlet with the largest audience base. Include the media champion in your coalition.
- Assign specific tasks for each coalition member, such as:
  - ✓ Training and Outreach Opportunities (Workshops, breakfast meetings, streamside chats, etc.);
  - ✓ Product Tailoring / Printing;
  - ✓ Media Outreach: Newspapers, Radio, Television, Social Media Channels (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, etc.)
- Conduct an aggressive media outreach effort, including following up with a personal phone call to secure:
  - ✓ Placements of the enclosed PSA materials in TV, radio and print media.
  - ✓ Articles in local newspapers.

- ✓ News stories on local TV stations and radio stations.
- ✓ TV and radio interviews with Supervisors, partners, or members of the coalition.

### III. Program Messages

#### Messages

The materials included in this program contain messages targeted to all parties that you are trying to reach. You may use the materials as is, or develop messages specific for your community. The messages in this program are targeted to the Backyard Conservation Program and the 4R Nutrient Stewardship Program. Each SWCD throughout Ohio has additional programs and technical assistance offerings that can be included in the 4R Tomorrow Program – because the ultimate focus is around the theme, **“Doing RIGHT today, 4R Tomorrow!”**

- **Healthy Soil = Productivity;**
- **Mow High to Develop Stronger Grass, Shade Soil, Prevent Weeds & Filter/Absorb Rainfall;**
- **Mulch Clippings to return valuable nutrients & organic matter to the soil to aid in productivity and reduce runoff/erosion;**
- **Use the RIGHT Source of Fertilizer;**
- **Use the RIGHT Rate of Nutrients;**
- **Fertilize during the RIGHT Time;**
- **Fertilize the RIGHT Place;**
- **And, Clean Up!**
- **Don’t forget the economic impact conservation practices offer as well!**

#### Hooks

To get the media interested in your program, you need to show them why this issue is so important. This information is often called a "hook" or "angle." Be sure to tailor the hooks to fit your community, using local information and why it is so important to be a proactive, as well as seek to be a part of the solution.

#### Outreach Materials Available

The elements of the **4R Tomorrow Program** include:

- **(1) 4R Tomorrow Guide** [this document]
- **(1) 4R Tomorrow Flyer Highlighting Both Programs**
- **(1) Backyard Conservation Program Pocket folder, includes following:**
  - ✓ *Backyard Conservation Program Introduction*
  - ✓ *Backyard Conservation PowerPoint Presentation / Speaker Notes*
  - ✓ *Backyard Conservation DVD, 20-minute narrated version of PowerPoint Presentation*
  - ✓ *Backyard Conservation Brochure*
  - ✓ *Backyard Conservation Magnet*
  - ✓ *Sample News Release, Backyard Conservation Program Kick-Off Announcement*
- **(1) 4R Tomorrow Nutrient Stewardship Program Pocket folder, includes following:**
  - ✓ *4R Tomorrow FAQ Sheet, SWCD District Focused*
  - ✓ *4R Tomorrow FAQ Sheet, Producer / Farmer Focused*
  - ✓ *4R Tomorrow FAQ Sheet, General Public Focused*
  - ✓ *4R Tomorrow Nutrient Stewardship Management Talking Points*
  - ✓ *4R Nutrient Stewardship Management Brochure*

- ✓ *Sample News Release, Program Kick-Off Announcement*
  - ✓ *Sample News Release, Fair Announcement*
  - ✓ *Sample News Release, Farmers & Homeowners Working Together*
  - ✓ *Sample News Release, 4R Tomorrow Year End Success*
  - ✓ *Sample Letter to the Editor*
  - ✓ *Educational News Article, "Coming Together to Protect Water Quality"*
  - ✓ *SWCD Newsletter, "Ohio Farmers Doing RIGHT Today, 4R Tomorrow"*
  - ✓ *4R Tomorrow PowerPoint*
  - ✓ *Farmer Breakfast / Workshop Templates*
  - ✓ *4R Tomorrow PSAs, 15 and 30 seconds*
  - ✓ *4R Tomorrow Team "I Resolve" pledge form*
  - ✓ *4R Tomorrow Membership Cards*
  - ✓ *4R Tomorrow Business Supplies (Letterhead, Envelope, Business Card)*
- **(1) Data CDs, *being developed***
    - Electronic files including:
      - ✓ *print ads and posters in a variety of sizes, future product*
      - ✓ *brochures, additional brochures will be developed*
      - ✓ *Images/icons for promotional products/items, future product*
      - ✓ *Fonts, future product*
      - ✓ *Press releases, additional releases will be developed*
      - ✓ *Newspaper articles with artwork, future product*

## IV. When Conducting an Outreach Effort

### Fully Utilize Your Established Coalition / LWG

When initiating efforts to conduct the **4R Tomorrow Program** outreach, maximize resources and reach out to a coalition of interested individuals or your Local Work Group. Enlisting the support of these allies could make the difference between a successful program and a mediocre one.

### Coalition Benefits

- Strength and power in numbers, leading to a wider reach.
- Added credibility to the community, when there is a coordinated program, a united front and a consistent message.
- A public perception of tangible, broad community support.
- Media attention and public profile for organizations that may not otherwise achieve it.
- Increased access to policy-makers.
- Networking and partnership opportunities.
- Economies of scale and cost-efficiency.
- Division of labor and reduced duplication of effort.
- Information.
- The exciting feeling of belonging to something greater than the sum of its parts.

### Coalition Structure Examples (or use your established LWG)

- Involve all key players.
- Choose realistic strategies.
- Establish a shared vision.
- Build ownership at all levels.
- Institutionalize change.
- Publicize successes.

### If Starting a New Coalition

Begin by forming a core group of two, three or more organizations. Remember, as few as two or three dedicated members can keep a coalition going. Discuss possible dates for first meeting. Set a date. Send out letters announcing meeting date, time and place. The letter should briefly inform about the purpose of the coalition effort and your community's goals. The first meeting is informational. Propose a name for the coalition. Have a representative from each participating organization sign up as a group liaison volunteer. This will be your contact person within a given group. Tell the coalition the campaign goals you have developed for your community and/or invite coalition members to further define and refine goals. The second meeting should solidify goals, and develop strategies, tactics, job assignments, timeline and next steps. Meeting schedules and frequencies will depend upon proposed projects.

### Recruiting Coalition Members

Determine which individuals and/or organizations can best serve your needs. Logical partners for your **4R Tomorrow Program** are parties that have a stake in solving the nutrient issues impairing our waterways and improving our natural resources. Members could include:

- Local government officials.
- Public health professionals.
- Educators
- Businesses
- Public works or engineering officials.
- Federal and state agency conservation office officials
- Farming Organizations
- Environmental Groups or other non-profit associations

### Prepare Your Pitch

When your invitation is accepted by potential coalition members, you will have to be respectful of their time. Your job is to convince them of the merit of the **4R Tomorrow Program**. Be prepared to explain:

- What the program is;
- Why it is important;
- What benefits they can reap by participating;
- And, what this particular person or organization could do to support the program.

### Follow Up With Thanks

If you have gained a supporter, follow up with written thanks and next steps. If you have been turned down, it is still important to follow up with written thanks. You are creating the first impression of the program. You want the word-of-mouth generated within the community to be positive.

### How to Manage a Coalition and Assign Tasks

The core group will keep everything going. The core group meets as often as necessary - once a week, three times a month - whatever is required. Communication is key. Use every means available. You might want to set up a group email and/or conference calls. And assign tasks to each member of the core group. By gaining active participation and involvement, you are building stronger support because these individuals have a stake in the process and are committed to being a part of the solution. Assign these individuals tasked based on his or her area of expertise. They should be organized according to those areas.

## V. Program Material Availability

### Where Can I Find the Materials?

To provide easy access to the 4R Tomorrow Materials, including both the Backyard Conservation: Lawns and the Environment Program and the 4R Nutrient Stewardship Program, all materials can be downloaded at the 4R Tomorrow website: [www.4RTomorrow.org](http://www.4RTomorrow.org). Additionally, the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (OFSWCD) website, [www.ofswcd.org](http://www.ofswcd.org) will have directions as to where to find 4R Tomorrow materials to provide additional guidance on the programs to consumers, interested individuals, associations or the general public.

### How Can I Share?

Nutrient Stewardship issues will be a key priority focus of Ohio's SWCDs throughout the future, so it is our hope that this material will be shared with as many individuals as possible. These two programs are not the only conservation efforts offered by Ohio's 88 SWCDs, so there is no push to limit the stories or sharing opportunities for districts

## VI. Additional Resources

### Backyard Conservation Resources

- Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, [www.ofswcd.org](http://www.ofswcd.org)
- National Association of Conservation Districts, [www.nacdnet.org](http://www.nacdnet.org)
- Natural Resources Conservation Service, [www.oh.nrcs.usda.org](http://www.oh.nrcs.usda.org)

### 4R Resources

- The Fertilizer Institute, [www.tfi.org](http://www.tfi.org)
- International Plant Nutrition Institute, [www.ipni.org](http://www.ipni.org)
- Environmental Protection Agency, [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)
- Natural Resources Conservation Service, [www.oh.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.oh.nrcs.usda.gov)
- Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation, [www.ofswcd.org](http://www.ofswcd.org)
- Ohio Soybean Council, [www.ohiosoy.org](http://www.ohiosoy.org)

### Additional Partners

- Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Soil & Water Resources  
[www.dnr.state.oh.us/soilandwater/](http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/soilandwater/)

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## VIII. Conclusion

On behalf of the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (OFSWCD), we would like to thank you for being a dedicated conservation leader. It is our hope that this guide and the materials developed for the programs under the 4R Tomorrow Initiative aid each of you and each area of the state in an effort to get conservation on the ground -- for **“doing RIGHT today, 4R Tomorrow!”** Conservation needs are going to increase along with demand for food, energy, fiber and other necessities. So it is vitally important that we strive to educate and reach out to as many people we can in an effort to instill the need for conservation stewardship so that we can maintain a high quality of life! And as you start your outreach efforts, if you find the need for additional tools, have comments or ideas to share, please contact the OFSWCD office!

We look forward to developing additional tools and programs that can be of benefit to your conservation efforts!

We would also like to thank our partners in the development of these programs: Scotts Miracle-Gro, the National Association of Conservation Districts, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Ohio Soybean Council and both the staff and supervisors of Ohio's 88 SWCDs. These collaborations truly reflect a desire to make a difference today – 4R Tomorrow!