



Knowledge grows



# Training Personnel at Every Level is Foundation of 'Safe by Choice'

ResponsibleAg Compliance Assistance Library is a valuable training tool for lean HES team, terminal managers at Yara North America.

In October 2018, Yara North America celebrated 140 combined years without a lost-time injury across all its 11 North American facilities. Yara's Tampa, FL, ammonia terminal, which has always deeply valued safety, leads the way in that effort, surpassing 34 years without a recordable injury. Across North America, the company has not had a reportable injury since May of 2015.

Yara's culture of safety is built around 'Safe by Choice', a global Yara program based on the belief that all injuries are preventable and that operating safely is an active, personal choice. As one of the world's largest producers of nitrogen fertilizers and crop nutrition products, including anhydrous ammonia for fertilizer manufacturing and industrial uses,

each employee has an individualized training program geared to the potential health and safety risks encountered in their roles. To streamline training, the company recently implemented a structured Learning Management System of online safety modules. For employees such as Vogen, who is in the company's Tampa headquarters and travels extensively, topics such as fire safety, safe driving, blood-borne pathogens and first aid, among others, make up his coursework. Employees at all locations have modules to complete, based around the specific products they each handle.



GARY VOGEN  
Vice President of Corporate Affairs,  
Yara North America

However, while LMS training includes general awareness of health, safety, environmental and security requirements, such as Process Safety Management and Risk Management, Yara Health, Environment and Safety staff also provide hands-on training to terminal employees. Yara has been involved with ResponsibleAg since the program began and believes the or-

Yara has always focused on the health and safety of its employees, contractors, customers and communities in which it operates. Safe by Choice provides the framework and tools to make Yara employees feel ownership for safety and taking responsibility for themselves and others. The program was initially rolled out in 2013 to Yara employees worldwide.

## Learning Management System is the starting point for training

According to Gary Vogen, Vice President of Corporate Affairs at Yara,



All the U.S.-based Yara North America facilities have been certified through ResponsibleAg and are at various stages of their recertification process. The Tampa terminal has surpassed 34 years without a recordable injury.

ganization is a valuable resource for tools to educate those in the ag inputs industry.

"When I visit our business partners that handle Yara products, I share ResponsibleAg elements with them. Handling fertilizers responsibly is not something to do because of rules and regulations, it should be done because it's the right thing to do," Brian Crets, Regional Health, Environment and Safety manager for Yara explains. "Membership in ResponsibleAg can help small retail facilities with all aspects of handling crop input products safely and responsibly."

## Knowledge of regulations built upon ResponsibleAg Compliance Program

Yara's 10 U.S.-based facilities have been certified through the ResponsibleAg Regulatory Compliance Program. This involves a facility audit by a ResponsibleAg credentialed auditor using a comprehensive assessment checklist of questions covering the safety, health, security and environmental regulations relevant to the facility. After completing a corrective action plan for any gaps identified during the audit, the facility receives certification which is good for three years.

"I completed the majority of our internal audits for Yara North America this year and the process is a tremendous opportunity for knowledge sharing," says Crets. "As a second set of eyes, I'm there to help. I can say, 'Have you thought about this?' 'Here's a new way to do this,' 'Here's where you can find the latest information on this.'"

## Each day begins with a Safety Toolbox Talk

"We run very lean, and our site managers wear many hats, just like facility managers at retail fertilizer locations. They are doing everything they can to keep an operation running, and then they've got EHS compliance and em-

ployee training responsibilities. It can be daunting," says Crets, who spent several years in manufacturing prior to joining Yara. "Before work begins, our facility employees gather for a Toolbox Talk to go over the work for that day, along with related safety items. Every Toolbox Talk focuses on relevant safety information."

"ResponsibleAg is a fabulous tool for these busy managers when they need information for a Toolbox Talk. The Compliance Assistance Library is easy to use and has concise summaries of regulatory standards that can be printed as a handout," Crets explains. "Anything updated recently is in red, and the summaries have hyperlinks that take you

**"Handling fertilizers responsibly is not just something to do because of rules and regulations, it should be done because it's the right thing to do."**

- Brian Crets

to the standards, so you're not spending days trying to find the source of the information to get a full understanding of what is required."

Being able to easily access the up-to-date regulations from OSHA, DHS, DOT and EPA is an important benefit of ResponsibleAg membership, especially for Yara's terminal managers because their sites don't have dedicated EHS personnel.

Don Smith, Director of Health, Environment & Safety for Yara North America and certified ResponsibleAg compliance auditor, emphasizes the importance of the program. "Yara North America places a high value on regulatory compliance, safety and environmental stewardship throughout our activities, and this program has supported us very well in these efforts!"



BRIAN CRETS  
Regional Health, Environment and Safety Manager,  
Yara North America

For more information about ResponsibleAg or to sign up, visit [www.ResponsibleAg.org](http://www.ResponsibleAg.org) or call 270-683-6777.

THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN PROVIDED BY



[www.ResponsibleAg.org](http://www.ResponsibleAg.org)

@ResponsibleAg

## MISSION

ResponsibleAg is an industry-led initiative **committed** to helping agribusinesses properly store and handle farm input supplies. The program helps members ensure they are **compliant** with environmental, health, safety and security regulations to keep employees, customers and our communities **safe**.

