



STATE OF GEORGIA  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Tyler J Harper  
COMMISSIONER

Senator Russ Goodman  
Chairman, Senate Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee  
301-A CLOB  
Atlanta, GA 30334

Representative Robert Dickey  
Chairman, House Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee  
228-B State Capitol  
Atlanta, GA 30334

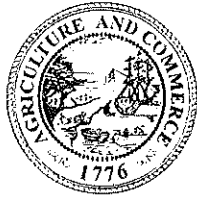
February 16, 2023

Chairmen Goodman and Dickey:

As you are aware, the Georgia Soil Amendment Act of 1976, Chapter 12 of Title 2 of the Official Code of Georgia, requires the registration of all soil amendments distributed in Georgia and codifies requirements on registered products including labeling, sampling, and reporting. O.C.G.A. § 2-12-71 defines a soil amendment as any substance intended to change the characteristics of soil or other growth medium for the purposes of:

- (a) Increasing penetrability of water or air;
- (b) Increasing water-holding capacity;
- (c) Alleviating or decreasing soil compaction; or
- (d) Otherwise altering the soil or other medium in such manner that the physical properties are materially enhanced.

In 2020 and 2021, the General Assembly passed legislation signed by the Governor that revised the regulation of soil amendments, adding new requirements regarding a site-specific nutrient management plan; clarifying definitions of what constitutes a soil amendment; and including penalties for those who violate certain provisions of the law, among numerous other substantive changes. The current law tasks the Department of Agriculture to develop rules and regulations for enforcement and implementation. Pursuant to this, the Department has amended the rules and regulations regarding soil amendments several times over the last few years. Most recently, the rules and regulations were amended on December 27, 2022, and those changes went into effect on January 1, 2023.



STATE OF GEORGIA  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Tyler J Harper  
COMMISSIONER

As I committed prior to and since taking office on January 12<sup>th</sup>, I will work hand in hand with the General Assembly to proactively address current and arising issues. Absent any objections from you, our team at the Department of Agriculture plans to move forward with a 90-day review and examination of the newly promulgated rules regarding soil amendments. This review process will allow us to determine whether these new rules do enough to address issues raised by residents, community leaders, and industry professionals. We will also be looking at ways to strengthen the Soil Amendment Program within the Department. Our goal is to ensure the safety, health, and wellbeing of every Georgia consumer while at the same time supporting and advancing our state's number one industry.

As Agriculture Commissioner, I stand committed to working with you to improve the lives of every Georgian, champion our state's number one industry, and empower farmers and families across this state to succeed—and I look forward to continuing to do that in the months and years ahead.

Thank you both for your service to our state. If I can ever be of assistance, please do not hesitate to call on me at any time.

Sincerely,

Tyler Harper  
Commissioner of Agriculture