



Indiana 4R Survey



Why Conduct an Ag Retail Survey?

Agribusiness Council of Indiana (ACI) and the Indiana Agriculture Nutrient Alliance (IANA) are partnering to gather statewide data from agricultural retailers on conservation and nutrient management practices. This winter, Indiana will launch its first 4R Ag Retail Survey, modeled after successful efforts in Iowa, Illinois, and Minnesota. Randomly selected retailers and farm fields across the state will help generate actionable trendlines for Indiana growers, support ACI's advocacy, and contribute data to the Indiana Nutrient Reduction Strategy.

Key points:

- The survey is supported by Indiana's agricultural and commodity groups through IANA, ensuring consistent messaging and engagement with retailers and farmers.
- It will focus on nitrogen and phosphorus application rates, conservation practices, manure and soil testing utilization, and factors influencing nutrient management decisions.
- Results will help track adoption of nutrient management practices and quantify nutrient loss reductions over time.
- The survey supports Indiana agriculture in demonstrating progress and reinforcing the value of a voluntary conservation framework.

What is the Indiana Nutrient Reduction Strategy?

Established in 2014, Indiana's Nutrient Reduction Strategy guides efforts to reduce excess nutrients from both point and nonpoint sources. Indiana, along with 11 other Mississippi River Basin states, developed this strategy as part of the national plan led by the Gulf of America Hypoxia Task Force to shrink the Gulf's hypoxic zone.

The strategy reflects Indiana's commitment to reducing nutrient runoff, improving water quality in local waterways, and protecting downstream ecosystems including the Mississippi River, Gulf of America, and Great Lakes.

Gulf Hypoxia Task Force goals include:

- **45% reduction in total phosphorus** (from 1980–1996 baseline)
- **45% reduction in total nitrogen** (from the same baseline)
- **Meeting Indiana lake and river water quality standards**

Progress requires a combination of practices:

- Expanding 4R nutrient management to improve nutrient use efficiency
- Increasing soil health practices to reduce soil and nutrient loss
- Enhancing drainage water management to better store and treat tile drainage

How is the Indiana 4R Ag Retail Survey Performed?

The survey design and sampling framework were created by the Iowa State University Center for Survey Statistics and Methodology (ISU CSSM) to provide practice implementation information on randomly selected farm fields using ag retailer records. This approach matches similar retail surveys conducted among Iowa, Minnesota, and Illinois retailer locations. ACI-appointed regional liaisons will work with selected ag retailers to gather anonymous data from grower records for the 2025 crop year. Data collection will take place in January through March of 2026, with support from the Iowa Nutrient Research & Education Council (INREC).

Survey structure:

- Indiana is divided into nine crop reporting districts (CRDs). The number of retailers in each CRD determines each liaison's sampling workload.
- Of Indiana's 325 agronomy retailers, **150 will be randomly selected**. Each will provide **10 randomly selected field records**.
- Liaisons will **meet in person** with retailers, conduct random selection, and submit data via a secure online form.
- Each visit should take **no more than two hours**.
- Growers may opt out at any time.
- No personal grower information is collected, and all reporting is aggregated at the state level.

What Will the Data Reveal?

The data collected from this survey will have the ability to inform stakeholders and drive progress toward Indiana's nutrient reduction goals. Annual reports summarizing trends and conservation adoption will provide potential insights for new initiatives related to nutrient stewardship. The Indiana 4R Ag Retail Survey is modeled after a similar survey that has been conducted annually in Iowa over the past eight years. For more information about their survey results, please refer to the INREC website:

<https://iowanrec.org/progress-measurements/>

Need More Information?

Please reach out to:

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