

Part 402 - Nutrient Management

TX402.3 Certification

A. All persons who review or approve plans for nutrient management will be certified through a certification program accepted by NRCS.

- (1) The following will be used to certify NRCS employees that approve Nutrient Management Plans.
 - (i) Complete the Introduction to Water Quality course available through the AgLearn.
 - (ii) Complete the Nutrient Management Certification Short Course available through the Texas Cooperative Extension (TCE). This course includes an online portion and a facilitated session. The facilitated session will be provided by NRCS and will consist of students preparing 2 nutrient management plans.
 - (iii) Achieve passing scores on the TCE Nutrient Management Certification Short Course exam and nutrient management plans generated at the facilitated session.
- (2) The following criteria will be used to certify third party vendors that approve Nutrient Management Plans.
 - (i) Complete the Nutrient Management Certification Short Course available through the Texas Cooperative Extension (TCE). This course includes an online portion and a facilitated session. The facilitated session will be provided by NRCS and will consist of students preparing two nutrient management plans.
 - (ii) Achieve passing scores on the TCE Nutrient Management Certification Short Course exam and nutrient management plans generated at the facilitated session.
- (3) Continuing Education and Re-certification
 - (i) Certificants must participate in continuing education to maintain their certification. Continuing education units (CEU's) will measure continuing education progress for re-certification.
 - (ii) Certificants must obtain 5 approved CEU's each calendar year (begins January 1).
 - (iii) Approved CEU's may include lectures, panel discussions, organized video or film with live instruction, field demonstrations, or other activities that are:
 - Approved for equivalent CEU's by the Texas Certified Crop Advisor board in the Nutrient Management Competency Areas,
 - Approved by the TCE Nutrient Management short course coordinator, or
 - Approved by the Texas NRCS State Conservationist.
 - (iv) Certificants must complete and submit one plan every 3 years for review and approval to the NRCS State Agronomist.
 - (v) Certificants will re-certify by self-certification. Certificants must collect and keep certificates of completion distributed at the approved activities [see paragraph (3)(c)] and/or sign the re-certification attendance form available at approved activities.
 - (vi) Of these certificants re-certifying, random audits will be conducted by the State Conservationist to determine compliance with the above policy. Ten percent of certificants re-certifying will be audited each year.