

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FERTILIZER PROGRAM SUMMARY REPORT: MAINE

2014

Report outlines the major accomplishments and goals of the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry's Fertilizer Program, Registrations, Tonnage, Sampling Results, Fees and Revenues. Our mission statement for this Program is to serve, promote and protect the Agricultural Producers and Retail Consumers of the State of Maine.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND GOALS

The overall goals of Maine's Fertilizer Quality Control program are to ensure consumers get the products they purchase for guarantees and weight, and to ensure all products are evaluated, thereby ensuring fair trade for businesses selling fertilizers. After analyzing data from previous years including 2014, the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) observed an increase in year to year sampling efforts of fertilizer products (see pages 4&5 for results). Equipment was purchased to sample liquid fertilizers, which are in wide use in the fertilizer industry; and we started sampling the ever growing number of retail consumer fertilizer products. To build on this effort, one of our goals for 2015 is to train additional staff in sampling procedures and verification of company registrations in the field through remote scanning capabilities tied into our registration data base.

The Program staff completed and implemented the Uniform Fertilizer Tonnage Reporting System (UFTRS) Data Base to record and analyze fertilizer usage in the State of Maine, including both Farm Use and Retail Use. This system is widely used by all other states. The system captures all registered companies and the type, grade, amount and usage of fertilizer and lime sold within the State of Maine. This information is critical to government, industry and farmers providing trends and usage of fertilizer materials and grades. This information is reported to Association of American Plant Food Control Officials (AAPFCO) annually and is the only report of fertilizer use data in the U.S. The first tonnage report was completed in 1882 by New Jersey. The program provides information for Homeland Security for materials such as Ammonium Nitrate used in the Oklahoma City Bombing.

This is the first year since the late 1980's that the State of Maine filed a State Report to AAPFCO identifying registration procedures, products registered, actual tonnage and type reported by industry. The UFTRS Data Base will now provide us with a "check and balance" system to compare companies and the products they register with the products for which they are paying tonnage fees. Once our remote scanning capabilities are in place we will be able to more quickly and efficiently identify unregistered products.

Program staff visited the University of Maine Orono (UMO) Analytical Laboratory to review and discuss sample analysis procedures, turnaround times and conformance with Association of Official Analytical Chemists (AOAC) guidelines. For 2015 we expect to work with the lab to become an active member of the Magruder Check Sample Program with inter-laboratory statistical evaluation with over 100 laboratories in North America and commercial laboratories from around the world. This program is sponsored by AAPFCO, The Fertilizer Institute (TFI) and AOAC.

All worksheets have been developed to calculate unit pricing, individual investigational allowances, overall index values and restitution, along with accompanying letters. Both growers and companies are receiving letters of laboratory results.

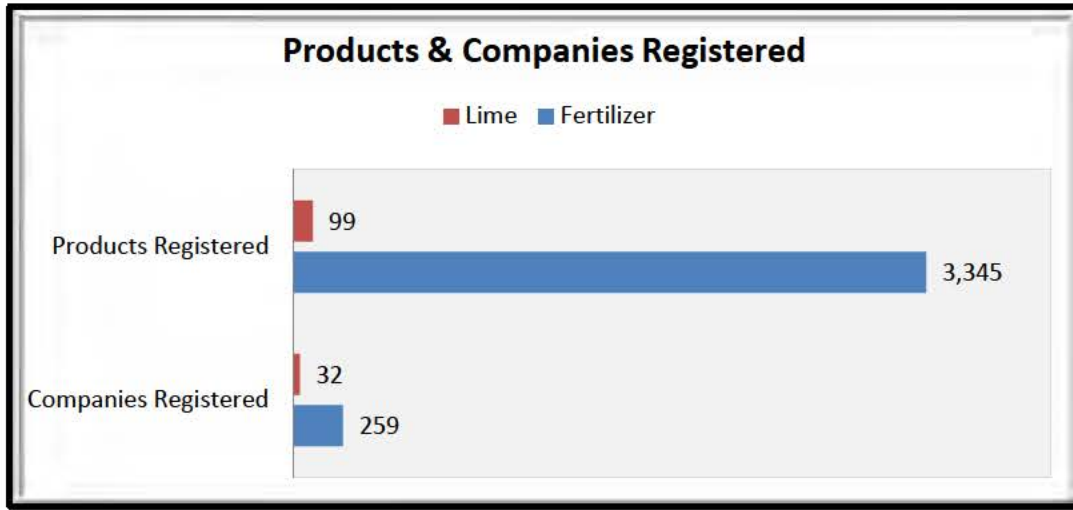
Sampling materials at fertilizer blend plants was initiated in Maine for the first time in 2014. The 2014 sample results indicated a deficiency in the Available Phosphate materials and Soluble Potash materials. This may have contributed to the high failure rate of custom mixes by the Blend Plants, if their formulations were not adjusted to the actual guarantees of the materials. We have received requests to sample materials from the Blend Plants for 2015. Requests for raw material sampling have also been made by Blend Plants in Canada which sell into Maine's fertilizer markets. This fall we had a Blend Plant from Canada and their supplier request samples to be tested for quality. The Blend Plant from Canada provided us with Phosphate materials and the samples passed. The supplier was concerned about the quality of their product meeting guarantees and the blend plant was concerned with the guarantees provided by the supplier. The purpose of this sampling is to identify the suppliers who are selling materials not meeting stated guarantees. Ultimately the growers are not getting what they are paying for which results in lower yields, lower profits, higher costs for additional fertilizer, lost time, fuel costs, etc.

The program received a very positive response from some of the Organic Growers who are paying a high price for their products and the products sampled are not meeting guarantees.

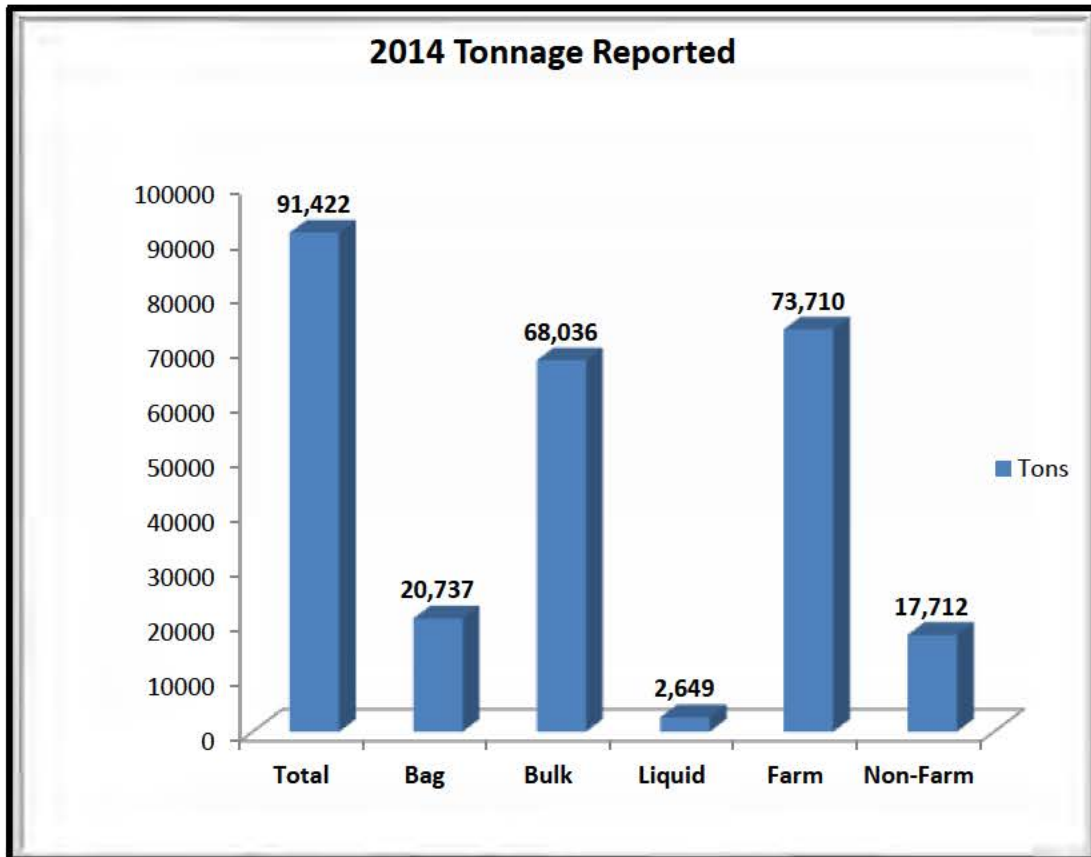
Preliminary data suggests that many products are being sold with improper labeling. An important goal for 2015 will be to assess and correct product labeling to conform to Statute and Rule. This will help ensure the program provides an equal opportunity for all businesses selling and buying fertilizer in Maine.

In order to improve program performance, changes to the language used in Subchapter 5: Fertilizers, Section 7, Subsection 751, Assessments for Deficiencies #3 Determination of commercial value are being proposed. The language used in our current statute does not conform to AAPFCO Standards or the State of Maine Regulations from 1965. The correct terminology proposed is: For the purpose of determining the commercial value to be applied under the provisions of this Section, the Commissioner shall determine and publish annually the values per unit of total nitrogen, available phosphate and soluble potash in fertilizers in this state. The value so determined and published shall be used in determining and accessing penalty payments. Another proposed action is to change the term Available Phosphoric Acid to Available Phosphate, which is the current term used by AAPFCO.

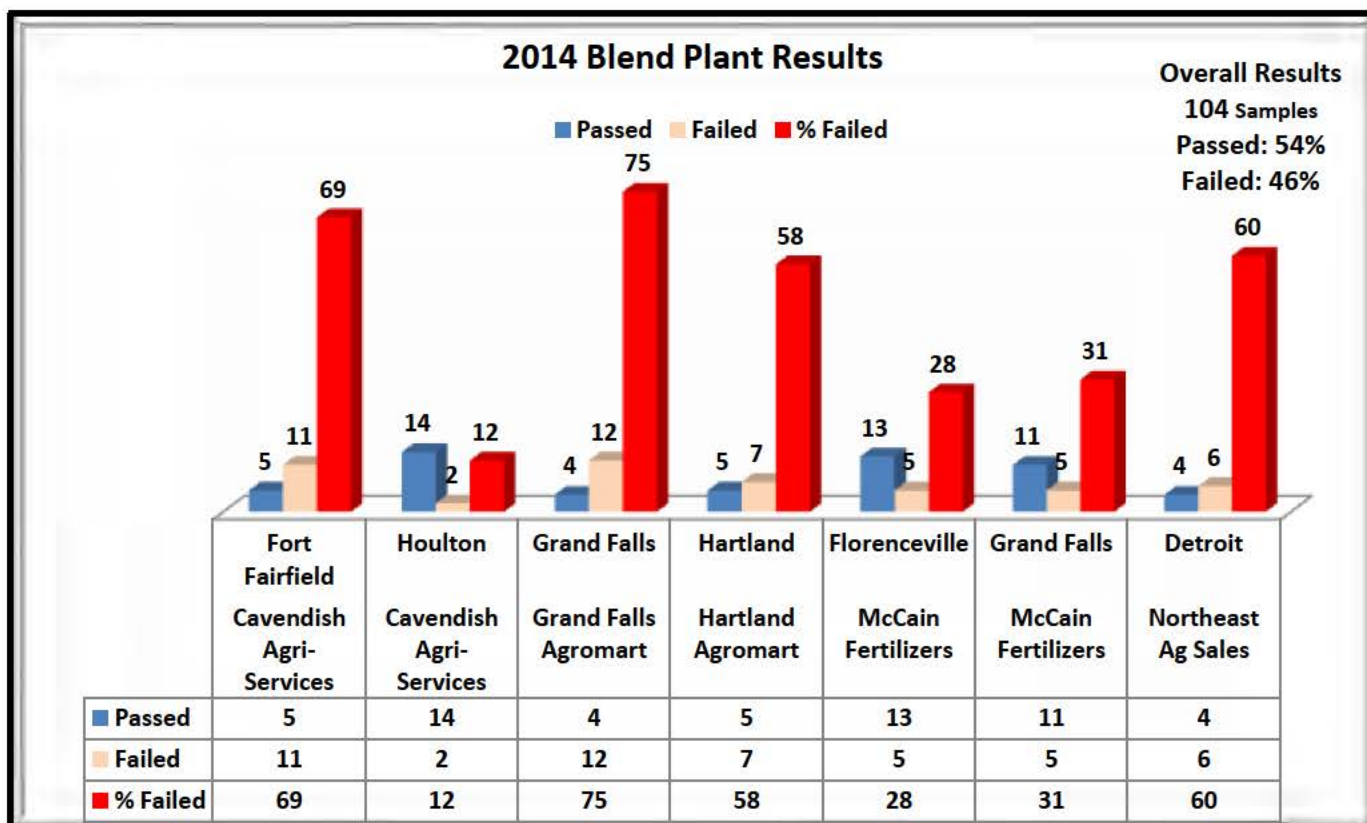
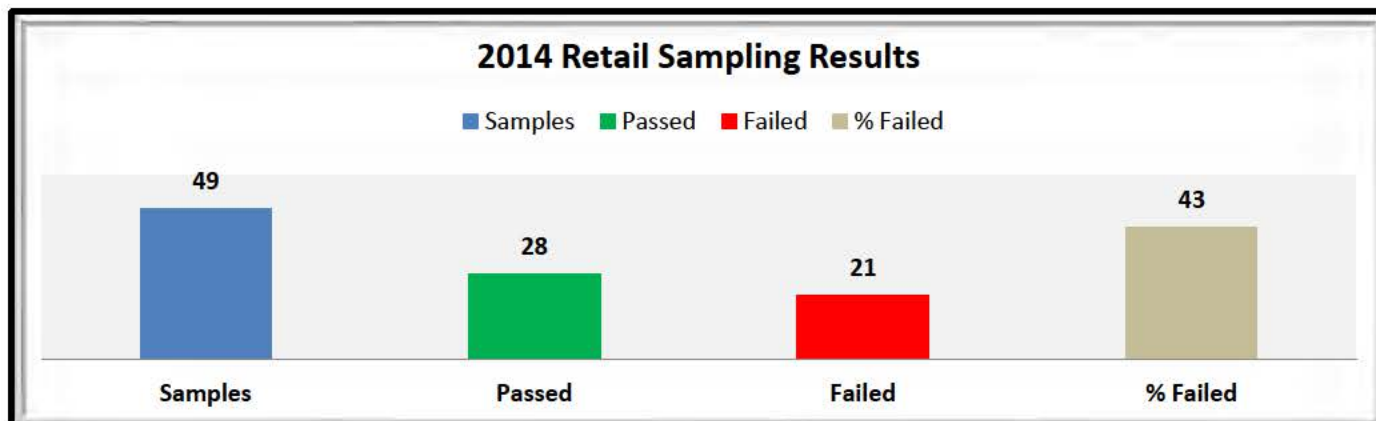
REGISTRATION DATA



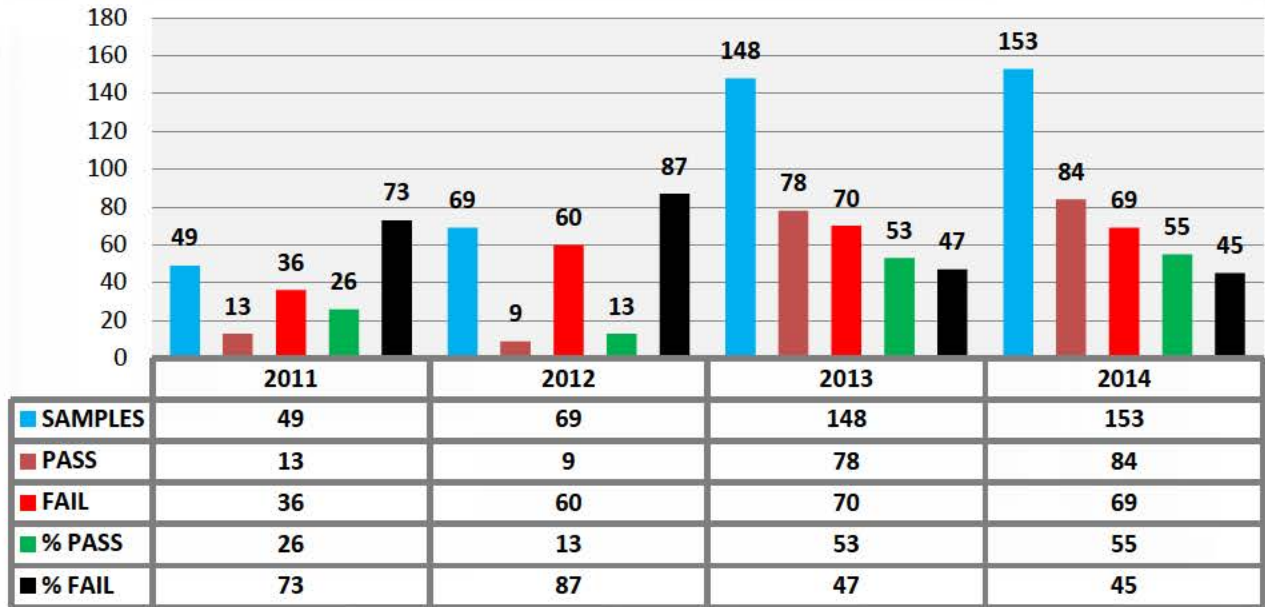
FERTILIZER TONNAGE DATA



FERTILIZER SAMPLING RESULTS



Sampling 2011-2014 Results

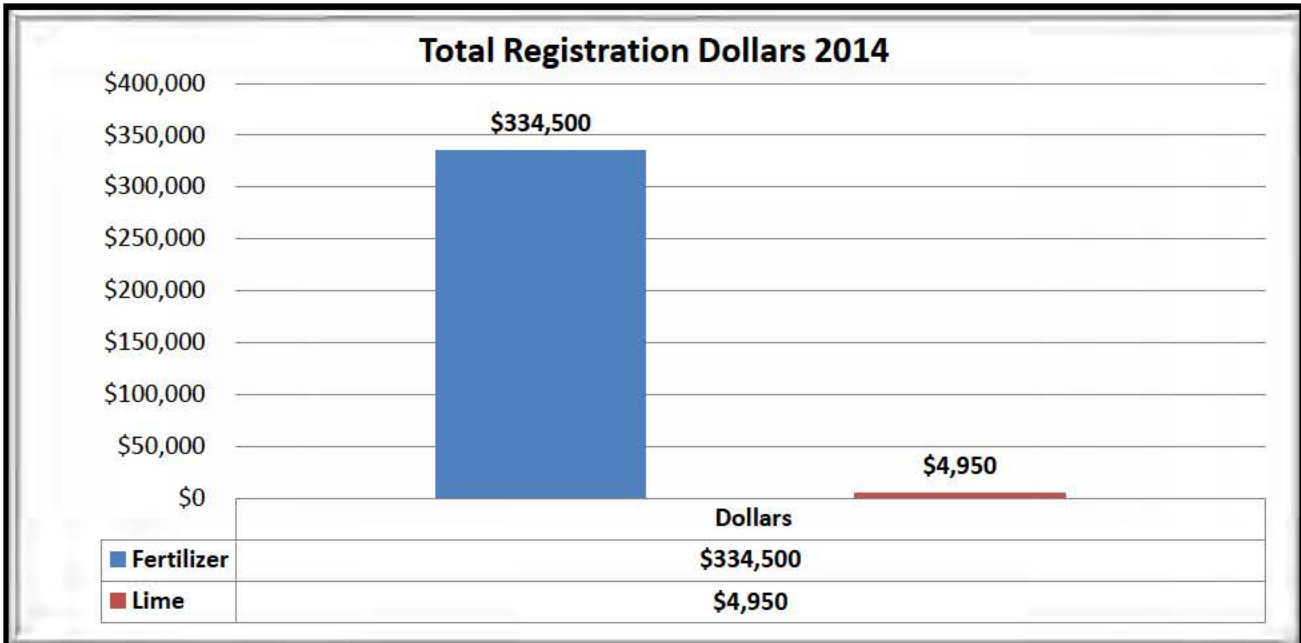


TONNAGE

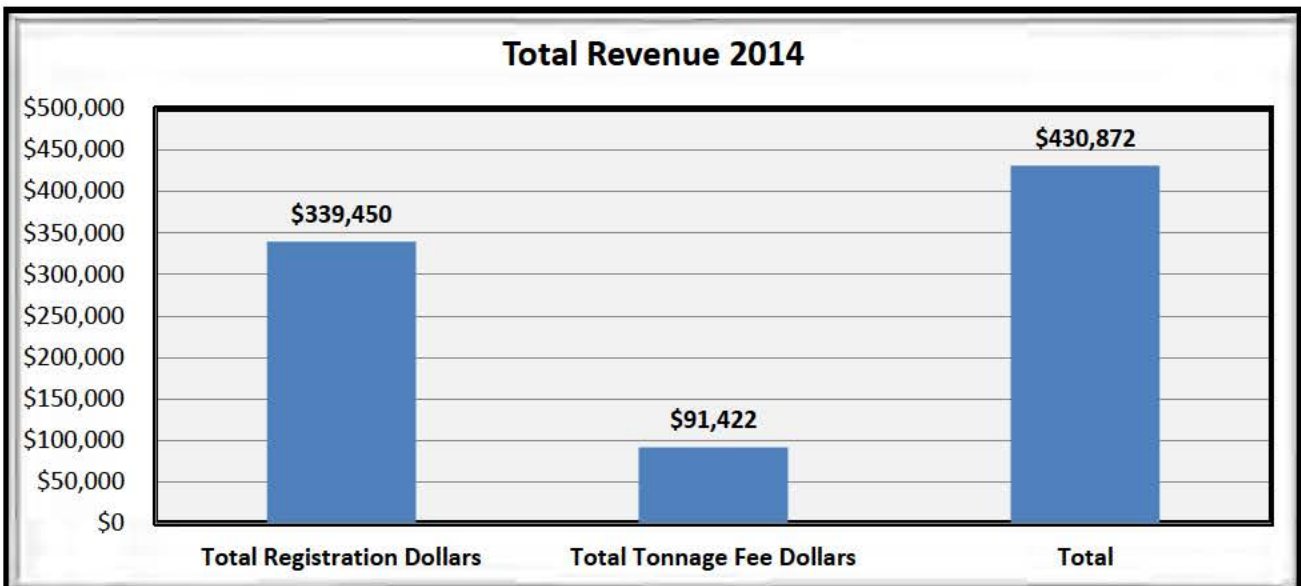
Tonnage Fee History



FERTILIZER AND LIME REVENUES



TOTAL REVENUES



Submitted by: Michael Crush CPI