



February 2024

As the Chairman and Illinois Farm Bureau representative on the Illinois Nutrient Research and Education Council (NREC), I want to congratulate you for being selected to provide important information on behalf of Illinois farmers.

By way of background, the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy (NLRS) was developed by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA), the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA), and a multi-stakeholder Policy Working Group (PWG). The initial NLRS was released in July 2015 and is a framework for leveraging existing programs to optimize nutrient loss reduction while promoting collaboration, research, and innovation among the private sector, academia, non-profits, wastewater treatment agencies, the agricultural sector, and state and local government.

The primary NLRS goals are to reduce annual loading of nitrate-nitrogen and total phosphorus to the Mississippi River and address the impacts on local water quality. The ultimate goal is to achieve 45 percent loss reductions in both nitrate-nitrogen and total phosphorus with the interim loss reduction goals of 15 percent nitrate-nitrogen and 25 percent total phosphorus by 2025.

The NLRS PWG is expected to report its progress to the public every two years via a Biennial Report, the first of which was released in July 2017, followed by a second report in November 2019, and a third in September 2021. An important part of the Biennial Report is the attached National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) survey that can help demonstrate implementation of various nutrient reduction best management practices (BMPs) on the land in a statistically valid manner over a long period of time. In addition to funding important nutrient research, NREC also prioritizes tracking the adoption and implementation of BMPs, and provides the funding for the NLRS NASS survey on behalf of Illinois farmers. **Without the NASS survey, the full story of Illinois farmers' efforts across the state to improve water quality cannot accurately be told.**

Illinois farmers have been making tremendous strides at voluntarily implementing BMPs that make sense for both their farms and the environment. Please take a few minutes to document your own progress toward the NLRS goals. Thank you for your time and attention to this priority issue for Illinois agriculture.

For more information on the NLRS, see <https://tinyurl.com/Illinois-NLRS>

Sincerely,

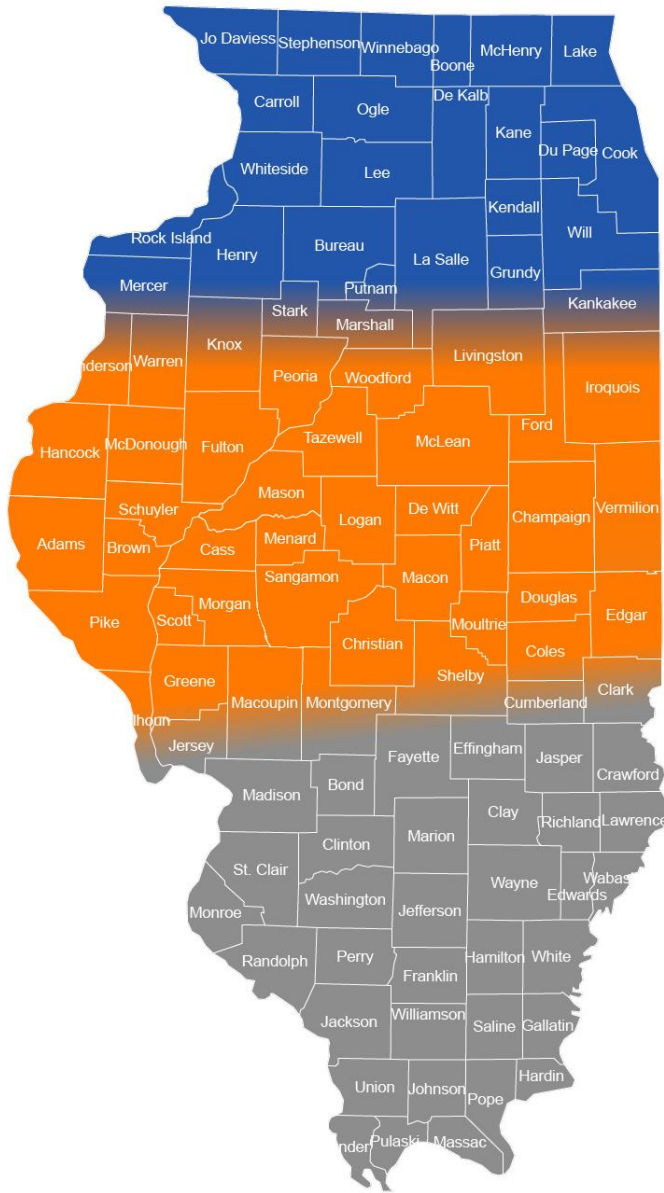
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Kirwan". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Jeff Kirwan
Chairman, Illinois Nutrient Research and Education Council
District 3 Director, Illinois Farm Bureau



Please utilize this map and chart to answer Question 1 under Section 2: Nutrient Management.

Maximum Return to Nitrogen (MRTN) is the Nitrogen rate where the economic net return to Nitrogen application is maximized. The MRTN rates below are calculated based on an extensive network of trials conducted across Illinois. The rates are updated each year and become the recommended Nitrogen rates from the University of Illinois. The corn nitrogen rate calculator website is available at the following URL: cnrc.agron.iastate.edu



Illinois Corn N-Rate Calculator Output for 2021

IL REGION	ROTATION	MRTN
NORTH	Soy/Corn	187
	Corn/Corn	222
CENTRAL	Soy/Corn	195
	Corn/Corn	214
SOUTH	Soy/Corn	215
	Corn/Corn	215