

## Inspection Fees

Entities which sell fertilizer, soil conditioner and ag lime products to end users are subject to an inspection fee of ten cents per ton. This fee is collected twice per year. Money collected is used to pay for inspector time, travel, shipping of samples to the laboratory, laboratory analysis fees and related costs associated with NDA's Fertilizer Program.

## Reporting

Distributors of fertilizer, soil conditioner and ag lime products will report, twice per year, tons of each type of product sold from their location. Data on each type of product sold is tabulated on a county basis, then submitted to AAPFCO. Data from all states is compiled and sorted on a county, state and national level. This data has great value for research, for development of nutrient management plans and for strategizing distribution routes for shipping products. Reporting of tons sold and payment of the inspection fee can be made online at: [nda.nebraska.gov/online/tonnage.html](http://nda.nebraska.gov/online/tonnage.html)

**Nebraska Department of Agriculture  
Animal and Plant Health Protection**

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# Fertilizer Program

Fertilizers  
Soil Conditioners  
Ag Lime

**NEBRASKA**

Good Life. Great Roots.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture's (NDA's) Fertilizer Program is primarily a consumer protection program, designed to assure growers that the agricultural products they purchase are of the quality stated on packaging labels and shipping paperwork.

NDA staff participate in meetings and committees of the Association of American Plant Food Control Officials (AAPFCO). Efforts are made to align Nebraska's definitions and requirements to those of AAPFCO, although there are some requirements in Nebraska law which differ from those of the Association.

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## Terms

Commercial fertilizers are products distributed whose ultimate use is to provide plant nutrients which are intended to promote plant growth. The term does not include unmanipulated animal or vegetable manures.

Soil conditioners are products (excluding unmanipulated animal and vegetable manures) distributed for their soil amending properties. When added to soil these products are intended to improve the physical, chemical, biochemical, biological or other characteristics of the soil.

Agricultural lime, or ag lime products are products distributed for agricultural use, whose calcium and magnesium compounds are capable of neutralizing

soil acidity. These products include limestone, burnt lime, hydrated lime, marl, industrial byproduct and agricultural lime slurry. Garden lime is considered a soil conditioner, not an ag lime.

Products NOT addressed by current Nebraska regulations include: inoculants applied to seed, nitrogen-stabilizing products applied directly to fertilizer, and some biostimulants which fall outside the definitions of fertilizer and soil conditioner.

## Submission/Registration of Product Labels

Fertilizer products, claiming nutrients only, do not require registration, but labels need to be submitted to NDA for review and approval. No fees are required for filing labels. Fertilizer products which contain pesticides (herbicide, insecticide, fungicide) must be registered as pesticides at \$160 per product label.

Soil conditioner and ag lime products must be registered, and labels need to be submitted to NDA for review and approval.

No registration fee is required.  
[nda.nebraska.gov/forms/148.pdf](https://nda.nebraska.gov/forms/148.pdf)

## Labeling Requirements

AAPFCO has established labeling guidelines for fertilizer and soil conditioner product labels. These guidelines can be found at:  
[aapfco.org/pdf/label\\_guide.pdf](https://aapfco.org/pdf/label_guide.pdf)

Copies of product labels are reviewed for content and compliance with state and AAPFCO labeling standards. Electronic copies are retained for NDA office and field staff use.

## Distribution and Dealer Licensing

Distribute means to offer for sale, sell, barter, or otherwise supply commercial fertilizers, soil conditioners or ag lime. All distributors of these products must be licensed. This includes manufacturers, quarries, dealers, farm dealers, garden centers and other retail outlets.

Licenses are issued on a calendar year basis. Licenses are \$15 per year.  
[nda.nebraska.gov/forms/ff15.pdf](https://nda.nebraska.gov/forms/ff15.pdf)

## Sampling and Testing

Each year, NDA collects several hundred samples of fertilizer and ag lime products to evaluate the quality of the product sold. Samples are submitted to the state laboratory for analysis. Nutrient levels for fertilizer samples and the effective calcium carbonate equivalent (ECCE) value of ag lime samples are determined and compared with grades and claims stated on product labels, invoices and shipping paperwork.

Products which fail to meet grade or claim are typically placed in an Off Sale status. If a manufacturer, dealer or retailer agrees to sell the product at the grade or claim found by the state laboratory, the product may be released for sale with adjusted claims.