

NEWSLETTER

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ResponsibleAg Can Fill Various Roles for Ag Retailers – All Will Reap Benefits

Agricultural retail organizations with 1,000+ locations, as well as those with a single facility, may wonder what ResponsibleAg can offer businesses that differ so widely in size. Plenty, says **Tim McArdle**, brand ambassador for the organization. ResponsibleAg's role with participating companies can vary, depending on the organization's existing safety and compliance needs, but all companies can benefit by participating in the program.

"Many people don't realize the amount of risk that exists within ag retail businesses," says McArdle, immediate past chair of ResponsibleAg and retired COO of Brandt. *"I'm very passionate about finding ways within the industry to help all ag retailers minimize that risk. I'm also passionate about sharing how ResponsibleAg helps minimize that risk."*



Benefits of Participating in ResponsibleAg

For retailers with well-developed internal environmental health and safety (EH&S) programs and dedicated staff, ResponsibleAg complements their existing programs. *"I firmly believe a company's EH&S team will become better by joining ResponsibleAg,"* says McArdle. He recommends these types of ag retailers send a few of their internal auditors through the organization's comprehensive auditor training course to become ResponsibleAg credentialed auditors, so they can conduct internal audits and train others about what they learned. *"ResponsibleAg is another tool in the company's toolbox,"* McArdle adds.

For ag retailers without internal EH&S programs or whose managers wear many hats, including safety and compliance responsibilities, McArdle says ResponsibleAg can serve as the primary resource in helping such companies meet mandated safety regulations, without incurring the cost of investing in a full-time internal EH&S team.

Helpful Resources

ResponsibleAg's audit checklist and compliance library offer significant benefits to all who use them. A retailer's internal auditors can use the audit checklist to ensure their internal program is functioning as they want it to. Companies without a dedicated internal EH&S person can use the checklist for guidance throughout the year, helping them prepare for an audit by a ResponsibleAg credentialed auditor.

All participants have access to ResponsibleAg's online compliance library, through which they can easily find answers to questions about any rule or regulation affecting ag retailers. It's kept current on ever-changing regulations by the organization's technical committee made up of industry experts.

If you have questions about the program or want to learn more about the ResponsibleAg auditing process, McArdle encourages you to contact him at 217-415-6895 or tim.mcardle@responsibleag.org.

[Back to Top](#)

ResponsibleAg Auditor Training Course Strengthens Helena's Safety Program

Blake Shankle
 Manager of Safety, Health and Engineering
 Helena Agri-Enterprises



Blake Shankle, manager of safety, health and engineering for Helena Agri-Enterprises in Collierville, Tennessee, is confident he and his team of eight environmental health and safety specialists are well versed in regulations affecting the 40 to 50 ag retail facilities each one is responsible for auditing. He'll also admit, however, that attending the ResponsibleAg auditor training course in June 2022 strengthened the team's auditing skills and made them overall better auditors.

"Some of our guys are really good at DOT regulations, and others are really good at knowing regulations for handling and storing fertilizer, because that's what they're auditing on a daily basis," says Shankle. *"ResponsibleAg's auditor training course helped galvanize us as a team and as a company to be better, more well-rounded auditors on all regulations affecting ag retail facilities."*

ResponsibleAg's training course combines in-class learning with hands-on training in former ag retail center. Shankle says the value of the course is really two-fold. *"The hands-on training is the most valuable, but the in-class training and discussions are important, too. Other training has either [involved] a person leading a class or online modules with testing. ResponsibleAg's training is unique."* He adds, *"I polled our guys on their thoughts after completing the course, and all said it was top notch and one of the best training [courses]*

they've ever attended."

For Shankle, the auditor training course is especially beneficial in his work designing ag retail facilities and overseeing capital improvement projects for the company. Knowing the OSHA, DOT, Homeland Security and EPA safety and environmental regulations upfront lets him know what inspectors look for during an audit. He then can ensure everything from elevated platforms and placarding to eyewash stations, as well as the redesign and design of new facilities handling ammonia, are done correctly from the start. "I can work with contractors to have things done correctly so we get it right the first time," says Shankle.

[Back to Top](#)

A green banner with white and yellow text. The text reads: "Ag Retail Industry and ResponsibleAg Reach Another Major Milestone: 4,500+ AUDITS COMPLETED". To the right of the text is a large white checkmark.

The recent completion of the 4,500th audit at Gavilon Fertilizer in Denison, Iowa, by a credentialed ResponsibleAg auditor is a testament to the commitment retailers and the industry has to the safety of employees, customers and local communities. The number of completed audits keeps climbing. Congratulations to Gavilon in Denison and all participating ag retailers throughout the United States who are part of this accomplishment.

[ResponsibleAg Audit Checklist](#)

[Back to Top](#)

A green banner with the ResponsibleAg logo and the text "SPOTLIGHT". Below the logo is a circular portrait of Kent McPherson, Treasurer of the ResponsibleAg Board of Directors. The text below the portrait reads: "Kent McPherson Treasurer, ResponsibleAg Board of Directors".

Kent McPherson was director of operations, overseeing environmental health and safety at GreenPoint Ag, when the company became the first retail organization to register with ResponsibleAg. Maintaining the health and safety of employees was the driving force behind that decision. McPherson says it's the same reason the company continues to participate in the program.

"GreenPoint Ag's ultimate objective is to be the safest in the industry with zero safety incidents," says McPherson, who is currently director of business and sales development for the company. "While we're not there yet, we continue working toward that goal, and ResponsibleAg is instrumental in helping us reach it."

GreenPoint Ag thought it had strict protocols in place before joining ResponsibleAg, but McPherson says the program offered a more formal, standard auditing process that helped the company reach the next level in its safety and compliance program. "The ResponsibleAg auditing process is right there in black and white, giving all our locations a road map to follow."

As treasurer on ResponsibleAg's board, McPherson's main goal is to increase the number of ag retailers participating in the program. He notes there are still too many ag retailers who aren't familiar with the program or have chosen not to participate. He hopes recent outreach steps ResponsibleAg has taken will change that.

"I can talk from first-hand experience that ResponsibleAg helps contribute to making safety a 24/7 practice within the company," says McPherson. "Today, the steps to meet the items on ResponsibleAg's audit checklist are part of every facility's 'to do list' and part of our everyday living at the company."

[Back to Top](#)

Help Stop Track Tragedies. Participate in Rail Safety Week, Sept. 19-25.

Every three hours in the U.S., a person or vehicle is hit by a train. Because many rural railroad tracks don't have crossing signals, it's important to promote crossing safety in the workplace. Help spread the word to employees on how to stay safe around tracks and trains by participating in the annual Rail Safety Week, Sept. 19-25. Take the Rail Safety Pledge.

Find educational materials from [Operation Lifesaver's free digital library of resources](#).



[Back to Top](#)



Why ResponsibleAG?



"We shouldn't view ResponsibleAg auditors as trying to shut down a facility or looking over our shoulders. Instead, they should be viewed as another set of eyes and another resource to use in our safety programs. ResponsibleAg is a program that helps us make safety compliance easier."

Lisa Hanson
EHS Director and ResponsibleAg-Credentialed Auditor, Ag Plus Inc.
South Whitley, Indiana

"Sometimes employees overlook little things, like missing or faded signs or documentation of monthly fire extinguisher inspections, but these are finable OSHA offenses. Sharing the news that our facilities are certified through ResponsibleAg helps show our local communities, employees, suppliers and insurance companies that we prioritize safety and protecting the environment."

Brian Scheid
Risk Coordinator, Premier Companies
Loogootee, Indiana



[Back to Top](#)

News from Around the Industry

Are You Prepared for Brake Safety Week, August 21-27?

Did you know that brake-related violations make up the largest percentage of out-of-service vehicle violations cited during roadside inspections? During last year's three-day International Roadcheck, brake systems and brake adjustments violations accounted for nearly 39% of all vehicle out-of-service violations. The out-of-service rate in the U.S. related to brakes was 13.5% out of the 28,694 commercial motor vehicles inspected.

Proactively checking and servicing your company's commercial motor vehicles to ensure they are safe, mechanically fit and compliant keeps your drivers and others on the road safe.

Last Chance to Register to Attend 2022 NAEHSS Safety School

It's not too late to register to attend the 2022 National Agronomic, Environmental and Health Safety School, August 23-24 in Bloomington, Illinois, the leading EHS&S industry event. Don't miss **insights and forecasts** by EHS&S experts and government and regulatory agency officials and the **opportunity to network** with peers. [Register Now!](#)

Welcome ResponsibleAg Credentialed Auditors

We welcome the following individuals as the latest ResponsibleAg credentialed auditors. Thank you for your commitment to safety in the industry.

Blake Shankle

Helena Agri-Enterprises, LLC - Collierville, TN

Brendan Henson

Nutrien Ag Solutions - East Galesburg, IL

Brian Derrick

Helena Agri-Enterprises, LLC - Ridge Spring, SC

Cody Black

Helena Agri-Enterprises, LLC - Cape Girardeau, MO

Cody Copley

Helena Agri-Enterprises, LLC - Valley Mills, TX

Fong Lo

Helena Agri-Enterprises, LLC - Fresno, CA

Gary Hamilton

Quasar Safety Consulting - Washington, NC

Gregory V Britt

Helena Agri-Enterprises, LLC - Venus, FL

John Sikes

NeuAG, LLC - Lake Jackson, TX

Lisa Maimone

Nutrien Ag Solutions - Stockton, CA

Marla Moore

GreenPoint Ag - Tifton, GA

Roger Callaway

Helena Agri-Enterprises, LLC - Wyaconda, MO

Scott Lentz

The Andersons - Maumee, OH

Walter Wicker

Helena Agri-Enterprises, LLC - Collierville, TN

William L Simmons

Quasar Safety Consulting - Lake City, FL

[Back to Top](#)

More Locations Receive Certification!

Welcome to these facilities that are now Committed, Compliant, Safe and Certified. We'd like to send a special shout out to the locations that have completed recertification, noted below with an asterisk*. The commitment to safety by all these facilities represents an incredibly positive and important effort for our industry. Congratulations to all!

- *Brandt Consolidated - Oakford, IL
- *Buttonwillow Warehouse Co. - Corcoran, CA
- Fort Loudoun Terminal Co., Inc. - Lenoir City, TN
- *Gavilon Fertilizer LLC - Denison, IA
- *GreenPoint Ag - Hardinsburg, KY
- *GreenPoint Ag - Wilson, AR
- *GROWMARK AgVantage FS - Aplington, IA
- *GROWMARK AgVantage FS - DeWitt, IA
- *GROWMARK New Century FS - Newton, IA
- Nutrien Ag Solutions - Atwood, KS
- *Nutrien Ag Solutions - Brownsville, TN
- *Nutrien Ag Solutions - Byron, NE
- *Nutrien Ag Solutions - Deshler, NE
- *Nutrien Ag Solutions - Great Falls, MT
- Nutrien Ag Solutions - Hebron, NE
- *Nutrien Ag Solutions - LaCrosse, KS
- *Nutrien Ag Solutions - Macksville, KS
- *Nutrien Ag Solutions - Palmyra, MO
- Nutrien Ag Solutions - Ransom, KS
- Nutrien Ag Solutions - Saint Francis, KS
- *Nutrien Ag Solutions - Salem, OR
- Nutrien Ag Solutions - Sidney, IL
- *Nutrien Ag Solutions - Stockton, CA
- Simplot Grower Solutions - Guadalupe, CA
- St Clair Co-op - Ashville, AL
- *The McGregor Company - Eltopia, WA

[Back to Top](#)

OUR 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**.