Certified Forage & Grassland Professional Designation Program

American Forage and Grassland Council
www.afgc.org
Dear CFGP Member:

In 2005, AFGC established the Certified Forage and Grassland Professional (CFGP) program to recognize individuals within the industry possessing the expertise to plan critical conservation practices and implement sound resource management of pasture, hayland and grazed cropland may be certified as such by the American Forage and Grassland Council.

In addition, AFGC has entered into a MOU with the United State Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to establish a framework for cooperation between AFGC and NRCS so that individuals receiving certification in the CFGP program will also be considered by NRCS for certification as a Technical Service Provider. This is a valuable benefit to the certification program and the association.

This guideline brochure is designed to give you vital information as you navigate your way from interest in the program, to participation, to certification and to re-certification. These guidelines will serve as the governing rules and regulations of the Certified Forage and Grassland Professional certification process and must be adhered to by all applicants seeking certification and those who are certified.

We hope that CFGP members will take full advantage of their certification and feel as proud to list the designation of CFGP by their name as we are to offer the certification to those most deserving individuals. If you should ever have questions regarding the program you may contact AFGC Headquarters at the information listed below.

Sincerely,

Tina Bowling
AFGC, Executive Director
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Guidelines and Procedures for the AFGC
Certified Forage and Grassland Professional Program

1. Statement of Policy

Certification as a Forage and Grassland Professional signifies that the designated individual has met the basic qualifications to be able to carry out professional work in the field, and has not been found to engage in unprofessional conduct. Persons possessing the professional credentials indicating that they can plan critical conservation practices and implement sound resource management of pasture, hay land, and grazed cropland may be certified as such by the American Forage and Grassland Council. Critical conservation practices are those that address critical resource needs such as: gully, sheet, rill, and stream bank erosion; plant health and adaptation, and contaminated runoff. Such practices include but are not limited to: prescribed grazing, water supply alternatives, stream crossings, fencing, and livestock trails and walkways.

2. Eligibility

Qualifying experience must begin after the completion of the educational requirements, which is completion of a bachelor’s degree in Agronomy, Soils, Animal Science, Natural Resources, Range Science, or closely related fields. Education toward an MS or PhD degree in a field closely related to forage and grassland management may be substituted for 2 years of experience as determined by the Certification Committee. The Committee will evaluate the evidence of education and experience submitted by each applicant. The Committee may, at their discretion, accept other combinations of experience, education and grades as meeting these requirements.

Five years of experience and performance on the written exam may be substituted for course requirements if the Committee decides that the required subject matter content is met. Also, completion of courses approved for continuing education units could be substituted for some educational requirements. Education alone cannot be substituted for all of the experience requirements.

To be eligible for CFGP certification you must be a member in good standing with AFGC.

3. Certification Requirement

Education
Completion of a bachelor’s degree in Agronomy, Soils, Animal Science, Natural Resources, Range Science, or closely related fields.

Experience
At least five years of full-time, experience is required. Only work that is directly related to grassland resource management will be counted toward the experience requirement. Qualifying experience may consist of employment in farm/ranch management, land management agencies, consulting, teaching, research, extension or technical assistance, or other types of forage and grassland management. Qualifying experience is defined as actively demonstrating professional competence in the science and practice of effectively managing and using, for human benefit, the natural resources that occur on and in association with pastureland, hay land, and grazed...
cropland. Also, at least one, documented training course should have been taken in each of the following areas:

1. Vegetative management - use of grazing or other biological agents, chemical or mechanical methods, or fire to control competing vegetation on pastureland or hay land.

2. Animal management - grazing management systems or other practices to control livestock numbers, distribution, and timing of grazing to accomplish natural resource objectives.

3. Conservation planning on grasslands or grazing lands - development of management plans that address all critical resource needs on grazing lands, and accomplish stated resource management goals.

4. Pasture condition assessment - classifying, mapping, and interpreting the characteristics, condition, and trend of pastureland/hay lands.

5. Economics of forage and grassland management.

6. Grassland soil management, soil quality, erosion control, and fertility management.

4. Examination

Applicants must obtain a passing score of at least 70% on the comprehensive written exam covering the basic subject matter outlined in the educational requirements above. Applicants who fail the exam may retake the entire exam. Exams may be retaken more than once and the applicant may retake the exam at the next available opportunity.

Once your application is approved, AFGC will contact you regarding the type of exam you wish to take and details.

No examination will be required for re-certification if the application for recertification is received within one year of the expiration date. After a lapse of one year, the applicant will be required to take the examination and pay the initiation fee again.

If the exam is taken and not passed the initiation fee includes one exam retake for no additional fee.

There is a practice exam located at www.afgc.org to assist in preparing for the exam.

5. Exam Proctor Guidelines

If taking the paper version of the Certified Forage and Grassland Professional (CFG) exam, a second party must proctor it. AFGC personnel have the responsibility of providing the proctor with a sealed exam that will be copied and administered by the proctor.

The proctor is responsible for the following:

- Storing the exam in a secure location.
- Copying the exam, being careful that he or she maintains possession of all copies before and after the exam, and that no additional copies are made.
- Distributing the exam to exam participants.
Verifying the identification of each exam taker.

Ensuring that the completed exam is solely the work of the individual.

Monitoring all test takers during the exam.

Ensuring that test takers do not use any notes, the CFGP study materials, or other materials during the exam process.

Collecting and securing all exams.

Initialing and dating each exam.

Shipping all exams, including the master copy, to AFGC at the address listed above.

It is not the proctor’s responsibility to answer questions during the test. The role of the proctor is to protect the exam’s integrity, the exam taker’s identity, and test authenticity. The paper test has a time limit of 2 hours.

If taking the exam online, a proctor is highly recommended but not required. The online exam has a time limit of 30 minutes to complete.

6. Administration

General oversight for the certification program and evaluation of applicant's credentials shall be the responsibility of the Certified Forage and Grassland Professional Committee.

The Committee will review applications for certification and recertification as needed. The Committee will assess applications and recommend candidates for certification.

In assessing candidates for certification, the Certified Forage and Grassland Professional Committee will review and verify information provided on application and supporting documentation. The Certified Forage and Grassland Professional Committee may ask candidates to submit any additional information, which may be needed to help resolve ambiguities. Where the judgment of the Certified Forage and Grassland Professional Committee differs from that of the certification candidate, the candidate will be notified promptly. Appeal procedures are set forth in these guidelines.

7. Appeals

All actions and recommendations of the Certified Forage and Grassland Professional Committee may be appealed through the Committee to the Board of Directors. A decision by the Board of Directors is final.

8. Ethics /Accuracy of Submissions

Candidates for certification must take reasonable steps to ensure the accuracy of all information they submit in support of an application for certification. Any willful misrepresentation of work or educational experience may result in removal from the certification program and revocation of certification if it has already been granted.

Certified Forage and Grassland Professionals are expected to maintain high standards of ethics related to the profession. Documented evidence of unprofessional or illegal conduct will be grounds for de-certification.
9. **The Certification Document**

Upon certification, all candidates will receive a printed certificate attesting to completion of the program requirements. In addition, NRCS will be notified of certification.

10. **Re-certification**

Certified Forage and Grassland Professionals will be required to meet the minimum continuing education requirements of 32 CEU’s during the 2-year certification period. Courses and the number of CEU credits counting towards re-certification will be approved by the Certification Committee. *It is highly encouraged that CEU's be submitted online in your member profile to ensure accurate recording and tracking.* Continuing education credits will be offered at annual AFGC and SRM meetings. AFGC affiliate councils, SRM sections, universities, government agencies, or other professional organizations may offer CEU’s as well.

Continuing education requirements must include a diversity of topics. At least 16 CEU’s must come from the following subject matter areas: vegetative management, animal management, conservation planning on grasslands and grazing lands, pasture condition assessment, economics of forage and grassland management, grassland soil management, soil quality, erosion control, and soil fertility management. The remaining CEU’s should be in subject matter related to professional practice of forage and grassland management.

Individuals must submit proof of satisfactory completion of all CEU’s when making application for renewal of certification. Certified individuals who fail to obtain the required 32 CEU’s during the two-year period will be given a provisional re-certification period of 6 months to complete the requirement, and charged a penalty fee.

11. **CEU Credit**

The AFGC Certified Forage and Grassland Professional Program recognize two types of CEU credits: committee-approved and self-reported. Committee-approved CEU’s are credits that have been approved by the AFGC Certified Forage and Grassland Professional Committee. Courses, programs, seminars, etc. must be submitted for approval by the meeting organizer. If you plan on attending a program you feel should be eligible for CEU credits, you should ask the meeting organizer to obtain a **CEU Program Documentation form** from the AFGC website ([www.afgc.org](http://www.afgc.org)) and submit it for approval. The meeting provider, however, is the only one who can submit the program to be considered for approval. Meeting planners for future programs should submit their CEU applications 30 days prior to the event so they can be processed and to allow time for advertisement of the meeting.

Self-reported CEU’s are continuing education events including meetings, seminars, symposia, etc. that have not been pre-approved by the AFGC Certified Forage and Grassland Professional Committee. The **CEU Reporting form** must be filled out by you to receive credit for programs. This form is available from the AFGC website.

The number of CEU’s granted per topic is related to contact time as follows:

30 to 45 minutes = 0.5 CEU’s
46 to 75 minutes = 1.0 CEU’s  
76 to 105 minutes = 1.5 CEU’s  
106 to 135 minutes = 2.0 CEU’s  

After 135 minutes of meeting time, each additional 30 minutes of instruction will equal 0.5 CEU’s.

12. Fees

Fees include a non-refundable, one-time initiation fee that must be paid when the application is submitted, and a renewal fee paid each biennial renewal period.

The initiative fee must be paid prior to taking the exam. The fee is non-refundable and is due each time the exam is administered, with the exception of one retake per initiative fee. Therefore, if you take the exam and do not pass and sign up to take the exam again you will not be required to pay the fee again.

A fee is required at the time of application for re-certification. Certain penalty fees will be assessed for failure to meet continuing education requirements or to make timely application for renewal of certification. A penalty fee may be assessed if all required continuing education units are not complete at the time of application.

Fees will be used for administration of the certification program, and may be adjusted as the program is developed.

For current fees please visit www.afgc.org.
## FORMS APPENDIX
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Application for Certification
Certified Forage and Grassland Professional (CFGP)

Certification as a Forage and Grassland Professional (CFGP) signifies that the designated individual has successfully completed this application and an exam that documents his or her knowledge in planning critical conservation practices and implementing sound resource management of pasture, hay land, and grazed cropland. Candidates who wish to take the exam and be certified by the American Forage and Grassland Council (AFGC) must complete the Application for Certification and return it, with payment, to AFGC at the address indicated on this form.

Those who earn CFGP status are required to re-certify every two years by meeting continuing education requirements specified by AFGC. More information on re-certification is available online at www.afgc.org or by calling the office at 800.944.2342.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY

Date of Application: ____________________________
Name (Mr./Ms./Mrs.): ____________________________________________
Company Affiliation: __________________________________________
Title: _________________________________________________________
Address: ______________________________________________________
City __________________________ State __________ Zip/Postal Code __________
Country (other than U.S.A.): ______________________________________
Phone: __________________________ Fax: __________________________
E-mail: _______________________________________________________

EDUCATION

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Education should include completion of bachelor’s degree in Agronomy, Soils, Animal Science, Natural Resources, Range Science, or a closely related field.

Education toward an MS or PhD degree in a field closely related to forage or grassland management may be substituted for two years of experience as determined by the Certification Committee. The Committee may, at their discretion, accept other combinations of education and experience as meeting these requirements.

Five years of experience and performance on the written exam may be substituted for course requirements if the Committee decides that the required subject matter content is met. Also, completion of courses approved for continuing education units may be substituted for some educational requirements. Education alone cannot be substituted for all of the experience requirements.
At least five years of full-time experience is required. Only work that is directly related to grassland/forage resource management will be counted toward the experience requirement. Qualifying experience may consist of employment in farm/ranch management, land management agencies, consulting, teaching, research, extension or technical assistance, or other types of grassland/forage resource management.

In the space below, please describe your professional work, starting with your current position. Provide enough detail to characterize the main activities and responsibilities (including number and type of personnel supervised) related to grassland/forage resource management. Keep the descriptions as brief as possible. Do not provide detail on work that clearly does not qualify as grassland/forage resource management experience. You may add pages where space provided is inadequate.

**Current Employment**
Postion/Job Title: ____________________________________________________________

Dates of Employment: From __________________________ To __________________________

Employer and Location: ________________________________________________________

Immediate Supervisor: __________________________ Telephone: ______________________

Percent of Time Directly Related to Grassland/Forage Management: ______________________

Description of Work: __________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________

Names and contact information of at least two people (other than the immediate supervisor listed above) with knowledge of your performance in this job. At least one should be from outside your organization or peer group. For example, agency personnel should list a rancher or other grassland/forage user, farmers should list someone other than a farmer, and university personnel should list someone from a producer group or agency.

Contact Name: __________________________ Telephone: __________________________

Address: _____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________

Contact Name: __________________________ Telephone: __________________________

Address: _____________________________________________________________________

**Previous Employment**
Postion/Job Title: ____________________________________________________________

Dates of Employment: From __________________________ To __________________________

Employer and Location: ________________________________________________________

Immediate Supervisor: __________________________ Telephone: ______________________

Percent of Time Directly Related to Grassland/Forage Management: ______________________
Description of Work: ________________________________________________________________
                                                                                       ________________________________________________________________
                                                                                       ________________________________________________________________
                                                                                       ________________________________________________________________

Names and contact information of at least two people (other than the immediate supervisor listed above) with knowledge of your performance in this job. At least one should be from outside your organization or peer group. For example, agency personnel should list a rancher or other grassland/forage user, farmers should list someone other than a farmer, and university personnel should list someone from a producer group or agency.

Contact Name: __________________________________ Telephone: ________________________
Address ____________________________________________________________

Contact Name: __________________________________ Telephone: ________________________
Address ____________________________________________________________

**Previous Employment**

Position/Job Title: ____________________________________________________________

Dates of Employment: From __________________________ To __________________________

Employer and Location: ________________________________________________________

Immediate Supervisor: __________________________________ Telephone: ____________

Percent of Time Directly Related to Grassland/Forage Management: ________________

Description of Work: __________________________________________________________
                                                                                       ________________________________________________________________
                                                                                       ________________________________________________________________
                                                                                       ________________________________________________________________

Names and contact information of at least two people (other than the immediate supervisor listed above) with knowledge of your performance in this job. At least one should be from outside your organization or peer group. For example, agency personnel should list a rancher or other grassland/forage user, farmers should list someone other than a farmer, and university personnel should list someone from a producer group or agency.

Contact Name: __________________________________ Telephone: ________________________
Address ____________________________________________________________

Contact Name: __________________________________ Telephone: ________________________
Address: ______________________________________________________________
OTHER EXPERIENCE

At least one documented training course should have been taken in each of the following areas. List training course and date completed:

Vegetative Management
Course: ____________________________________ Date Completed: ____________________________

Animal Management
Course: ____________________________________ Date Completed: ____________________________

Conservation Planning on Grasslands or Grazing Lands
Course: ____________________________________ Date Completed: ____________________________

Pasture Condition Assessment
Course: ____________________________________ Date Completed: ____________________________

Economics of Forage and Grassland Management
Course: ____________________________________ Date Completed: ____________________________

Grassland Soil Management, Soil Quality, Erosion Control, and Fertility Management
Course: ____________________________________ Date Completed: ____________________________

FEES/PAYMENT INFORMATION

Please return this completed form with payment to: AFGC, PO Box 867, Berea, KY 40403. If you have questions, please call 800.944.AFGC; fax 859.623.8694, or e-mail info@afgc.org. Fees are used to support CFGP program administration. Once your application and payment are processed, the Certification Committee will review it. AFGC will contact you regarding the result. If your application is approved, a time, location and proctor to administer the exam will be set. Refunds are not available regardless of certification status. Membership in AFGC is not required for certification.

☐ $100 AFGC Member
☐ Check ☐ Credit Card (circle): AMEX MC VISA Amount: $__________

Card Number: ________________________________
Exp. Date: __________ Security Code: __________
Signature: ____________________________________

For office use only
Accepted on: ________ By: ________
Payment Received ☐ Yes ☐ No
Payment Type ☐ Check ☐ Credit Card
Application for Re-Certification
Certified Forage and Grassland Professional (CFGP)

Those who earn CFGP status are required to re-certify every two years by meeting continuing education requirements specified by AFGC. Complete details are available online at www.afgc.org, or by calling the office at 800.944.2342. Please be sure that you read and understand all of the re-certification information and requirements, including AFGC’s Continuing Education Units (CEUs) program, program documentation, and reporting form. Refunds are not available regardless of certification status.

Please type or print legibly.

Name (Mr./Ms./Mrs.): ____________________________________________________________
Company Affiliation: ____________________________________________________________
Title: ________________________________________________________________________
Address Line 1: __________________________________________________________________
Address Line 2: __________________________________________________________________
City _______________________________ State _______ Zip/Postal Code ___________________
Country (other than U.S.A.): ____________________________________________________________________________
Phone: _______________________________ Fax: __________________________________________________________________
E-mail: ____________________________________________________________________________
Web Site: ________________________________________________________________________

Fees/Payment Information

Please return this completed form with payment to: AFGC, PO Box 867, Berea, KY 40403. If you have questions, please call 800.944.AFGC, fax 859.623.8694, or e-mail info@afgc.org. Fees are used to support CFGP program administration. Once your application and payment are processed, AFGC will verify that you have met the requirements for re-certification. If the Certification Committee cannot document that you have met the requirements, you will be notified and provided with the opportunity to support your application.

☐ $25 AFGC Member

☐ Check         ☐ Credit Card (circle):  AMEX  MC  VISA  Amount: $__________

Card Number: ____________________________________________________________________
Exp. Date: __________ Security Code: __________
Signature: _______________________________________________________________________

For office use only
Accepted on: __________ By: __________
Payment Received ☐ Yes ☐ No
Payment Type ☐ Check ☐ Credit Card
AFGC Certified Forage and Grassland Professional Program

CEU Request Form & Program Documentation

(This form is to be completed by the meeting organizer at least 30 days prior to a program that will used for CEU credits.)

Contact Name: ___________________________________________________________

Address: ________________________________________________________________

City/State/Zip: ____________________________________________________________

Phone: _______________ Email: ___________________________________________

Title of Program: _________________________________________________________

Program Location (City, State): __________________________ Date: __________

Hours of Instruction (excluding breaks): __________________

Please provide a summary of the program or attach an agenda with a listing of the topics covered and speakers.

Number of CEU Credits for This Program (Please estimate): __________

Signature of Meeting Organizer: _________________________________________

Mail, fax or Email completed form to:

American Forage and Grassland Council
PO Box 867
Berea, KY 40403
Phone: 800.944.2342
Fax: 859.623.8694
Email: info@afgc.org

***You will be notified as to the official number of CEU credits given for this program
Certified Forage and Grassland Professional
Approval Form

I have reviewed the application and supporting materials for the following program(s):

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

As designee for the AFGC Certification Committee, I am ____ approving/____ not approving the application. Program(s) approved for the following number of CEU’s:

_________________________________________________________________________

If not approved, the reasons are as follows:

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

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Print Name: ______________________________________________________________

Signature: ____________________________________________ Date: _________
Certified Forage and Grassland Professional--AFGC
Continuing Education Workshop Roster

Location: ___________________________  Date of Workshop: ________________

CEUs Approved: ________________

Course/Symposia Name: ________________________________________________

Facilitator Name: ___________________________  Work Phone: ________________

NOTE: Mail or fax to American Forage & Grassland Council (AFGC), PO Box 867 Berea, KY 40403; fax: 859.623.8694

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American Forage and Grassland Council

Continuing Education Reporting Form

(This form is to be completed by the person requesting credit for attending a program. Please apply for only one program per form.)

Name: _____________________  Email: _____________________

Phone: _____________________  Fax: _____________________

Program Title: __________________________________________

Program Location (City, State): ______________________________  Date: ________________

Please provide a summary of the program or attach an agenda with a listing of the topics covered and speakers.

Number of CEU Credits Requested from Program:

_____ Vegetative Management  _____ Animal Management

_____ Conservation Planning  _____ Pasture Condition/Assessment

_____ Grassland Economics  _____ Soil Management

_____ Soil Quality  _____ Erosion Control

_____ Soil Fertility  _____ Professional Development

Total CEU’s Requested from Program: ____________________

Mail, fax, or Email completed form to:

American Forage and Grassland Council
PO Box 867
Berea, KY 40403
Phone: 800.944.2342
Fax: 859.623.8694
Email: info@afgc.org

***You will be notified as to the official number of CEU credits given for this program.
CFGEP Exam Proctor Guidelines

Please be sure to review and adhere to these guidelines, and to sign and return this form with the CFGEP exams to:

AFGC
PO Box 867
Berea, KY 40403

**********

Due to the nature of the Certified Forage and Grassland Professional (CFGEP) exam, a second party must proctor it. AFGC personnel have the responsibility of providing the proctor with a sealed exam that will be copied and administered by the proctor.

The proctor is responsible for the following:

- Storing the exam in a secure location.
- Copying the exam, being careful that he or she maintains possession of all copies before and after the exam, and that no additional copies are made.
- Distributing the exam to exam participants.
- Verifying the identification of each exam taker.
- Ensuring that the completed exam is solely the work of the individual.
- Monitoring all test takers during the exam.
- Ensuring that test takers do not use any notes, the CFGEP study materials, or other materials during the exam process.
- Collecting and securing all exams.
- Initialing and dating each exam.
- Shipping all exams, including the master copy, to AFGC at the address listed above.

It is not the proctor’s responsibility to answer questions during the test. The role of the proctor is to protect the exam’s integrity, the exam taker’s identity, and test authenticity.

**********

Proctor’s Name: ________________________________

Signature: ________________________________

Date: ________________________________