

American Agronomic Stewardship Alliance

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Q & A Fact Sheet

What is the American Agronomic Stewardship Alliance (AASA)?

The American Agronomic Stewardship Alliance (AASA) is a not-for-profit 501c(6) organization that has taken the lead in developing a stewardship inspection program for agricultural retail facilities that store and handle bulk, portable refillable containers and packaged crop protection chemical products.

Why is this program needed?

This program is designed to enhance stewardship and increase efficiency. The AASA has developed a single checklist and schedule for inspecting agricultural retail facilities. This replaced the duplicative bulk inspections of facilities conducted by manufacturers for several years. Working together with manufacturers, distributors and retailers, AASA has developed a more effective way to conduct facility inspections.

What are the benefits to retailers?

Facilities are inspected more efficiently; instead of each manufacturer conducting a facility inspection, the AASA conducts the inspection with resulting data available on a fee basis to all participating manufacturers and distributors. Ag retailers have fewer and more efficient inspections based on one stewardship checklist, and there is no fee charged to the retail facilities for the inspection. AASA provides each facility with a copy of the inspection report.

What are the benefits to manufacturers and distributors?

Manufacturers and distributors have a one-stop access to facility inspection data through the AASA. Better data about facilities means better decision making. The program replaces costly and duplicative inspections previously conducted individually by manufacturers. The AASA's inspection data services are available to all participating crop protection product manufacturers on a fee basis. Distributors that are AASA members do not pay for inspection data for their locations. Release of inspection data is confidential and limited to those locations where manufacturers and distributors have a bulk presence. Inspection data is available to these manufacturers and distributors for stewardship purposes only. Manufacturers and distributors who have or plan to have a bulk presence at a facility will use the inspection data as a tool to determine where crop protection products can be stored and used safely.

How is the program implemented and managed?

The AASA has a Board of Directors that includes crop protection product manufacturers, retailers, distributors and state regulators. The board provides oversight to the

organization in accordance with its by-laws. AASA has a management agreement with the Illinois Fertilizer & Chemical Association to provide administrative support for the program and also has an agreement with the Asmark Institute to provide database management and support. Dave Powers is the AASA Program Manager. The AASA conducts inspections, issues an inspection report to each facility inspected, trains inspectors and ensures the checklist is kept current.

How many facilities have been inspected?

Approximately 5,000 U.S. facilities storing bulk and packaged crop protection products have been inspected over a three-year cycle that began in 2004. This three-year cycle provides for fairness by giving facilities time to address any areas of concern.

How and when will inspections be conducted?

Inspections are conducted by third-party vendors using the comprehensive AASA stewardship checklist. This checklist covers general facility data, requirements related to bulk and PRC pesticide storage and handling, and general areas of stewardship. Inspections occur primarily from June through September of each year. AASA provides ag retail facility managers with a copy of their inspection reports.

Who will conduct the inspections and maintain the data?

Currently, AASA contracts with various inspection companies and individual inspectors to perform AASA inspections. All AASA inspectors are trained annually by AASA and overseen by the AASA Program Manager.

How is the inspection data be used?

Facility inspection data is available to participating crop protection product manufacturers and distributors who have, or plan to have, a bulk presence at the retail facility. The inspection data will be used to assist with decisions about where products can be stored safely.

How are these inspections different from what went before?

Before AASA, the crop protection product manufacturers and distributors inspected retail facilities using their own inspection programs. In some years, a retail facility may have had multiple inspections, based on multiple sets of criteria. Now, retailers are receiving a single, regular inspection, using one checklist. The AASA is providing one-stop inspection data for manufacturers and distributors who are participating in the AASA stewardship program. Some manufacturers and distributors may continue to conduct bulk site inspections at facilities on an annual basis for the years when there will not be an AASA inspection. Companies may also continue to conduct inspections when new bulk tanks are added at a facility, tanks are taken over from other suppliers or when there is a change in product to be stored in established tanks.

Is there a program to ensure the accuracy and quality of the third-party vendor’s inspections?

Yes. AASA contracts with an additional independent inspector to perform “quality assurance” inspections to verify the quality of the original inspection. Mahoney Safety LLC conducts quality assurance inspections at randomly selected locations. The results of these quality assurance inspections have demonstrated over the years that there is a high level of accuracy and quality of the AASA inspection program.

Will this data be available to regulators?

Individual facility inspection data is not shared with or made available to regulators, individuals or groups. The data is owned by the AASA. Only the retail facility that received the inspection and the crop protection product manufacturing companies or distributors that requested and paid for the inspection to occur will have access to inspection data.

If requested, AASA will provide a general summary of the inspection results if a state or federal regulator request it. The name and location of the individual facilities is NOT provided to these agencies. They receive only a summary of the overall industry level of compliance with regard to required regulatory requirements.

For questions, contact Dave Powers, the AASA Program Manager, at (515) 230-0294 or davepowers@powers-holdingsllc.com or visit the AASA website at www.aginspect.com

