

# Conventional Fertilizing Materials Licensing, Registration, & Labeling Guide

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## Introduction

The Feed, Fertilizer, & Livestock Drugs Regulatory Services (FFLDRS) Branch of the Inspection Services Division manages a comprehensive fertilizing materials program that licenses individuals or companies who manufacture or distribute fertilizing materials, and registers labels for fertilizing materials that are sold or distributed into California.

***This guide will assist firms and interested parties with the application process for conventional materials and provide them with a better understanding of the review and analysis undertaken by FFLDRS. This guide is applicable to conventional products (not intended for use in organic crop and organic food production); for guidance on materials intended for organic food and organic crop production, refer to the OIM Licensing, Registration, & Labeling Guide. This guide is designed to address many of the common pitfalls and questions regarding label registration and save you months of valuable time and costly label revisions. Look for the italicized segments for helpful notes, but always refer to the Fertilizing Materials Law and Regulations for the entire labeling, licensing, and registration requirements. All the information presented here is also available on our website at: <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/ffldrs/fertilizer.html>.***

## **Purpose of Licensing and Registering Labels for Fertilizing Materials**

The purpose of this program is to:

- Promote the distribution of effective and safe fertilizing materials.
- Provide assurance to consumers that the products they purchase are properly identified, and the quality and quantity represented is valid.

## **Law and Regulations**

The Fertilizing Materials Law and Regulations can be found in PDF format on our website at:

<http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/regulations.html>

## **FFLDRS online ExtraView Database**

The online ExtraView Database (EV) is the official database for the Feed, Fertilizer, and Livestock Drugs Regulatory Services Branch. Through the database, firms and individuals may apply for and manage fertilizer licenses and registrations; calculate and pay required mill assessments and submit tonnage reports; and view correspondence from registration staff.

To enroll, visit the database at: <https://inspect.cdfa.ca.gov/> and click “Enroll New User”.

Video instructions on how to navigate the ExtraView Database are available at: <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/ffldrs/index.html>.

This page includes tutorials on how to:

- Enroll as a New User
- Apply for a new Fertilizing Materials License
- Apply for a new Product Registration
- Pay for Items
- Renew Product Registrations or Licenses

## **Fertilizer Product Database**

The online Fertilizer Product Database is available for the public to view the status of fertilizing material products that are registered or submitted for registration with the Fertilizing Materials Inspection Program. This database also provides product information, such as Guaranteed Analysis, Heavy Metals, and Annotations for use, if applicable.

The database is available at: <https://apps1.cdfa.ca.gov/fertilizerproducts/>

## **Fertilizer Program Workshop**

The Fertilizing Materials Inspection Program holds a yearly workshop at various locations throughout the state of California to assist applicants with licensing, registration, the product database, and reporting form completion. Information on the workshop date, location, and registration will be available approximately one month before the workshop on the website: <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/ffldrs/fertilizer.html>

## Licensing for Fertilizing Materials

An individual or company who manufactures or distributes fertilizing materials in California shall, before they engage in the activity, obtain a Fertilizing Materials License for each plant and business location that they operate. The most expedient method to submit a license application is via the online ExtraView Database at: <https://inspect.cdfa.ca.gov/>.

A printable license application is also available on the FFLDRS website at: [http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/docs/LicenseApplication\\_513-020.pdf](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/docs/LicenseApplication_513-020.pdf)

***Please note: Any business or manufacturing location in California, other U.S. states, or another country, which manufacture or distribute fertilizing materials directly into California, or appear on the product label, must obtain a license from California.***

A fertilizing materials license is valid for a two-year period from January 1<sup>st</sup> of each odd-numbered year to December 31<sup>st</sup> of the next even-numbered year. Licensing fees are not pro-rated.

## License Application Procedures

### APPLICANT

1. Complete online ExtraView database license application or paper license application
2. Pay the license fee - \$100

### LICENSING DESK

1. Receives application from ExtraView or CDFA's Cashier
2. Enters information into ExtraView
3. Reviews for completeness

### LICENSE REVIEWED

1. If incomplete, notifies the firm
  - a. Response from Firm goes back to review with the Licensing Desk
2. If complete, approves license
  - a. Issues License and sends notification to firm with information on mill assessment requirements and tonnage reporting

***Please Note: If your mailing address is a P.O. Box and you have another business location in the same city, you must obtain a license for the physical business location in that city. If your mailing address is a P.O. Box and you do NOT have a business location in that city, then please clarify in writing that there is no business location in the city with the P.O. Box. For example: If Company A operates out of Fresno, but has mail sent to a P.O. Box in Madera, then Company A should license the Fresno location and clarify in writing for FFLDRS that, "There are no business locations in Madera. This is a mailing address only."***

## License Renewal

The renewal fee is \$100 per business location. Renewals are considered delinquent if received after January 31<sup>st</sup> and assessed a \$50 penalty. If the renewal remains delinquent past February 28<sup>th</sup>, of the odd-numbered year, then a penalty of \$100 per location is assessed.

## Registration of Conventional Product Labels

Before the following fertilizing materials may be sold or distributed in California, the product label must be registered by FFLDRS. Specialty Fertilizers (SF), Packaged Agricultural Minerals (PAM), and Beneficial Substances require registration. Registration is meant to ensure that the product label complies with the Fertilizing Materials Law and Regulations. The most expedient method to submit a registration application is via the online ExtraView Database at:

<https://inspect.cdfa.ca.gov/>. A printable registration application is also available at:

[http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/docs/ConvRegistrationApplication\\_513-023.pdf](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/docs/ConvRegistrationApplication_513-023.pdf).

Fertilizing materials registration is valid for a four-year period. For registration schedules, see section 2320.1(b) of the California Code of Regulations.

## Product Label Registration Procedures

### APPLICANT:

1. Apply for a fertilizing materials license (if not currently licensed)
2. Complete a ExtraView online database registration application or paper application
3. Include one 8 ½ x 11 copy of each product label
4. Pay the registration fee - \$200 for each product label to be registered
5. Provide appropriate data (Efficacy, MSDS, Analytical, etc....) to support label claims

### REGISTRATION DESK:

1. Evaluates submitted documents in order of receipt
2. Reviews submission for completeness
3. Verifies compliance with laws and regulations
4. Ensures claims, data, and information are valid

### **If registration application is incomplete**

1. Correspondence is sent to the firm via email or paper letter asking for further data and/or revisions and re-submission within 180 days. A new registration is required after 180 days, if a re-submission is not fulfilled.

### **If scientific evaluation is required, the Data Review Specialist:**

1. Reviews data in support of claims and ingredients
2. May consult with experts at the University of California
3. May request additional data or revisions

### **If registration application is complete, issue registration**

1. Product is now approved for sale/distribution in California
2. Certificate of Registration is available via ExtraView

**Please note: Any changes/updates made to the registered label must be reviewed and approved before the product bearing the amended label can be sold or distributed in California. Changes to the guaranteed analysis, derivation statement, name of product, list of ingredients, or active ingredient statement require a new submission for registration. The registration update form is available online at <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/docs/ConventionalRegistrationUpdateForm.pdf>.**

## Four Year Registration Renewal for Conventional Products

The renewal fee is \$100 per product label. Renewals are considered delinquent if not received within one calendar month from the beginning of the designated group registration cycle; such delinquent registrations will be assessed a \$50 penalty and will not be granted provisional status.

If there are no substantive label changes to a non-delinquent renewal, provisional registration status will be granted for up to six months while the program completes registration review.

## Specific labeling requirements for Conventional Fertilizing Materials

### Commercial Fertilizers (CF)

Defined in Section 14522 of the Food and Agricultural Code, “means any substance which contains 5 percent or more of nitrogen (N), available phosphoric acid (P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>), or soluble potash (K<sub>2</sub>O), singly or collectively, which is distributed in this state for promoting or stimulating plant growth.”

***Please note: Conventional commercial fertilizer is only intended for agricultural or professional use and does not require registration, although a compliant label is still required. This includes agricultural production, golf course maintenance, or commercial landscaping. However, if it is marketed for home and garden use, then it classifies as a specialty fertilizer (see next page) and must be registered.***

The following is required on a commercial fertilizer label, as specified in the California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 2303:

1. **Product name** (*The name should be unique and not possess a misleading purpose or guarantee*)
2. **Measurement**
  - a. **Net weight** (*for dry materials, U.S. & metric units*)
  - b. **Volume** (*for liquid materials, U.S. & metric units*)
  - c. **Density** (*lbs./gallon at 68° Fahrenheit- only for bulk liquids >110lbs*).
3. **Grade** (*Shall exactly match the guaranteed analysis for N-P-K*)
4. **Licensee's name and address** (*If both manufacturer and distributor are given, state “Guaranteed by:” in front of the name of the firm acting as the licensed guarantor*)
5. **Guaranteed analysis** (*required format, terminology, and order shown on next page*)
6. **Derivation Statement** (*required format and restrictions shown on next page*)

**Heavy metals:** The Fertilizing Materials Law and Regulations include standards for heavy metals. These regulations are found in Sections 2302 and 2303(s) of the CCR. The regulations set limits on arsenic, cadmium, and lead, and require that in lieu of a statement on the label, each product guaranteeing **iron, manganese, zinc, or phosphates derived from inorganic sources** shall contain either the statement, “Information regarding the contents and levels of metals in this product is available by calling 1-800-XXX-XXXX,” or the statement, “Information regarding the contents and levels of metals in this product is available on the internet at <http://www.regulatory-info-xx.com>.”

***Please note: The best (most uniform among all states) method for addressing heavy metals compliance is to state, “Information regarding the contents and levels of metals in this product is available on the internet at <https://www.aapfco.org/metals.html>” If this method is used, submit a chemical analysis reported within 5 years, at registration, to FFLDRS for ALL of the following metals: Arsenic (As), Cadmium (Cd), Cobalt (Co), Copper (Cu), Lead (Pb), Mercury (Hg), Molybdenum (Mo), Nickel (Ni), and Selenium (Se). This proactive action may save you months of valuable time and costly label revisions. If the analysis is more than 5 years old at renewal, you must submit new analytical results.***

## Commercial Fertilizers (CF), continued

The guaranteed analysis will use the following format, terminology, and order presented: *(Please note: Zero guarantees should not be made on the label and guarantees below the secondary and micronutrient guarantee minimums shown in the right column, below, should not be made unless they are exempt per Section 2307 of the CCR. If mention is made of a fertilizing material outside of the guaranteed analysis, a guarantee should be given for that material. For example: If a label guarantees values for magnesium and iron, but not sulfur, and then mentions the benefits of sulfur on the label, a value for sulfur should be guaranteed.)*

### Guaranteed Analysis:

Total Nitrogen (N) .....X%  
    X% Ammoniacal Nitrogen  
    X% Nitrate Nitrogen  
    X% Water Soluble Nitrogen  
    X% Water Insoluble Nitrogen  
Available Phosphoric Acid (P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>) .....X%  
Soluble Potash (K<sub>2</sub>O) .....X%  
Calcium (Ca) .....X%  
Magnesium (Mg) .....X%  
Sulfur (S) .....X%  
Boron (B) .....X%  
Chlorine (Cl) .....X%  
Cobalt (Co) .....X%  
Copper (Cu) .....X%  
    X% Chelated Copper *(If guaranteed)*  
Iron (Fe) .....X%  
    X% Chelated Iron *(If guaranteed)*  
Manganese (Mn) .....X%  
    X% Chelated Manganese *(If guar.)*  
Molybdenum (Mo) .....X%  
Sodium (Na) .....X%  
Zinc (Zn) .....X%  
    X% Chelated Zinc *(If guaranteed)*

### (Guarantee minimums, if claimed)

**Please note that the sum of the guaranteed forms of nitrogen must equal the total nitrogen guarantee.**

(or, Available Phosphate (P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>))

1.0000%

0.5000%

1.0000%

0.0200% ---- **If B ≥ 0.1%, add**

0.1000% **WARNING, per Section**  
0.0005% **2300 (h) of the CCR.**

0.0500%

Give chelating agent in derivation statement.  
0.1000%

Give chelating agent in derivation statement.  
0.0500%

Give chelating agent in derivation statement.  
0.0005% ---- **If Mo ≥ 0.001%, add**

0.1000% **WARNING, per Section**  
0.0500% **2300 (h) of the CCR.**

Give chelating agent in derivation statement

Derived from: ... list the ingredient sources for the above guarantees. Abbreviated chemical names, trade names, and trademarks are prohibited from the derivation statement. **The derivation statement must immediately follow the last nutrient guarantee.**

## Specialty Fertilizers (SF)

Defined in Section 14563 of the Food and Agricultural Code, “means packaged commercial fertilizer labeled for home gardens, lawns, shrubbery, flowers, and other similar noncommercial uses. These products may contain less than 5 percent nitrogen (N), available phosphoric acid (P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>), or soluble potash (K<sub>2</sub>O), singly or collectively, detectable by chemical methods.”

The following is required on a specialty fertilizer label, as specified in CCR Section 2303:

1. **Product name** (*The name should be unique and not be misleading as to the purpose and guarantees*).
2. **Measurement**
  - a) **Net weight** (*for dry materials, U.S. & metric units*)
  - b) **Volume** (*for liquid materials, U.S. & metric units*)
  - c) **Density** (*lbs./gallon at 68° Fahrenheit- only for bulk liquids >110lbs*).
3. **Grade** (*Shall exactly match the guaranteed analysis for N-P-K*)
4. **Licensee’s name and address** (*If both manufacturer and distributor are given, state “Guaranteed by:” in front of the name of the firm acting as the licensed guarantor*)
5. **Purpose of product** (*Should not be misleading as to the guarantees*)
6. **Directions for use** (*Should be for the specific product*)
7. **Guaranteed analysis** (*required format, terminology, and order shown on next page*)
8. **Derivation Statement** (*required format and restrictions shown on next page*)

**Heavy metals:** The Fertilizing Materials Law and Regulations include standards for heavy metals. These regulations are found in Sections 2302 and 2303 (s) of the CCR. The regulations set limits on arsenic, cadmium, and lead, and require that in lieu of a statement on the label, each product guaranteeing **iron, manganese, zinc, or phosphates derived from inorganic sources** shall contain either the statement, “Information regarding the contents and levels of metals in this product is available by calling 1-800-XXX-XXXX,” or the statement, “Information regarding the contents and levels of metals in this product is available on the internet at <http://www.regulatory-info-xx.com>.”

**Please note:** *The best (most uniform among all states) method for addressing heavy metals compliance is to state, “Information regarding the contents and levels of metals in this product is available on the internet at <https://www.aapfco.org/metals.html>” If this method is used, submit a chemical analysis reported within 5 years, at registration, to FFLDRS for ALL of the following metals: Arsenic (As), Cadmium (Cd), Cobalt (Co), Copper (Cu), Lead (Pb), Mercury (Hg), Molybdenum (Mo), Nickel (Ni), and Selenium (Se). This proactive action may save you months of valuable time and costly label revisions. If the analysis is more than 5 years old at renewal, you must submit new analytical results.*

## Specialty Fertilizers (SF), continued

*The N, P, and K percentages can be any value. The key distinction is the product is intended for home and garden use.*

The guaranteed analysis will use the following format, terminology, and order presented: ***(Please note: Zero guarantees should not be made on the label and guarantees below the secondary and micronutrient guarantee minimums shown in the right column, below, should not be made, unless they are exempt per Section 2307 of the CCR. If mention is made of a fertilizing material outside of the guaranteed analysis, a guarantee should be given for that material. For example: If a label guarantees values for magnesium and iron, but not sulfur, and then mentions the benefits of sulfur on the label, a value for sulfur should be guaranteed.)***

### Guaranteed Analysis:

Total Nitrogen (N) .....X%  
    X% Ammoniacal Nitrogen  
    X% Nitrate Nitrogen  
    X% Water Soluble Nitrogen  
    X% Water Insoluble Nitrogen  
Available Phosphoric Acid (P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>) .....X%  
Soluble Potash (K<sub>2</sub>O) .....X%  
Calcium (Ca) .....X%  
Magnesium (Mg) .....X%  
Sulfur (S) .....X%  
Boron (B) .....X%  
Chlorine (Cl) .....X%  
Cobalt (Co) .....X%  
Copper (Cu) .....X%  
    X% Chelated Copper *(If guaranteed)*  
Iron (Fe) .....X%  
    X% Chelated Iron *(If guaranteed)*  
Manganese (Mn) .....X%  
    X% Chelated Manganese *(If guar.)*  
Molybdenum (Mo) .....X%  
Sodium (Na) .....X%  
Zinc (Zn) .....X%  
    X% Chelated Zinc *(If guaranteed)*

### (Guarantee minimums, if claimed)

**Please note that the sum of the guaranteed forms of nitrogen must equal the total nitrogen guarantee.**

(or, Available Phosphate (P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>))

1.0000%

0.5000%

1.0000%

0.0200% ---- **If B ≥ 0.1%, add**

0.1000% **WARNING, per Section**

0.0005% **2300 (h) of the CCR.**

0.0500%

Give chelating agent in derivation statement.

0.1000%

Give chelating agent in derivation statement.

0.0500%

Give chelating agent in derivation statement.

0.0005% ---- **If Mo ≥ 0.001%, add**

0.1000% **WARNING, per Section**

0.0500% **2300 (h) of the CCR.**

Give chelating agent in derivation statement

Derived from: ... list the ingredient sources for the above guarantees. Abbreviated chemical names, trade names, and trademarks are prohibited from the derivation statement. **The derivation statement must immediately follow the last nutrient guarantee.**



## Packaged Agricultural Minerals (PAM)

Defined in Section 14512 of the Food and Agricultural Code, “means any substance with nitrogen (N), available phosphoric acid (P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>), and soluble potash (K<sub>2</sub>O), singly or in combination, in amounts less than 5 percent, which is distributed for Agricultural or Professional use, or any substance only containing recognized essential secondary nutrients or micronutrients in amounts equal or greater than minimum amounts specified by the secretary, by regulation, and distributed in this state as a source of these nutrients for the purpose of promoting plant growth. It shall include gypsum, liming materials, manure, wood fly ash, sewage sludge not qualifying as commercial fertilizer, and captured dilute solutions.” ***(Please note: Conventional bulk Ag. Minerals (more than 110 pounds) DO NOT require registration, although a compliant label is still required.)***

If secondary and micronutrients are claimed, the label shall guarantee values equal to or above specified minimums for all claimed nutrients. Acceptable secondary and micronutrients are: calcium, magnesium, sulfur, boron, chlorine, cobalt, copper, iron, manganese, molybdenum, sodium, and zinc.

The following is required as specified in CCR Section 2303 on a packaged agricultural mineral label:

1. **Product name** *(The name should be unique and not be misleading as to the purpose and guarantees)*
2. **Measurement**
  - a. **Net weight** *(for dry materials, U.S. & metric units)*
  - b. **Volume** *(for liquid materials, U.S. & metric units)*
  - c. **Density** *(lbs./gallon at 68° Fahrenheit- only for bulk liquids >110lbs).*
3. **Licensee’s name and address** *(If both manufacturer and distributor are given, state “Guaranteed by:” in front of the name of the firm acting as the licensed guarantor)*
4. **Purpose of product** *(Should not be misleading as to the guarantees)*
5. **Directions for use** *(Should be for the specific product)*
6. **Guaranteed analysis** *(required format, terminology, and order shown on next page)*
7. **Derivation Statement** *(required format and restrictions shown on next page)*

**Heavy metals:** The Fertilizing Materials Law and Regulations include standards for heavy metals. These regulations are found in Sections 2302 and 2303 (s) of the CCR. The regulations set limits on arsenic, cadmium, and lead, and require that in lieu of a statement on the label, each product guaranteeing **iron, manganese, zinc, or phosphates derived from inorganic sources** shall contain either the statement, “Information regarding the contents and levels of metals in this product is available by calling 1-800-XXX-XXXX,” or the statement, “Information regarding the contents and levels of metals in this product is available on the internet at <http://www.regulatory-info-xx.com>.”

***Please note: The best (most uniform among all states) method for addressing heavy metals compliance is to state, “Information regarding the contents and levels of metals in this product is available on the internet at <https://www.aapfco.org/metals.html>” If this method is used, submit a chemical analysis reported within 5 years, at registration, to FFLDRS for ALL of the following metals: Arsenic (As), Cadmium (Cd), Cobalt (Co), Copper (Cu), Lead (Pb), Mercury (Hg), Molybdenum (Mo), Nickel (Ni), and Selenium (Se). This proactive action may save you months of valuable time and costly label revisions. If the analysis is more than 5 years old at renewal, you must submit new analytical results.***

## Packaged Agricultural Minerals (PAM), continued

The guaranteed analysis will use the following format, terminology, and order presented: *(Please note: Zero guarantees should not be made on the label and guarantees below the secondary and micronutrient guarantee minimums shown in the right column, below, should not be made, unless they are exempt per Section 2307 of the CCR. If mention is made of a fertilizing material outside of the guaranteed analysis, a guarantee should be given for that material. For example: If a label guarantees values for magnesium and iron, but not sulfur, and then mentions the benefits of sulfur on the label, a value for sulfur should be guaranteed.)*

### Guaranteed Analysis:

Total Nitrogen (N) .....X%  
    X% Ammoniacal Nitrogen  
    X% Nitrate Nitrogen  
    X% Water Soluble Nitrogen  
    X% Water Insoluble Nitrogen  
Available Phosphoric Acid (P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>) .....X%  
Soluble Potash (K<sub>2</sub>O) .....X%  
Calcium (Ca) .....X%  
Magnesium (Mg) .....X%  
Sulfur (S) .....X%  
Boron (B) .....X%  
Chlorine (Cl) .....X%  
Cobalt (Co) .....X%  
Copper (Cu) .....X%  
    X% Chelated Copper *(If guaranteed)*  
Iron (Fe) .....X%  
    X% Chelated Iron *(If guaranteed)*  
Manganese (Mn) .....X%  
    X% Chelated Manganese *(If guar.)*  
Molybdenum (Mo) .....X%  
Sodium (Na) .....X%  
Zinc (Zn) .....X%  
    X% Chelated Zinc *(If guaranteed)*

### (Guarantee minimums, if claimed)

**Please note that the sum of the guaranteed forms of nitrogen must equal the total nitrogen guarantee.**

(or, Available Phosphate (P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>))

1.0000%

0.5000%

1.0000%

0.0200% ---- **If B ≥ 0.1%, add**

0.1000% **WARNING, per Section**

0.0005% **2300 (h) of the CCR.**

0.0500%

Give chelating agent in derivation statement.

0.1000%

Give chelating agent in derivation statement.

0.0500%

Give chelating agent in derivation statement.

0.0005% ---- **If Mo ≥ 0.001%, add**

0.1000% **WARNING, per Section**

0.0500% **2300 (h) of the CCR.**

Give chelating agent in derivation statement

Derived from: ... list the ingredient sources for the above guarantees. Abbreviated chemical names, trade names, and trademarks are prohibited from the derivation statement. **The derivation statement must immediately follow the last nutrient guarantee.**

## Beneficial Substances

Defined in Section 14513 of the Food and Agricultural Code, “means any substance or compound, other than primary plant nutrients, secondary plant nutrients, and micronutrients, and excluding pesticides, that can be demonstrated by scientific research to be beneficial to one or more species of plants, soil, or media. A beneficial substance includes, but is not limited to, plant biostimulants.”

Section **14555.5** of the Food and Agricultural Code defines “plant biostimulant” as “a substance or microorganism, or mixtures thereof, that, when applied to seeds, plants, the rhizosphere, soil, or other growth media, act to support a plant’s natural nutrition processes independently of the biostimulant’s nutrient content. The plant biostimulant thereby may improve nutrient availability, uptake, or use efficiency, tolerance to abiotic stress, and consequent growth, development, quality, or yield.”

### A. Beneficial Substance - Chemical/Biological

The following is required as specified in CCR Section 2303 on a beneficial substance label:

1. **Product name** (*The name should be unique and not be misleading as to the purpose and guarantees*)
2. **Measurement**
  - a. **Net weight** (*for dry materials, U.S. & metric units*)
  - b. **Volume** (*for liquid materials, U.S. & metric units*)
  - c. **Density** (*lbs./gallon at 68° Fahrenheit- only for bulk liquids >110lbs*).
3. **Licensee’s name and address** (*If both manufacturer and distributor are given, state “Guaranteed by:” in front of the name of the firm acting as the licensed guarantor*)
4. **Purpose of product** (*Should not be misleading as to the guarantees*)
5. **Directions for use** (*Should be for the specific product*)
6. **The statement “CONTAINS BENEFICIAL SUBSTANCE(S)”**
7. **A statement of composition** (*This should show the amount of each ingredient, which is the agent in a product primarily responsible for the intended effects as noted below.*)

#### **CONTAINS BENEFICIAL SUBSTANCE(S)**

Name of beneficial substance.....% (or acceptable units)

Species of microorganism .....viable CFU/cm<sup>3</sup>, /mL, /g or other acceptable units

#### **Examples:**

Humic Acids derived from... (*list the source of the humic acids, e.g. leonardite*) X%

**(Please note: The only claim we allow for Humic Acids is “may increase micronutrient uptake.”)**

Soluble Silicon (Si) derived from (*the source of soluble silicon is optional*).....X%

Wetting Agent (*Provide exact chemical name*).....X%

Surfactants (*Provide exact chemical name*) .....X%

Tackifiers (*Provide exact chemical name*).....X%

Polymers (*Provide exact chemical name*).....X%

Soil Penetrants(*Provide exact chemical name*) .....X%

Sugars(*Specify sugar*) (microbe food).....X%

**(Please note: The only purpose allowed for Sugars under this heading is “microbe food”, which must be stated as presented.)**

*Yucca schidigera* ..... X%

(*Not a complete list*)

## Beneficial Substances (continued)

**If biotics are guaranteed, FFLDRS requires the following additional information per Section 2304 of the CCR:**

1. **Species name of each microorganism, name of each enzyme, or organism by-product, if claimed, as part of the statement of composition.** *(Provide the full name, not abbreviations)*
2. **Active Ingredients:**
  - a. **Microorganisms:** number of viable units per mL or g. *(e.g. 100 CFU/mL)*
  - b. **Enzymes:** concentration in activity units per mL or g. *(e.g. 100 u/mL)*
  - c. **Organism by-product:** concentration in percentage by weight. *(e.g. 10%)*
3. **Expiration date** *(You may leave a space noted by "Expiration date:\_\_\_\_" where the actual date will be stamped or printed later)*
4. **Storage conditions**
5. Submit a **written description of a generally accepted laboratory method** for assaying the identity and the quantity of the viable and attenuated units and the by-products claimed with the registration application.
6. Submit a **laboratory analysis or alternate methods** verifying the microbial guarantees. The analytical results shall be no more than five (5) years old at the time of registration/renewal approval.

**Please note: If added to a commercial fertilizer, specialty fertilizer or agricultural mineral, the following format shall appear below the derivation statement:**

### **ALSO CONTAINS BENEFICAL SUBSTANCE(S)**

Humic Acids derived from *(list the source of the humic acids, e.g. leonardite)*.....X%  
Wetting Agent *(Provide exact chemical name for our records only)* .....X%  
Surfactants *(Provide exact chemical name)* .....X%  
Tackifiers *(Provide exact chemical name)*.....X%  
Polymers *(Provide exact chemical name)*.....X%  
Soil Penetrants *(Provide exact chemical name)* .....X%  
Biotic Guarantees  
*(Not a complete list)*

## Beneficial Substances (continued)

### B. Beneficial Substance - Physical

For beneficial substances intended to condition soils solely through physical means, in lieu of a statement of ingredient composition as required in 2303(g) or (k), the label shall include a list of non-nutritive ingredients in decreasing amounts present.

(1) This includes, but is not limited to:

(A) Hay, straw, peat moss, leaf mold, sand, gravel, coir, humus, rice hulls, perlite, vermiculite, wood products, and biochar.

(B) Manures, meals, mulches, and composts without guarantees for plant nutrients.

(C) Any product or mixture of products intended for use as a potting medium, planting mix, or soilless growing media.

***(Please note: Conventional bulk beneficial substances-physical (more than 110 pounds) DO NOT require registration with the exception of biochar [refer to FAC Section 14601(b)(1).])***

The following is required as specified in CCR Section 2303 on a beneficial substance packaged label:

1. **Product name** *(The name should be unique and not be misleading as to the purpose and list of ingredients)*
2. **Measurement** (volume) *(U.S. & metric)*
3. **Licensee's name and address** *(If both manufacturer and distributor are given, state "Guaranteed by:" in front of the name of the firm acting as the licensed guarantor)*
4. **Purpose of product** *(Should not be misleading as to the guarantees)*
5. **Directions for use** *(Should be for the specific product)*
6. **A list of ingredients** *(Shall be in order of decreasing amounts present)*

**Please note: If a WETTING AGENT/TACKIFIER is included in the list of ingredients, FFLDRS requires the exact chemical name of the wetting agent and/or tackifier on the registration application or in another form of writing. The exact name is not required on the product label, "wetting agent/tackifier," is acceptable on the label. The name shall be kept confidential.**

## Organic and Natural Claims

**Organic:** In conventional fertilizing material products, the term “organic” can be used only if 100% of the product composition is carbon-containing; reference to National Organic Program (NOP) qualified organics is not allowed. If 50% or more of a product is derived from organic sources, you may state, “organic-based.”

### Please note:

1) Products making claims for use or intended for use in organic crop and organic food production (i.e., not conventional fertilizing materials) must be registered with the CDFA Organic Input Material (OIM) program. For guidance on materials intended for organic food and organic crop production, consult the OIM Licensing, Registration, & Labeling Guide.

2) Products submitted for listing by a third-party organic input material review organization must be registered with the CDFA OIM program. For guidance on materials intended for organic food and organic crop production, consult the OIM Licensing, Registration, & Labeling Guide.

3) Except for the term “Organic matter”, products using the term “organic” on fertilizing materials label(s)/labeling that does not require registration as an OIM shall conspicuously display one of the following statements on the primary display panel of the label, exactly as it appears in Section 2320.4 of the CCR:

- “NOT FOR USE IN ORGANIC CROP AND ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTION IN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA” or
- “NOT FOR USE IN ORGANIC CROP AND ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTION”.

**Natural:** A mineral nutrient source that exists in or is produced by nature and may be altered from its original state only by physical manipulation.

## Plant Biostimulant Claims

Beginning January 1, 2025, “plant biostimulant” claims will be permitted on labeling in some instances. Labeling may claim “plant biostimulant,” but not the abbreviated and undefined term of “biostimulant”.

At present time, the only fertilizing materials permitted to make “plant biostimulant” claims must include humic acid, seaweed extract and/or kelp extract as ingredients.

The only additional allowed plant biostimulant labeling claims include:

- (Product name or humic acid/seaweed extract/kelp extract ingredient) acts to support a plant’s natural nutrition process.
- Humic acid may aid in the uptake of micronutrients.
- Seaweed extract (or kelp extract) is a food source for microorganisms.
  - Seaweed extract (or kelp extract) subsequently enhances microbial growth. (This claim must be accompanied by the microbe food claim)

## Misbranding and Adulteration

Per Article 12, Section 14681 of the Food and Agricultural Code, no person shall distribute misbranded fertilizing materials. A fertilizing material shall be deemed misbranded under any of the following conditions:

- (a) If its labeling is false or misleading in any particular way.
- (b) If it is distributed under the name of another fertilizing material.
- (c) If it is not labeled as required by regulations adopted pursuant to this chapter.
- (d) If it purports to be, or is represented as, a fertilizing material, or is represented as containing a primary or secondary plant nutrient or micronutrients, or both, unless the plant nutrients conform

to the definition of identity, if any, prescribed by regulation. In adopting these regulations, due regard shall be given to commonly accepted definitions and official fertilizer terms such as those prescribed by the Association of American Plant Food Control Officials.

## Unacceptable Terms and Claims

There are no official definitions for the terms **Balanced**, and **Complete**. They are considered misleading and are not allowed on fertilizing material labels. Refer to Section 14681(a) of the Food and Agricultural Code.

Presently, the Department does not allow guarantees for **Fulvic acids** or **Organic acids** on labeling of fertilizing materials.

Please Note: This should not be considered a complete list of unacceptable terms, claims, or guarantees

## Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

### Do all fertilizing materials for agricultural use require registration?

No, conventional commercial fertilizers and conventional bulk agricultural minerals are exempt from registration; however, firms are still required to follow all the labeling laws and regulations. Conventional bulk beneficial substance- physical are exempt from both licensing and labeling requirements. All organic input materials (OIM) require registration.

### What about fertilizers that contain pesticides?

Fertilizers that make pesticide claims may require dual registration with FFLDRS and the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR). DPR may be contacted at (916) 445-4400. Please note that Beneficial Substance - Chemical/Biological products cannot hold dual registrations with FFLDRS and DPR.

### Are the registration fees refundable?

No. Registration fees are product label review fees and are neither refundable nor prorated. Overpayments will be refunded.

### If I distribute or sell bulk fertilizing material, am I required to include a label?

Yes, products shall be accompanied by a label compliant with the Fertilizing Materials Law and Regulations.

### Where can I obtain copies of the licensing and/or registration applications?

You are encouraged to apply on the online ExtraView Database at <https://inspect.cdffa.ca.gov>.

Paper applications are available through our website:

<https://www.cdffa.ca.gov/is/ffldrs/fertilizer.html>, by contacting FFLDRS at 1220 N Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-5607.

### What is required with the application for licensing and/or registration?

Provide the following information with a fertilizing materials license application: a completed application via the online ExtraView database or a paper application and a license fee of \$100.

Provide the following information with a fertilizing materials label registration application: a completed application via the online ExtraView database or a paper application, an application for a license if not currently licensed, one 8 ½ x 11 copy of each product label, \$200 registration fee for each product label to be registered, and appropriate data.

**Who requires a fertilizing materials license?**

Any individual or company who manufactures or distributes fertilizing materials in California shall, before they engage in the activity, obtain a Commercial Fertilizing Materials License for each plant and business location they operate.

**Do I need both a license and product label registration?**

All firms are required to have a current license. All product label registration applications require a current license or an active license application. However, not all conventional product labels require registration.

**Who needs to register product labels?**

The guarantor of specialty fertilizers, packaged agricultural minerals, Beneficial Substance - Chemical/Biological, Beneficial Substance - Physical, and all organic input materials (OIM) are required to register product labels.

**How long is the license or registration valid?**

A fertilizing materials license is for a two-year period that commences January 1, of each odd-numbered year and expires on December 31 of, the next even-numbered year. The status and expiration date for a firm's license(s) may be viewed on the firm's online ExtraView account.

A product label registration for fertilizing materials is for a four-year period. The status of product registration(s) may be viewed on the firm's online ExtraView account, where the Certificate of Registration for Fertilizing Materials with the expiration date of all product(s) registered under the firm is also available.

**How long does the application process take?**

The length of the application process varies. Applications submissions and re-submissions are reviewed in the order as they are received. Typically, it takes up to 90 days for a reviewer to conduct a review and provide correspondence to a submission or re-submission. If revisions or clarifications are requested, the firm must re-submit to FFLDRS their product label with the requested revisions or clarifications in order to continue the review process. Each subsequent response or re-submission by the firm is subject to up to 90 days response time from the reviewer, based on the date of receipt of the most recent response/re-submission. If scientific evaluation is necessary, the process would require additional time.

Currently, less than one tenth of the labels received are ready for approval without additional revisions/data. Thus, the majority of firms must resubmit their labels with additional revisions/data. The best way to minimize the length of the application process is to fully address all items requested by CDFA reviewers in a timely fashion.

**Can I challenge the Departments scientific findings?**

Yes. A rebuttal may be submitted to clarify deficiencies found in the studies, or additional supporting data may be submitted to substantiate company claims.

**How are humic acid guarantees evaluated?**

Humic acid guarantees are evaluated based on analysis of the humic acid content in a product using the CDFA in-house humic acid method. A copy of the method used by CDFA is available at <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/ffldrs/pdfs/HumicAcid.pdf>, and many analytical laboratories testing fertilizing materials are familiar with this method. Please reference the 'CDFA Humic Acid method'.



**Can silicon be guaranteed in fertilizing materials?**

A Soluble Silicon (Si) guarantee may appear on fertilizing material labels under the “CONTAINS BENEFICIAL SUBSTANCE(S):” heading. See the example that appears in this guide under beneficial substance-chemical/biological products. Acceptable claims for soluble silicon include general claims such as strengthening and promotion of upright stature. Specific claims may require further scientific evaluation. The method for soluble silicon analysis is available at [https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/cac/CAC\\_Methods\\_Publications.html](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/cac/CAC_Methods_Publications.html)

???? Questions – Please contact FFLDRS staff at [fertilizer@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:fertilizer@cdfa.ca.gov).