



CERTIFIED
CROP ADVISER

Policy and Procedures Manual

A program of



ASA

CCA
POLICY & PROCEDURES
MANUAL
(Revised January 2026)

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Foreword

This manual contains the policies and procedures for the International Certified Crop Adviser's (ICCA) program as of 2026. Members of local boards will find information in this manual that they need to administer the program.

As this manual is used, please let us know if corrections or revisions are needed. Board members should work with the most current manual found on the [CCA website](#).

**American Society of Agronomy
Certifications Department**

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Definitions

The following terms and their definitions are provided to assist the reader in the interpretation and use of this manual.

Policies—Standards by which the Certified Crop Adviser program operates. The CCA – International Council sets policies and the CCA – National Boards ratify the policies. The CCA – North American Board (comprised of USA, Canada, Mexico) functions as the CCA – Council and CCA – National Boards until additional countries outside of North America join the program.

Procedures—Means by which policies are carried out and implemented.

Guidelines—Examples or aids used to illustrate policies and procedures. Guidelines may be followed at the discretion of the local board.

Local—Describes boards, actions or activities at the state, region, or province level.

Mailing List—The CCA mailing list can be rented. Contact our membership team at membership@sciencesocieties.org for details.

CCA Logo—The logo can be used by CCAs after signing a usage guidelines agreement. It can be downloaded at <https://www.sciencesocieties.org/certified-crop-adviser/boards/admin-marketing> (permissions and login required). The official logo is shown below and is trademarked.

Applicant—Anyone who has initiated the procedures for becoming a Certified Crop Adviser and who has been issued an identification number by the Certified Crop Adviser program, but who has not yet completed all the requirements for becoming certified and has not been issued a certificate.

Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) Anyone who has met all the requirements and been issued a certificate by the Certified Crop Adviser program identifying that person as being a CCA.

Candidate CCA—Anyone who has met all the requirements except for experience.

Retired CCA—A CCA who no longer works or practices as a CCA and has received the CCA Retired designation from their local board.



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1.1 CERTIFIED CROP ADVISER (CCA) PROGRAM

Over 12,000 men and women serve our farmers, ranchers and other agricultural entities as crop advisers providing information and expertise on crop production, crop protection and natural resource management. This profession of commercial, public, and independent advisers plays an important role in modern agriculture.

Crop advisers provide advice and counsel to farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural entities in their decision-making process. This responsibility requires a proficient understanding of crop production science, food safety, technology, economics, and the environment. Crop advisers combine their knowledge in these disciplines as well as their local experience to provide sound recommendations to their clients.

Together in 1991, agribusiness leaders, government, and university personnel, under the leadership of the American Society of Agronomy (ASA), began discussions that led to the creation of the Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) program. The purpose of this discussion was to develop a voluntary, professional program for crop advisers that:

1. Established standards for knowledge, experience, ethical conduct, and continuing education.
2. Enhanced professionalism.
3. Promoted dialogue among individuals involved in agriculture and natural resource management.

The CCA program is coordinated by ASA and administered by state, regional or provincial boards at the local level. Volunteers with agricultural and natural resources backgrounds provide leadership to the local boards. Board members represent universities, agribusiness, private businesses, and governmental agencies. The collective effort has improved communication between groups active in agriculture and natural resource management and helped improve understanding of the crop advising profession to the public.

Any public, commercial, or independent adviser who counsels farmers, ranchers or other agricultural entities and meets the rigorous standards of the program is encouraged to participate in the CCA program. To become a CCA an individual must:

1. Pass the comprehensive International Exam and a local board exam, which evaluates an applicant's knowledge of nutrient management, soil and water management, integrated pest management and crop management.
2. Have at least two to four years of crop advising experience (depending on the individual's educational background).
3. Document his or her education and crop advising experience with transcripts and supporting references.
4. Sign and agree to uphold the CCA Code of Ethics.

To maintain their certified status CCAs must complete 40 hours of continuing education in each two-year certification cycle. Their local board monitors CCAs regarding their activities in continuing education and their ethical conduct.

CCAs play a critical role in the future of agriculture as they advise agricultural producers. Through their skills, they will keep agriculture competitive in a global economy, while aiding the process of sustaining our natural resources and protecting our environment.

1.2 RELATIONSHIP OF ICCA TO ASA

The American Society of Agronomy provides professional support, financial backing, representation in Washington, DC, and liability protection to the ICCA Program. The ICCA Program is an activity of ASA.

The Relationship of the American Society of Agronomy, the International Certified Crop Adviser Program and the Alliance of Crop, Soil and Environmental Science Societies

The American Society of Agronomy (ASA) is a scientific and professional society that promotes both the science and practice of agronomy. ASA is a tax-exempt nonprofit corporation that is governed by a board of directors responsible for the financial, management, policy, and operation of society. The International Certified Crop Adviser (ICCA) Program is a certification program of ASA that was developed for the purpose of demonstrating competency for individuals providing crop production advice, and for promoting the value of the credential to industry, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations. The ICCA Program is administered locally by state, regional and provincial (local) boards and internationally by the CCA – International Council (also called ICCA board). The ICCA board is responsible for developing and assuring certification standards, developing educational programs in support of certification, and working with the state, regional, and provincial boards, as well as industry, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations to promote and improve the value of the certification credential.

Management of the ICCA Program is a collaborative effort involving interactions among the ASA board of directors, the ICCA board, and local boards. The ICCA board consists of members elected by each of the local boards. The ASA and ICCA executives' committees provide strategic oversight to the program. Fiduciary responsibility lies with the ASA board of directors which delegate authority to the ICCA board. Support services including staff, accounting, and other business activities are provided by the Alliance of Crop, Soil and Environmental Science Societies (ACSESS) through a contract with ASA. A Director of Certification Programs employed through ACSESS has responsibility for providing necessary support for the ICCA Program as directed by the ICCA Board and the ASA Board. Funding for the ICCA program is self-supporting through exam fees, annual dues, and income derived from continuing education and other ASA-ICCA sponsored programs.

ASA and ICCA Financial Relationship

Approved by the ASA Board on February 6, 2008

There are two board components that make up the ICCA Program, the International and the local boards. ASA has fiduciary responsibility for the ICCA Program but designates related funds to the program. The program has individual budget centers that show revenues and expenses associated with each local board and the international board. The local boards develop and submit their budget to ASA ICCA on

an annual basis. These budgets direct the designated money for each local board according to the policies and procedures of the ICCA Program.

The ICCA program has always been part of the ASA overhead distribution and pays its appropriate allocated share of overhead annually. The ICCA budget center pays for all direct expenses including designated staff plus contributes to several supporting ACSESS staff according to time allocation. The local boards of the ICCA Program have not been and are not a part of the ASA overhead distribution. The local boards do not require direct services or demands on ASA resources since they have local offices that administer the program, and each local board has its own budget to cover their direct expenses.

All local boards pay an annual administrative fee for ASA accounting services, which is not a charge from the ICCA Program. This annual fee is re-examined on an annual basis, based on the number of checks processed and other expenses generated annually.

Note: The annual fee local boards pay is for ACSESS accounting staff to manage the local boards' funds including processing at least quarterly but no more than monthly invoices. Additional services may be requested, and additional fees will be assessed.

1.3 ICCA PROGRAM POLICY AND GUIDELINE DEVELOPMENT

The ICCA Program Board structure is:

CCA – International Council – sets overall policies for the program and deals with issues that impact the entire program regardless of international boundaries. The Council is comprised of three ICCA executives, ICCA representative to the ASA board, ASA Board executive committee representative and a representative from each CCA - National Board. The Council meets as needed.

CCA – National Board – sets policies and deals with issues that are unique to an individual country. It also ratifies policy decisions made by the CCA – International Council. Each CCA – Local Board has one representative on its respective CCA - National Board along with representatives from the appropriate government agencies associated with agriculture, resource management and environmental protection. The National Boards meet as needed.

CCA – Local Board – administers the ICCA Program at the state, regional or provincial level.

Task Forces are appointed by the ICCA Board Chair, serve as needed and for the time needed to complete their task. Rapid Response Teams (RRT) were enacted for the four competencies' areas (Nutrient Management, Soil and Water Management, Integrated Pest Management, and Crop Management) and comprised of members from the ASA Communities by the same name. RRTs serve as needed. The ICCA executive committee serves as the Budget and Finance Committee.

Each voting member of the ICCA Board representing a local CCA board will need to be a CCA and a current member of the local board, unless designated as a proxy by the board chair. The representative

automatically in this position is the local CCA board chair unless the local board designates another member and notifies the ICCA office.

POLICY: A board chair who is unable to attend a scheduled ICCA Board meeting may designate a proxy from their board to vote on their behalf, including ex-officio members or administrators. The designated proxy is not required to hold CCA certification. The board chair must provide written notice of the proxy designation to appropriate ASA staff (i.e., the Director of Governance and/or Associate Director of Component Relations) and the ICCA Executive Committee Chair, in advance of each meeting at which the proxy will serve. The written notice must specify the name of the designated proxy and the date(s) of the meeting(s) for which the proxy authorization applies. Prior to voting, the proxy must verbally declare that they are serving as proxy on behalf of the board chair. The proxy's authority applies only for the duration of the meeting(s) identified in the written notice.

QUORUM: A quorum for board action shall follow ASA Bylaws (Article VII, Section 5), which requires that at least fifty percent of the voting members of the ICCA Board or two-thirds of the Executive Committee are present to conduct official business. Official action may then be taken by a majority of the voting members present in a meeting of any format.

Interpretive Note:

Quorum establishes the minimum number of voting members who must be present for the board to conduct business. For Executive Committee meetings, four out of five of the Executive Committee must be present. For full ICCA Board meetings, eighteen of thirty-five boards must be present. Once quorum is met, decisions are made by a simple majority of those *present and voting*, not a majority of the total board membership. This ensures meetings can proceed efficiently while maintaining fair representation of those in attendance.

The program includes four countries (Brazil, Canada, Mexico, and the United States) under the title of ICCA Board.

Agenda Item Process:

The ICCA Board (comprised of Brazil, Canada, Mexico, and USA) will meet four times per year, including one time in person, unless changed by the Board.

Proposed agenda items along with any supporting documents need to be sent to the ICCA Board Chair via the ICCA office at least 45 days prior to the scheduled ICCA Board meeting. Items received after the deadline will not appear on the agenda, but attempts will be made to accommodate late arriving topics. Otherwise, items will be placed on the following meeting agenda list.

The ICCA Executive Committee will review all requested agenda items in developing the meeting agenda and related supporting materials. The agenda and related documents will be sent to the ICCA Board members at least 21 days prior to the meeting date.

1.4 ICCA STANDING COMMITTEES

Executive Committee (EC): This committee is responsible for setting the agendas for the board meetings, creating task forces to address issues as needed, acting as the budget and finance committee, acting as the nominating committee and addressing questions. The EC provides general, operational oversight and brings policy matters to the ICCA Board.

ICCA Board Executive Committee Composition:

Current chairs and members are listed at:

<https://www.sciencesocieties.org/membership/committees/view/A092.4/members?q=membership/committees/view/A092.4/members/>

1. Past Chair of ICCA Board
2. Current Chair of ICCA Board
3. Vice Chair of ICCA Board
4. ICCA Board Representative to the ASA Board
5. ICCA Board Representative to the ARA Board
6. Associate Director of Component Relations, ASA (ex-officio)

Chair

Primary responsibilities include:

- Leads ICCA and Executive Committee meetings (virtual and in person)
- Serves as the primary internal and external spokesperson for the ICCA Program
- Plans meeting agendas by working with ASA staff
- Communicates with the ASA staff on a regular basis and provides guidance for staff
- Participates in goal setting and provides feedback for ASA support staff
- Works to recruit nominees for the vice-chair role
- Represents the ICCA Executive Committee in internal and external functions, including but not limited to Congressional Visits in Washington DC, awards presentations, American Society of Agronomy meetings, Commodity Classic and other industry functions.

Vice-Chair

Primary responsibilities include:

- Runs ICCA board and Executive Committee meetings if chair is unavailable
- Serves as Chair of the ICCA Budget and Finance Committee and works with ASA staff to review and prepare the ICCA financial reports
- Schedules Executive Board and ICCA board meetings for the year in which they will be chair
- Leads task forces and other activities as requested by the chair or Executive Committee and ASA staff
- Reports membership recruitment challenges and changes in CCA/CPAg numbers (overall and by region)

- Represents the ICCA Executive Committee in internal and external functions, including but not limited to Congressional Visits in Washington DC, awards presentations, American Society of Agronomy meetings, Commodity Classic and other industry functions.

Past-Chair

Primary responsibilities include:

- Serve as a mentor and resource to the current chair and vice-chair
- Serves as Chair of the Nominations Committee
- Leads scholarship and award nomination, selection, and recognition efforts
- Leads task forces and other activities as requested by the chair or Executive Committee and ASA staff
- Represents the ICCA Executive Committee in internal and external functions, including but not limited to Congressional Visits in Washington DC, awards presentations, American Society of Agronomy meetings, Commodity Classic and other industry functions.

Exam and Procedures Committee (EPC):

Current chair and members can be found at:

<https://www.agronomy.org/membership/committees/view/A092.6/members?q=membership/committees/view/A092.6/members/>

This committee is responsible for the construction and administration of the International Exam, including editing the International Exam, ensuring security of the International Exam, revising the International Performance Objectives and setting the passing score for the International Exam. It is also responsible for the overall quality control and standard operating procedures for all CCA exams. Each committee member is required to have a signed Confidentiality and Conflicts of Interest Agreement on file at the ICCA office. If no signed form is received, the individual will not be allowed to participate or have access to exam materials.

1.5 ICCA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NOMINATION AND ELECTION PROCEDURES

POLICY: The Vice Chair is elected to a two-year term, followed by two years as Chair and two years as Past Chair, for a total of six consecutive years of service in the officer rotation.

PROCEDURE: Every two years the Board elects a Vice-Chair from current or past CCA board members.

The Representatives to the ASA Board shall be elected to a three-year term, following the ASA Board's guidelines. The ARA representative will be elected to a three-year term. Neither can serve more than two consecutive three-year terms.

All positions should have at least two nominees. Nominees are submitted by the Past Chair and voting is via electronic ballot sent to all State, Provincial and Regional Board Chairs. If a board member cannot

complete his/her term, it is at the discretion of the Board Chair to hold a special election or appoint someone to complete the existing term.

1.6 STATE, PROVINCIAL AND REGIONAL BOARDS

POLICY: The local boards shall consist of at least seven members. Each member shall serve a three-year term and cannot serve more than two consecutive three-year terms. At-large members must be active CCAs and elected by the CCAs in the board's jurisdiction. The board chair appoints all other board positions.

An executive committee elected by the current board members will consist of vice-chair, chair and past chair of the board. The vice chair will rotate to chair, and the chair will rotate to past chair. Chairs cannot serve more than one two-year term, nor can they serve consecutive terms.

The chair appoints the standing committee chairs to three-year terms. The committee chair selects the committee members. The standing committees are exam and procedures (Each committee member is required to have a signed Confidentiality and Conflicts of Interest Agreement on file at the ICCA office. If no signed form is received, the individual will not be allowed to participate or have access to exam materials.); continuing education; standards and ethics. The executive committee serves as the budget and finance committee, or the chair can appoint a budget and finance committee chair. The vice-chair serves as the marketing committee chair, or the chair can appoint a marketing committee chair.

A nominating committee led by the past chair of the board will create a slate of candidates to fill open board positions each year.

The administrative agent of the board should serve the board in an advisory/ex-officio position. They may not hold officer or committee leadership positions. They may not serve in a voting capacity on the local board, but they may serve as the local board chair's designated proxy to the ICCA Board.

The structure of the local board:

1. One representative-Environmental Regulatory Agency, such as the State/Provincial Environmental Protection Agency or Department of Natural Resources
2. One representative-Extension Service
3. One representative-President or an officer of the State/Province Agriculture Business Association
4. One representative-State/Province Agricultural regulatory agency and/or Natural Resource Conservation Service
5. Chair, Exam and Procedures Committee
6. Three representatives At-Large (minimum) – elected by the CCA membership
7. Others as deemed appropriate by the local board

The duties of the local boards include the following:

1. Administer CCA program in its jurisdiction including actively marketing and promoting the program
2. Assure adequate CEU opportunities are available
3. Enforce the Code of Ethics
4. Rule on work experience and educational summaries

5. Develop and manage local board exams as needed
6. Grant certification
7. Evaluate and decide amnesty applications
8. Approve Local Board expenses consistent with ASA bylaws
9. Local board chairs and/or administrative agents must keep ICCA office staff informed of board changes

GUIDELINES: It is a goal of the ICCA Program that the majority of the local board members are CCA certified and that the board members who are not appointees be elected by the certificants in the state, region, or province.

1.7 LOCAL BOARD NON-COMPLIANCE WITH ICCA BOARD POLICIES

Should a local board be deemed to be out of compliance with ICCA board policies, the following process will be implemented to work with the board to regain compliance.

1. Every attempt will be made to communicate and explain the ICCA Board Policy decisions including three written requests to comply with the stated policy. The ICCA Executive Committee will provide oversight, and the ICCA Board Chair will sign appropriate letters and communicate with the local board chair. The local board will have 30 days post original deadline to implement the stated ICCA policy and notify the ICCA office.
2. If #1 does not bring the local board into compliance, then a letter of warning will be sent to every board member on the local board explaining the need to comply with the stated policy and outlining the consequences of non-compliance. The letter will be approved by the ICCA Executive Committee and signed by the ICCA Board Chair. The local board will have 30 days to comply and notify the ICCA office.
3. If #2 does not bring the local board into compliance, then a letter outlining what has taken place and the consequences of non-compliance will be sent to all of the CCAs within the local board's jurisdiction. The letter will be approved by the ICCA Executive Committee and signed by the ICCA Board Chair. The local board will have 30 days to comply.
4. If #3 does not bring the local board into compliance, then the local board funds will be frozen. This step will first be reviewed and approved by the ICCA Executive Committee with a recommendation to the full ICCA Board. The ICCA Board must produce a majority vote in favor before this step is implemented. The local board will have 30 days to comply. Once the local board complies with the stated policy, the funds will be made available. The local board has the right to appeal this decision to the American Society of Agronomy (ASA) Executive Committee.
5. If #4 does not bring the local board into compliance, then the local board will be dissolved, and the administrative agent dismissed. A new board will be organized from the local CCA membership. This step will first be reviewed and approved by the ICCA Executive Committee with a

recommendation to the full ICCA Board. The ICCA Board must produce a majority vote in favor before this step is implemented. No members of the existing local board may serve on the newly formed local board for five years from the date of termination. The ICCA Board will provide services and leadership until the new local board is selected.

1.8 LIABILITY INSURANCE COVERAGE

POLICY: Local Board members and the ICCA Board of Directors are covered by the ASA directors' and officers' liability insurance. To ensure continued eligibility for this coverage, it is imperative that all certification procedures be consistent with the bylaws of ASA and the policy and procedures of the ICCA Program. The ICCA Program is an ASA program. All fees charged in regard to certification (i.e.: application, exam, renewal, etc.) are payable to ASA. These conditions are necessary for ASA to accept liability for the ICCA Program.

PROCEDURE: All boards must keep ASA updated with any board member changes.

1.9 ELIGIBILITY FOR CERTIFICATION

POLICY: Applicants for CCA certification must submit the CCA Application including credentials that describe their work experience, educational background, sign the code of ethics and pass both the International and local board exams.

Applicants must satisfy one of the following eligibility requirements to qualify for ICCA certification:

1. A BS degree in an agriculture-related field with two years of crop advising experience.
2. An Associate degree in agriculture-related field with three years of crop advising experience.
3. Non-degree or non-related degree with four years of crop advising experience.

GUIDELINES: Students enrolled in a degree program, who have participated in an internship or supervised summer crop production work experience may apply this experience to the CCA work experience eligibility requirement. Applicants may submit farming work experience. Regardless of the applicant's duration of farming, the local board may only grant up to one year for farming experience.

1.9.1 Required Submissions for Certification

1. Agricultural work summary form detailing work experience in crop production advising.
2. Education summary and official transcripts if applying with an Associate's or Bachelor's degree.
3. Two completed reference forms:
 - a. One from a current employer, and one from a client or individual who is familiar with the applicant's work experience in crop production.
 - b. **Self-employed applicants** may substitute a letter of recommendation from a colleague (not a subordinate) or a second client for the employer's letter.
4. Signed Code of Ethics.

1.9.2 Deadline for Credential Submission

POLICY: Applicants must submit all required credentials directly to the ICCA Office in Madison, Wisconsin within six months of successfully completing both the International and local board exams.

PROCEDURE: Exam results will be invalidated, requiring the applicant to retest if the applicant's credentials are not received in the prescribed six-month time period that begins when the applicant has successfully passed both the International and local board exams. Applicants may appeal to the appropriate local board for an extension.

1.9.3 Annual Renewal Fee

POLICY: A non-refundable renewal fee (in U.S. Dollars) is required annually to maintain certification. Local boards may also charge annual renewal fees.

1.10 EXAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

POLICY: The ICCA Program requires successful passing of both the International and local board exams for all applicants.

PROCEDURES: The International Exam is divided into four sections: Nutrient Management; Soil and Water Management; Integrated Pest Management, and Crop Management. Under the oversight of the ICCA Exam and Procedures Committee, an independent psychometrician is contracted to design, construct and manage the International Exam. An independent psychometrician scores and validates all CCA exams.

The committee is responsible for oversight of the International Exam. The local board exam is developed under the direction of the local board and follows the same procedures as the International Exam.

1.10.1 CCA Exam Procedures

1. The International and local board exam along with specialty exams are offered during four scheduled exam windows each year.
2. All exams are delivered via internet-based testing with a live proctor.
3. The International, local board exams, and specialty exams are scored separately and have separate cut scores.
4. The International, local board exams, and specialty exams are all scored by ICCA.
5. International, local board exams, and specialty exams must be taken and passed independently.
6. Local boards must provide an exam with 100 questions using a multiple-choice format with one correct answer.

7. Local boards will participate in setting a passing score for their exam by completing an Angoff Analysis.
8. The four sections of each exam are rolled into one total score. The passing score for each exam is based on the total score. Specialty exams have one total score.
9. Local boards control the content of the local board exam. Local board exams emphasize local nutrient management, weeds, insects, diseases, IPM system, regulatory requirements, crop management and physiology, etc.
10. Local boards may additionally require applicants to pass applicable state/province licensing or certification exams to become certified.
11. Local boards may choose to use their state/province licensing or certification exams in lieu of a portion or the entire local board exam. However, local boards must request a waiver from the Exam and Procedures Committee (EPC) to use a part or all of a licensing or certification exam in this way and the EPC will require applicants to be examined in all four sections.
12. The local board needs to work with staff to review licensing or certification exam standards approximately every five years to ensure that the exam is still valid and supports the knowledge required by the ICCA Program.

1.11 CODE OF ETHICS

All individuals certified under the ICCA Program must subscribe to the ICCA Code of Ethics. The ICCA Program periodically reviews the Code of Ethics and the complaint investigation procedures.

CODE OF ETHICS

Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) Code of Ethics

All individuals certified under the International Certified Crop Adviser (ICCA) program must subscribe to the CCA Code of Ethics. The ICCA Standards & Ethics Committee periodically reviews the current Code of Ethics.

Article I. Preamble

1. The privilege of professional practice imposes obligations of responsibility as well as professional knowledge. The ICCA Program certifies the credentials of individuals through local boards.
2. When using the CCA designation, a CCA shall use professional conduct in all communications relating to this vocation including but not limited to emails, blogs, and social media.
3. The ICCA program will award the title of Certified to individuals who meet the experience, testing requirements and the continuing education requirements of the ICCA Program. The ICCA Program does not require college level education. A college education will substitute for part of the ICCA work experience requirement as provided for in the ICCA guidelines.
4. Certified Crop Advisers (hereafter called CCAs), at the request of a client or employer, must disclose the information used to gain certification. CCAs who knowingly misrepresent their credentials will face disciplinary action.

Article II. Relation of Professional to the Public

1. A CCA shall avoid and discourage sensational, exaggerated, or unwarranted statements that might induce participation in unsound enterprises.
2. A CCA shall not give professional opinion, or make a recommendation, without being as thoroughly informed as might reasonably be expected considering the purpose for which the opinion or recommendation is desired; and the degree of completeness of information upon which it is based should be clear.
3. A CCA shall not issue a false statement or false information even if directed to do so by employer or client.

Article III. Relation of Professional to Employer and Client

1. A CCA shall protect, to the fullest extent possible, the interest of the employer or client insofar as such interest is consistent with the law and professional obligations and ethics.
2. A CCA who finds that obligations to the employer or client conflict with their professional obligation or ethics should work to have such objectionable conditions corrected.
3. A CCA shall not use, directly or indirectly, employer or client's information in any way that would violate their confidentiality.
4. A CCA shall not divulge information given in confidence.
5. A CCA retained by one client shall not accept, without the client's written consent, an engagement by another if the interests of the two are in any manner conflicting.
6. A CCA who has made an investigation for any employer or client shall not seek to profit economically from the information gained, unless written permission to do so is granted, or until it is clear that there can no longer be a conflict of interest with the original employer or client.
7. A CCA shall engage or advise an employer or client to engage and cooperate with other experts, specialists and government agency staff.
8. A CCA protects the interest of a client by recommending only products and services that are in the best interest of the client and public.
9. A CCA protects his/her credibility by disclosing to clients how he/she will be compensated for providing recommendations to the client.

Article IV. Relation of Professionals to Each Other

1. A CCA shall not falsely or maliciously attempt to injure the reputation of another.
2. A CCA shall freely give credit for work done by others, to whom the credit is due, and shall refrain from plagiarism of oral and written communications and shall not knowingly accept credit rightfully due to another person.
3. A CCA shall not use the advantage of public employment (e.g. university, government) to compete unfairly with other certified professions.
4. A CCA shall endeavor to cooperate with others in the profession and encourage the ethical dissemination of technical knowledge.

Article V. Duty to the Profession

1. A CCA shall aid in exclusion from certification, those who have not followed this Code of Ethics or who do not have the required education and experience.
2. A CCA shall uphold this Code of Ethics by precept and example and encourage, by counsel and advice, other CCAs to do the same.
3. A CCA having positive knowledge of deviation from this Code by another CCA shall bring such deviation to the attention of the CCA's local board.

Approved by International CCA Board of Directors 07/97

Edited and approved by ICCA Board of Directors 09/2016

1.12 SUSPENSION AND REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION

POLICY: Certification may be revoked or suspended if a CCA.

- A. Provides false information to the local board,
- B. Violates the Code of Ethics,
- C. Does not maintain the required CEUs; and/or
- D. Does not pay the annual renewal

The American Society of Agronomy's ("ASA") International Certified Crop Adviser Program ("ICCA") has established these Complaint Investigation Procedures ("CIPs") to be used by Local Certifying Boards (whether State, Regional, or Provincial) in conducting reviews and investigations of Complaints setting forth alleged violations of the ICCA's Code of Ethics by CCAs. The Complaint investigation under these CIPs will be conducted by at least three CCAs who are members of the Standards and Ethics Committee ("SEC") of the accused CCA's Local Certifying Board, plus the Local Board Chair as an ex-officio. Any member of that Local Certifying Board's SEC or Local Board Chair who has a personal or business relationship with either the Complainant (the person who filed the Complaint) or the accused CCA named in a filed Complaint will recuse himself/herself from that particular investigation, and a replacement SEC member will be selected from the Local Board to serve only for purposes of the particular investigation.

The CIPs will conclude with a determination of whether the accused CCA violated any of the ICCA's Code of Ethics, as well as a conclusion as to whether the accused CCA was qualified to be involved with the agronomy work described in the Complaint based on but not limited to the accused CCA's certification records, training, continuing education, and work experiences.

The CIPs will not investigate or reach any conclusions regarding the accused CCA's recommendation on a specific job or project; or determine fair pricing issues regarding the work performed by the accused CCA or the amount charged by the accused CCA for such work.

The specific CIPs that will be followed by each Local Certifying Board's SEC are:

1. Any individual or organization may file a Complaint against a CCA for an alleged violation of the

ICCA's Code of Ethics. A Complaint must be both written and signed with the name of the signatory to be clearly set forth in the Complaint. Complaints that are not written and signed with a clear name of the signatory included will not be reviewed by the SEC, and will result in the Complaint being summarily dismissed by the SEC. Any ASA adopted whistleblower policy will be followed throughout this process to the degree it is applicable.

2. Filing may be accomplished by the Complainant by regular mail, overnight mail, email, or hand delivery. All such methods of transmission will be considered valid for purposes of beginning this process.
3. Complaints must be filed with either the CCA's Local Certifying Board's office or the ICCA Board's office. The office receiving the Complaint will notify the other office that a Complaint has been received.
4. The SEC will conduct the initial review of the Complaint. However, an SEC member will recuse himself/herself and not participate in this initial review or discussions about the Complaint if the SEC member is the Complainant, Respondent, or a witness in the matter.
5. The ASA will confirm the Local Board Chair is aware of the Complaint. The Local Board Chair will be an ex-officio member of the SEC and will participate in issues related to the Complaint, unless he/she is the Complainant, Respondent, or a witness in the matter. In such circumstances, the SEC will select an Interim Investigation SEC Chair solely for purposes of the particular investigation, and the Local Board Chair will recuse himself/herself from the matter. The full Local Certifying Board will not be involved in the initial review by the SEC because it will serve as the appeal hearing body, if necessary, as set forth below.
6. If the majority or all of the SEC members need to recuse themselves from the investigation, and/or in circumstances where an objective and fair investigation may be restricted for all SEC members, the ASA may ask for participation in the investigation by CCAs from neighboring States. The determination on whether such a step is necessary will be entirely within the unilateral discretion of the SEC members or the ASA.
7. The ASA Chief Administrative Officer and/or the Director of Certifications will confirm with the Complainant that the Complaint has been received and will be reviewed by the SEC. A copy of the CIPs and Code of Ethics will be provided to the Complainant, if requested.
8. As part of its initial review of the Complaint, the SEC will decide within 90 days of receipt of the Complaint whether the Complaint has alleged sufficient information supported by attached evidence of the type described in Section 9 below, if any, to warrant an investigation by the SEC. The 90-day period may be extended in circumstances that the SEC determines is necessary in its unilateral discretion. The purpose of the SEC's initial review is NOT to make any assessment or finding regarding the merits of the Complaint. **A decision to move forward with an investigation is not a decision on the merits,** but rather is a finding that a minimal evidentiary threshold has been met to advance a Complaint to the investigation stage of these CIPs. The decision to move forward with an investigation requires a simple majority vote by the SEC.
9. As noted in Section 8, the SEC will base its decision on whether to investigate the contents of the Complaint and any evidence attached to the Complaint. The Complainant must provide as much detail about the potential violation as possible including, but not limited to, attached evidence in the form of witnesses' written statements or affidavits, lab results, other written documents including, but not limited to, communications (such as emails or texts), photographs and/or video. The SEC may also review other relevant information or evidence, including, but not limited to, public records, as part of

its initial review as to whether to move forward with an investigation.

10. The accused CCA will not be involved in the initial review of the Complaint as again the purpose is not for the SEC to make any determination as to the substantive issues raised in the Complaint, but rather solely to determine whether there is sufficient information and evidence presented by the Complainant to proceed to an investigation.
11. The SEC will make one of the following initial review decisions:
 - a. If the SEC decides that there are established evidentiary grounds for an investigation, it will determine which section(s) of the Code of Ethics was or were potentially violated by the accused CCA and these will be investigated further by the SEC. If this finding occurs, then Section 12 below will be used to continue the CIPs.
 - b. If the SEC decides that there are not established grounds for an investigation, it will notify Complainant in writing that the SEC found insufficient grounds to move forward with an investigation. If this finding occurs, Complainant will be given the opportunity to either supplement the record within 15 days for the SEC's reconsideration or if no supplemental information is provided, then Complainant may appeal the SEC's finding to the 3-person Executive Committee of the ICCA ("Executive Committee"). If the Executive Committee affirms the SEC's findings, this process will end and no further action will be taken regarding the complaint, and the Complainant will be so informed. If the Executive Committee overturns the SEC's findings, this process will continue as set forth in Section 12 and thereafter.
12. If the grounds are established by the SEC for an investigation to proceed, the accused CCA and Complainant will be notified in writing of the decision to proceed to a full investigation by the SEC.

Note: All correspondence to the accused CCA and Complainant will be handled through the Chief Administrative Officer and/or Director of Certifications.

13. The accused CCA will be provided with a copy of the Complaint and given 45 days to respond to the Complaint and to provide rebuttal information and evidence in writing to the SEC. Such information and evidence may include, but is not limited to, witnesses' written statements or affidavits, lab results, other written documents including, but not limited to, communications (such as emails or texts), photographs and/or video. Failure by the accused CCA to respond within this 45-day period shall be considered a waiver by the accused CCA to provide rebuttal information. If requested by the accused CCA, the SEC may in its unilateral discretion provide an extension of up to 30 days to the accused CCA to provide rebuttal information. During the 45-day rebuttal period, the SEC will also conduct an audit of the accused CCS's certification maintenance program.
14. During its investigation, the SEC in its unilateral discretion may request additional information to review from the Complainant, the accused CCA, a third-party, or any other source. The SEC may also review public documents related to the Complaint as part of its investigation. The SEC will meet during its investigation process for purposes of discussion and deliberations concerning the Complaint, and virtual participation will be allowed by SEC members at such meetings.
15. After receipt and review of the rebuttal information and evidence, the Complaint, any information or evidence submitted with the Complaint, and any other information or evidence gathered by the SEC, as well as the audit of the defendant's CEU maintenance program, the SEC will within 60 days of receiving the last of such information take one of the following actions:
 - a. Make a finding of no violations of the Code of Ethics, and exonerate the accused CCA in writing;

- b. Make a finding of at least one violation of the Code of Ethics, and issue a letter of warning to the CCA based on all circumstances of the violation;
- c. Make a finding of at least one violation of the Code of Ethics, and suspend the CCA's certification for a designated period of time based on all circumstances of the violation;
- d. Make a finding of at least one violation of the Code of Ethics, and revoke the CCA's certification based on all circumstances of the violation; or
- e. extend the investigation for a period to be determined by the SEC.

If Section 15.e. is selected, the SEC may involve approved third parties to be determined solely by the SEC to assist the investigation which may be extended thereafter in 30-day increments. Funds may be requested from ICCA to assist the investigation. Upon the completion of the extended investigation, action must be taken by the SEC as set forth in Section 15. a-d above.

- 16. If the SEC makes a finding under Section 15. b., c., or d., the accused CCA may request a hearing to be conducted before the Local Certifying Board. The time and place will be set by ASA. The hearing will be conducted based on the following rules:
 - a. To overrule the SEC's action under Section 14, a two-thirds majority vote of the Local Certifying Board is required.
 - b. A member of the Local Certifying Board will not participate if he/she is the Complainant, Respondent, or a witness.
 - c. Documents must be provided by Complainant or the accused to the Local Certifying Board no later than one week in advance of the hearing date.
 - d. Written Official Minutes of the hearing will be taken and/or the hearing will be recorded by video and audio means.
 - e. Virtual participation will be allowed by members of the Local Certifying Board.
 - f. Any notes taken by members of the Local Certifying Board will be sent to the ASA and maintained by the organization as an official record.
- 17. Upon completion of the investigation, all documents, electronic files, audiotapes and/or videotapes provided to SEC members or Local Certifying Board members during this process will be returned to the ASA.

1.13 CONTINUING EDUCATION AND RECERTIFICATION

POLICY: CCAs must participate in continuing education to maintain their certification. Continuing education progress for recertification will be measured by continuing education units (CEUs).

PROCEDURES: The local boards, following guidelines set up by the ICCA Board, set the amount of credit issued for workshops, meetings, and other educational materials.

1.13.1 Certification Renewal

POLICY: A CCA who leaves the program in good standing, voluntarily withdrawals or by mistake will have up to two years after leaving the program to be reinstated without having to retest as long as they make up any required CEUs (within the next two-year cycle) and renewal fees. Between 2 and 5 years of leaving the program the individual can apply for and follow the requirements for amnesty and avoid retesting. After five years' time, the individual is required to retest and reapply for certification.

PROCEDURE: CCAs may renew their certification annually by payment of the appropriate fees. At the end of the certification continuing education cycle, renewal requires evidence of completion of the 40 hours of CEUs and the payment of the appropriate fees. Renewal is due annually on 1 January and is considered delinquent if not paid within 30 days after the annual date. The CCAs name is dropped from the active registry if the fee is not paid before 1 February.

1.13.2 Continuing Education Procedures for Maintenance of Certification

To maintain certification, CCAs must adhere to the Code of Ethics and participate in continuing education. Failure to comply with these requirements will result in suspension or revocation of certification. The primary purpose for continuing education is to further enhance the skills of a CCA and routinely update their knowledge as new information and technologies become available. To ensure that the primary purpose of continuing education is achieved, specific requirements have been adopted that must be followed by a CCA to receive credit for continuing education activities.

Continuing education activities are measured in CEUs, which are defined as the equivalent of one hour of quality contact time in training or other qualifying activity on such topics as contained in or related to the CCA Educational Areas Document. These requirements will ensure that the quality of continuing education meets high standards. A CCA must devote the equivalent of an entire work week (40 hours) to obtain 40 CEUs in every two-year cycle. The quality of continuing education is subject to review by the local boards. CCAs may report CEUs using the online form as long as the required minimum of 20 CEUs are board approved. CEUs are subject to random audit and will be reviewed in conjunction with any complaints.

Two-year CEU cycles begin on 1 January of each year. The continuing education requirements for maintaining certification are:

1. A minimum of 40 CEUs every two years with a minimum of 5 CEUs in each of the four competency areas. *Please note: The category—Professional Development—is not a required category for CCA.*
2. A minimum of 20 CEUs must be pre- or post-Board approved in each two-year cycle.
3. A minimum of 1 credit in each two-year cycle must be in professional ethics (starting in 2026).
4. Applicants may begin accumulating CEUs on the day their CCA certificate is dated. CEUs obtained on or after the date on the certificate, but prior to 1 January, will count towards the first year.

The ICCA Board believes the continuing education requirements outlined above are sufficiently rigorous to reinforce and steadily upgrade the skills of CCAs. These continuing education requirements are minimums. The CCA is encouraged to exceed them whenever possible. The ICCA Board will routinely examine the continuing education requirements for the ICCA Program to ensure continued excellence.

The ICCA Program will provide flexibility for planned or unplanned life changes or situations while maintaining the integrity of the CCA Program's standards.

POLICY: The ICCA Program recognizes that CCAs may take a leave from work duties for various reasons. These reasons may include but are not limited to:

- a. Maternity, paternity, or parental leave
- b. Loss of or change in employment status that resulted in unemployment for an extended period of time
- c. Health related conditions that caused an extended leave of absence
- d. Providing primary care for a seriously ill family member
- e. Active military service
- f. Accident resulting in being unable to work
- g. Other, contact the ICCA office

These and other life changes or situations may prevent a CCA from meeting their CEU requirements by the stated deadline. The CCA may:

1. Request Inactive Status: CCA will need to notify their local board and request to have their certification placed on inactive status if the life change or situation is a pre-planned event, or if the notification occurs prior to the end of their CEU cycle, or #2.

Note: A CCA on inactive status is prohibited from using the CCA name, logo or any other identification as long as they are on inactive status.

2. Appeal the decision to terminate CCA status: CCA will need to write a letter of appeal to their local board explaining any life changes or situations that prevented them from earning the CEUs.

CEUs and annual renewal fees will be prorated based on the length of time on inactive status or granting of an appeal.

The amount of required CEUs will be based on the total time on active status or being able to work during the two-year CEU cycle as follows: (category = NM, SW, IPM, CM, and 1 credit in ethics)

22 to 24 months active = no reduction in CEUs

19 to 21 months active = 30 CEUs, and 5 in each category

16 to 18 months active = 25 CEUs, and 5 in each category

13 to 15 months active = 20 CEUs and 4 in each category

10 to 12 months active = 15 CEUs and 3 in each category

7 to 9 months active = 10 CEUs and 2 in each category

4 to 6 months active = 5 CEUs and 1 in each category

0 to 3 months active = 0 CEUs and 0 in each category

Greater than 24 months inactive = contact the ICCA office. The maximum allowable period for inactive status is five years.

Annual renewal fees will be prorated as follows:

10 to 12 months active = no reduction in fees

7 to 9 months active = 25% reduction

4 to 6 months active = 50% reduction

0 to 3 months active = 75% reduction

Minimum annual fee will not drop below \$25.00/year US

The ICCA Program asks that the CCA completes the request for inactive status as soon as possible by using this [form](#). The inactive status request form should be emailed to the ICCA office at certification@sciencesocieties.org or directly to your CCA representative.

The appeal needs to be filed as soon as possible after the notification of out of CEU compliance is received by the CCA from the ICCA office. The appeal should be filed with the ICCA office during the standard appeal process time frame by using this [form](#).

The request for inactive status or appeal form needs to be sent to the ICCA office, which will forward the written request or appeal to the local board.

The local board can do one of the following upon review of the request for inactive status or the appeal form and must follow the above proration schedule for CEUs and annual renewal fees:

1. Request for Inactive Status
 - a. Grant the request and determine how many CEUs and fees would still be required, re-activate the CCA upon return
 - b. Deny the request with stated reasons that are aligned with ICCA Policies as to why, so this can be communicated to the CCA
 - c. Grant a modified version of the request with reasons that are aligned with ICCA Policies as to why the modification is recommended so this can be communicated to the CCA
2. Appeal:
 - a. Grant the appeal, determine the amount of deficient CEUs and fees, waive the deficient CEUs and fees, allow the CCA to continue to their next CEU cycle
 - b. Grant the appeal but add the deficient CEUs and fees to the CCA's next CEU cycle and fee schedule
 - c. Deny the appeal and uphold the termination of the CCA's certification based on ICCA Policies.

Decisions by the local board can be appealed to the ICCA Standards and Ethics Committee. Decisions by the ICCA Standards and Ethics Committee are final.

1.13.3 Amnesty Policy

The ICCA Board provides an amnesty option for CCAs that have left the program voluntarily by not paying dues or not completing CEU requirements, who want to return to certification as a CCA. This opportunity is only provided once per person, and approval lies with the local board.

Recipients of Amnesty shall be reinstated without having to take the ICCA and Local Board Exams again as long as all other requirements are met, and the local board approves the application.

For lapses less than 2 years, the process outlined in 1.13.2 shall be followed.

For lapses of 2 to 5 years after their last cycle the following procedure shall be followed:

1. An application shall be submitted to the ICCA Madison Office that contains the following information.
 - a. Applicants shall submit their own letter requesting amnesty, explaining the circumstances, and why they wish to be reinstated.
 - b. Applicants shall submit a signed Code of Ethics with their application.
 - c. Applicants shall submit fees equal to the current exam costs (ICCA and Local Board) their application.
2. Once the application is complete in the Madison office, the entire packet will be forwarded to the Local Board for consideration. Local Boards shall have 45 days to rule on the application. The Local Board may ask for additional information if needed. The decision of the Local Board is final.

If the application for amnesty is approved, the applicant will then provide the following to complete the amnesty process:

1. Applicants shall complete 50 CEUs with the minimum requirements met in each CEU section within a standard CEU cycle.
2. If 50 CEUs are not obtained within 2 years, the amnesty is revoked and there is no appeal process.

Applicants that are not approved will be refunded the fees submitted with their application and will have the option of re-applying for certification.

Lapses in certification over 5 years are not eligible for amnesty and must re-apply for certification.

1.14 Specialty Certifications

The ICCA Program structure provides for Specialty Certifications. The option has been added to provide structure for specific niche needs that build upon the core ICCA Program, but the content is deemed as not all CCAs need to know. The following information is required in order for the ICCA board to assess the need for such a Specialty Area, the funding support and mechanisms for maintenance of the Specialty Certification.

1. General Description: Describe the need for a Specialty Area, and a general description of the overall work or services to be performed by the Specialty Area-certified CCA for an individual grower/farmer. Specific description is preferred, including all expected deliverables produced by the proposed specialty certified CCA.

2. Funding: Describe the funding provided by the requester for development of this specialty area certification, the funding process and any delivery of funds to ICCA.
3. Target audience to receive services by Specialty Area-certified CCA: Describe geographic region, estimate number of farms, type of farm(s), acreage, crops. Identify provider(s) that currently deliver needed services (in item #1) to target audience.
4. Capabilities: Describe why current ICCA Performance Objectives are not sufficient to meet the needs of the proposed Specialty Area Certification. Are any specialized training courses or materials suggested or required? Describe the maintenance of capabilities. Is the CCA CEU process, to document educational fulfillment in a specific subject matter area, satisfactory to accomplish specialty capabilities updates? For future program continuity and coordination, a periodic review process is proposed, to review specialty area performance objectives (every 4 years), to consider inclusion of those objectives into the core ICCA Performance Objectives.
5. Proof of Specialty Competency: In addition to training (CEUs) is proof of specialty capability required by the requester? Various options – completion of a special project, interview, case study report, exam, some combination of these, etc. Explain the process, identifying who develops and evaluates the “proof”. If an exam is requested, is participation by ICCA in exam development needed or requested? If yes, provide details of exam development, administration, and maintenance.
6. Timeframe: What is the general timeframe during which this specialty area needs to be made available (country, region, state, watershed, province)? Detail any requested deadlines. Identify geographic priorities, if any. Applicants are encouraged to inform ICCA headquarters at least six months in advance of any deadlines.
7. Assistance: Does the applicant need or require assistance from the ICCA Program to develop certain aspects of this program? Describe where assistance is desired and expectations for cooperation both initially and into the future. ICCA will administer all specialty certifications and maintain a current roster of specialty certified CCAs.

1.14.1 Specialty Certification Programs

Certified Professional Agronomist (CPAg)

Description and Identification of Responsible Parties:

1. This is a voluntary specialty certification available to a CCA in good standing that has obtained a bachelor’s degree in an agricultural related field and is concentrating on management. A Certified Professional Agronomist (CPAg) is a qualified agronomy expert who has met the standards set by the American Society of Agronomy (ASA). For any agronomist who advises growers on agronomic practices, conducts educational programs and /or does research in agronomy, manages other agronomists, or provides technical support to field agronomists and can meet the standards of the program. Application for this credential included documentation of education and experience, 5 reference letters less than two years old, and signing the Code of Ethics.
2. Individuals seeking the CPAg designation will need to meet experience levels of at least 5 years with a Bachelor’s degree, 4 years with a Master’s degree, or 3 years with a Ph.D.

3. To renew the CPAg Certification, the CCA must earn 5 CEUs every two years in Professional Development. This is in addition to the 40 CEUs required of a CCA for a total of 45 CEUs every two years.
4. The individual will be charged an annual fee in addition to their annual CCA renewal to maintain both certifications.

4R Nutrient Management Specialist (4R NMS) Certification

Description and Identification of Responsible Parties:

1. This is a voluntary, specialty certification available to a CCA in good standing. The ICCA Program developed the 4R NMS Certification to meet the growing demand for qualified advisers with focused knowledge and skills in nutrient management. The 4R concept of nutrient management has been developed and is being implemented world-wide by industry, researchers, government agencies, and farmers and their advisers. It is centered on the goal of building a nutrient management plan that puts the right nutrient sources, at the right rate, in the right place, and at the right time---the 4Rs of nutrient management. 4R Nutrient Management considers the integration of agronomic practices with economic analysis and environmental interaction, all considered at the local field level, as well as social impacts for the community, and for downstream stakeholders. The CCA 4R NMS Certification builds upon the nutrient, soil, and water components of the International CCA Certification. It demonstrates the CCA's proficiency in working with the 4R concepts and building it into nutrient management planning.
2. The candidate must pass the 4R NMS Certification exam. The specialty certification exam committee will participate in setting a passing score for the exam by completing an Angoff Analysis.
3. To renew the 4R NMS Certification, the CCA must earn 7.5 CEUs every two years in each of the Nutrient Management and Soil and Water Management categories. The requirement of 40 total CEUs every two years and the minimum of 5 CEUs in each of the Integrated Pest Management and Crop Management categories and one CEU for Ethics is unchanged.
4. ICCA fees for the exam will be set by the ICCA Office including an amount for the local board.
5. ICCA fees for the renewal will be set by the ICCA Office including an amount for the local board.
6. The ICCA Office will score and evaluate the exams using methods in place for the ICCA Program exams.

Precision Agriculture Specialist (PASp) Certification

Description and Identification of Responsible Parties:

1. This is a voluntary, specialty certification available to a CCA in good standing. The International Certified Crop Adviser (ICCA) Program developed the Precision Agriculture (PASp) Specialty Certification to meet the growing demand for qualified advisers with focused knowledge and skills in precision agriculture. The Precision Agriculture Specialty is an additional specialty certification that builds upon the basic components of the International CCA Certification, to demonstrate the Crop Adviser's proficiency in working with the Precision Agriculture concepts/technology and building it into a holistic management model. This specialty, like others within the CCA program falls under the five major pillars of a CCA's knowledge, which include Nutrient Management (4R Nutrient Management Specialty), Soil and Water Management, Integrated Pest Management (Resistance Management Specialty), Crop Management (Sustainability Specialty), and Professional Development.

Not all CCAs work extensively on precision agriculture but focus on other aspects of crop advising. The PAsp Specialty allows those CCAs who advise on precision agriculture to become more visible and recognized for their integrated systems thinking and approach.

2. The candidate must pass the PAsp Certification exam. The specialty certification exam committee will participate in setting a passing score for the exam by completing an Angoff Analysis.
3. To renew the PAsp certification, the CCA must earn 5 CEUs every two years in Precision Agriculture. The requirement of 40 CEUs every two years, which must include 5 CEUs in each of Nutrient Management, Soil and Water Management, Integrated Pest Management and Crop Management and one CEU for Ethics is unchanged.
4. ICCA fees for the exam will be set by the ICCA Office including an amount for the local board.
5. ICCA fees for the renewal will be set by the ICCA Office including an amount for the local board.
6. The ICCA Office will score and evaluate the exams using methods in place for the ICCA Program exams.

Resistance Management Specialist (RMS) Certification

Description and Identification of Responsible Parties:

1. This is a voluntary, specialty certification available to a CCA in good standing. The ICCA Program developed the RMS Certification to meet the growing demand for qualified advisers with focused knowledge and skills in pest and resistance management. The CCA RMS Certification builds upon the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) components of the International CCA Certification. It demonstrates the CCA's proficiency in working with resistance management and building it into a holistic, IPM management plan. The RMS Certification allows those CCAs who advise on pest management to become more visible and recognized for their integrated systems thinking and approach to avoid development of resistance or alleviate resistance problems in order to meet the need for improved environmental stewardship.
2. The candidate must pass the RMS certification exam. The specialty certification exam committee will participate in setting a passing score for the exam by completing an Angoff Analysis.
3. To renew the RMS Certification, the CCA must earn 10 CEUs every two years in Integrated Pest Management. The requirement of 40 total CEUs every two years must include 5 CEUs in each of the Nutrient Management, Soil and Water Management, and Crop Management, and one CEU for Ethics is unchanged.
4. ICCA fees for the exam will be set by the ICCA Office including an amount for the local board.
5. ICCA fees for the renewal will be set by the ICCA Office including an amount for the local board.
6. The ICCA Office will score and evaluate the exams using methods in place for the ICCA Program exams.

Sustainability Specialist (SSp) Certification

Description and Identification of Responsible Parties:

1. This is a voluntary certification available to a CCA in good standing. The CCA program is predicated on the concept that there is a basic set of knowledge and experience that one must know in order to provide sound advice to producers. The role of the CCA in agricultural production and their relationship to producers has grown over the life of the certification program and continues to grow alongside ever-evolving agricultural standards and practices, which include economic, environmental, and social considerations. With that in mind, the CCA program, with support from the United Soybean Board, has undertaken development of a Sustainability Specialty to meet the growing demand for information and advice from producers facing requests to utilize and document sustainable practices. The purpose of implementing a Sustainability Specialty is to utilize CCAs to help farmers to become better acquainted with and adopt more sustainable management practices within their operations.
2. The candidate must pass the SSp certification exam. The specialty certification exam committee will participate in setting a passing score for the exam by completing an Angoff Analysis.
3. To maintain the Sustainability Specialty Certification, the CCA must earn 5 CEUs every two years in Sustainability. The requirement of 40 CEUs every two years, which must include 5 CEUs in each of Nutrient Management, Soil and Water Management, Integrated Pest Management and Crop Management and one CEU for Ethics is unchanged.
4. ICCA fees for the exam will be set by the ICCA Office. An additional amount will be added for the local board for local administration.
5. ICCA fees for renewal will be set by the ICCA Office. An additional amount will be added for the local board for local administrative expenses.
6. The ICCA Office will score and evaluate the exams using methods in place for the ICCA Program exams.

California Only – Manure Management Specialty Certification Program and California Nitrogen Management Specialty Certification Program

Description and Identification of Responsible Parties:

1. These are voluntary certifications available to a California CCA in good standing. They are offered as a tool to build clientele in the dairy industry and to demonstrate CCA competency in a regulated category of nutrient management.
2. The candidate must pass the Manure Management specialty certification exam or California Nitrogen Management Exam. The Western Region CCA Board will participate in setting a passing score for the exams by completing an Angoff Analysis.
3. To maintain the Manure Management Specialty Certification, the CCA must earn 5 CEUs every two years in Manure Management. The requirement of 40 CEUs every two years, which must include 5 CEUs in each of Nutrient Management, Soil and Water Management, Integrated Pest Management and Crop Management, and one CEU for Ethics is unchanged.
4. To maintain the California Nitrogen Management Specialty Certification, the CCA must earn 8 CEUs every two years in Nutrient Management and 7 CEUs every two years in Soil and Water Management. The requirement of 40 CEUs every two years, which must include 5 CEUs in each of Integrated Pest Management and Crop Management and one CEU for Ethics is unchanged.

5. The Western Region CCA Board will approve Manure Management CEUs and California Nitrogen Management CEUs using procedures in place for approving other CEUs.
6. ICCA fees for the exam will be set by the ICCA Office. An additional amount will be added by the Western Region CCA Board for local administration.
7. ICCA fees for renewal will be set by the ICCA Office. An additional amount will be added by the Western Region CCA Board for local administrative expenses.
8. The ICCA Office will score and evaluate the exams using methods in place for existing exams.
9. The Western Region CCA Board will publicize the Specialty Certificates and the exam dates. The Western Region CCA Board may provide pre-exam training for examinees.

1.15 CCA and CPAg Retired

A CCA may apply for “retired” status to their local board if they have met the following requirements:

1. To be eligible for “retired” status, a person had to be a CCA in good standing for 10 years or more and fully retired (not receiving compensation) in any field related to crop advising.
2. “CCA Retired” is exempt from CEU requirements.
3. If a “CCA Retired” decides to become an active CCA again, he/she has two years to do so without taking the International and local board exams again. After two years, they must take the exams again.
4. Application and approval for the “CCA Retired” status is completed through the local boards. The ICCA Office will facilitate this process by providing information and forms at the time dues notices are sent out.
5. A “CCA Retired” may complete his/her terms on local and international boards as a voting member. Once their term(s) are up, they are eligible to serve as an ex-officio board member.
6. A minimum fee for the International CCA will be set. Local boards have the discretion to also charge a fee. A “CCA Retired” receives all normal correspondence from International and local programs including Crops and Soils Magazine.

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2.1 ICCA EXAM PROCESS

POLICY: ICCA is responsible for supplying remote proctoring services for taking exams. Additional exam locations can be arranged in the event of an approved exam accommodations request for a physical location.

2.2 EXAM REGISTRATION AND SCHEDULING PROCEDURES

1. Online exam registration is posted approximately 5 weeks prior to the start of each scheduled exam administration.
2. The registration deadline is two days prior to the start of exam scheduling for each scheduled exam administration.
3. At the beginning of the scheduling window examinees will be sent an Examinee Handbook, which contains all of the information needed to navigate the online exam experience, including scheduling their exams and logging in to the software to take the exams.

2.3 EXAM ACCOMMODATIONS PROCEDURES

The ICCA Program follows standard practices for accommodations and adheres to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines for exam accommodations. Please refer the ADA document on Testing Accommodations, which can be found on the ADA website <https://www.ada.gov/resources/testing-accommodations/>.

Individuals with disabilities must submit an Exam Accommodations Request Form with supporting documentation to the ICCA Office regarding their disability no less than 30 days prior to the exam administration they are registering for. The ICCA Office and the local board will accommodate reasonable requests.

2.4 IN-PERSON PROCTOR OPTION FOR BOARDS

POLICY:

Beginning in 2026, local boards may offer an in-person proctoring option for CCA exams. This option is voluntary and intended to supplement, not replace, the existing remote-proctored format.

PROCEDURE:

- Exams administered under this option will continue to be taken on a computer but will not require remote proctoring.
- Local boards choosing to offer this option must designate an approved in-person proctor to oversee the exam session and assist candidates with launching the exam.
- ASA will provide guidance and technical requirements for local proctors to ensure exam integrity and consistency with national testing standards.

- Boards are not required to offer in-person proctoring and may continue using the standard remote-proctored format.
- The program will initially be offered on a pilot basis before it is made available to all boards.

2.5 PROCEDURES TO PROMOTE CCA EXAM SECURITY

POLICY: Each examinee will complete a check-in process with the remote proctor prior to their exam being launched and continually monitors them during their exam. By agreeing to take the exam using internet-based testing with a remote proctor, examinees agree to have their exam session recorded.

PROCEDURE: The remote proctor will send an invite via an online meeting application and then check the examinee's computer camera and microphone, phone's camera and microphone, camera angles, workspace and room prior to launching the exam with continuous audio and visual monitoring during the entire exam appointment.

2.6 PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING EXAM RESULTS TO PARTICIPANTS

1. Exams are delivered using Internet Based Testing (IBT). Each examinee's answers and results are stored on a secure server at Certification Management Services (CMS). Examinees will receive immediate pass/fail results on-screen after submitting their exam. The examinees will have the option to print or email the results to themselves.
2. The psychometrician provides the International CCA office with an e-mail file of the item analysis report for each exam scanned. This information includes a roster of the number of questions answered correctly by each examinee. The Assessment Specialist reviews all exam item analysis reports and provides a summary by email to each local board exam contact with information regarding their suggested passing score. The Exam and Procedures Committee reviews the International Exam and the International Exam passing score is set, based upon recommendations of a privately contracted psychometrician.
3. Once ICCA has a local exam passing score set, the psychometrician reruns the original exam data to determine the final pass/fail listing. The results are uploaded to ICCA's database. These results are hand checked against the listing provided by psychometrician to ensure accuracy. Once the results have been verified as correct, the exam results emails are sent to the examinees. Examinees will receive an email within 7-10 business days when official exam results are released with a specific password protected URL to log into.
4. Exams results are reported online to examinees as pass/fail only. For individuals who failed, the online page will display any of the four competency areas (Nutrient Management, Soil and Water Management, Integrated Pest Management or Crop Management) that fall below a set threshold indicating that these are areas that can use improvement.

2.7 PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH EXAM IMPROPRIETIES

POLICY: To preserve the integrity of the ICCA Program and the CCA registrant's credentials as well as ensure fairness for all examinees during the ICCA exams, ASA has developed the procedures to ensure ICCA exam security and proper handling of improprieties that may occur with respect to the ICCA exams. These procedures have been reviewed and approved by ASA's Executive Committee.

Remote Proctor Responsibilities During Exam: If a proctor observes an examinee engaging in any of the improprieties described below, the proctor shall take actions as he or she deems prudent to confirm the impropriety and/or prevent its continuation. The impropriety can be explicit or suspected.

Remote Proctor Reporting Responsibilities: The proctor who witnessed the improprieties shall send details of the incidents to the Director of Certifications in writing and with a video of the exam session.

Improprieties include any action by an examinee that compromises the security of the exam or constitutes cheating, including:

- A. Copying exam material or taking extensive notes regarding the exam on the allowed scratch paper.
- B. Use of unauthorized devices at the exam location, including but not limited to tape recorders, radios, cell phones, electronic devices, and computers or tablets.
- C. Conversations between examinees and others in and around the exam location.
- D. Disruption of assigned seating order or unauthorized movement of exam booklets by examinees.
- E. Substitution by an examinee of another person to sit in the exam room and write one or more of the exam questions.
- F. Failure to show the scratch paper at the conclusion of the exam session or handing the paper to the proctor at the conclusion of an on-site proctoring event.
- G. Personal behavior inside the exam room that severely disrupts other examinees.
- H. Other actions that support a conclusion that the examinee is cheating on the exam.
- I. Notification by one examinee that another examinee appears to be engaging in the activities specified in items A-K above.
- J. Power failures, natural disasters, and other like occurrences.

Filing and Scoring Exams: Submission of Reports.

The proctor shall forward documentation on exams from examinees suspected of engaging in exam improprieties to ASA Headquarters, along with all reports of exam improprieties. Notification of flagged exams shall be forwarded prior to final exam results (preliminary results are provided when internet-based exams are submitted, notification of final results comes from ASA Headquarters).

Initial Determination.

Within 30 days of receiving the report of the exam irregularity, ASA will make an initial determination as to the veracity of the report(s) via video documentation for internet-based exams or written reports for on-site proctoring events.

If ASA determines that the examinee did not engage in the improprieties or that the improprieties did not undermine the integrity of the exam, ASA shall score the exam and respond to the examinee in the standard manner.

If ASA determines the examinee engaged in improprieties or that the improprieties did undermine the integrity of the exam, ASA will advise the examinee. ASA will simultaneously advise the examinee in writing that the examinee has the right to appeal ASA's initial determination. The examinee has the right to a hearing at which the examinee may be represented by counsel. The exam will not be scored unless it is determined that the examinee did not engage in improprieties and, until such time, the exam result will be recorded as not scored.

Right to Appeal to Exam and Procedures Committee. The examinee has 30 days from the date of ASA's initial determination letter to submit a written report for an appeal to the Exam and Procedures Committee.

In the request for an appeal, the examinee shall indicate whether the appeal will consist of Exam and Procedures Committee's review of written materials submitted by both parties, or a hearing conducted by Exam and Procedures Committee. If a review of recorded or written materials is requested, all recorded or written materials shall be submitted within 30 days. If a hearing is requested, the examinee may request that the hearing be closed to the public.

The appeal shall be considered at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Exam and Procedures Committee, but in no case later than 90 days from the date that the request for an appeal is received.

If the examinee fails to file a timely request for an appeal or fails to timely submit written materials, the initial determination shall be the final and binding determination on all parties. In such cases, the exam shall not be scored. The result reported shall remain not scored. The examinee is not eligible to retake the CCA exam for up to five years from the date of the final determination, and the reports of improprieties shall remain in the applicant's credential file for five years from the date of the final determination. A second determination of improprieties will result in the examinee being banned from the CCA program.

Final Determination by Exam and Procedures Committee. Following consideration of the evidence and such inquiry as the Exam and Procedures Committee deems desirable or necessary, the Exam and Procedures Committee shall meet in executive session to consider the evidence to determine whether there is clear and convincing evidence that the examinee engaged in the improprieties.

If the Exam and Procedures Committee determines that such evidence exists, the Committee shall simultaneously determine the penalty for engaging in such improprieties. Dependent on the impropriety, the penalty shall include that the examinee is not eligible to retake the CCA exam for at least two years and up to five years from the date of the final determination, and the reports of improprieties shall remain in the applicant's credential file for at least five years from the date of the final determination.

If the Exam and Procedures Committee determines that such evidence does not exist, the exam shall be scored, and the result released. If necessary, the examinee may also take the next regularly scheduled CCA exam, in the same manner as other examinees. The record of the alleged improprieties shall be expunged from the examinees' credential file.

The Exam and Procedures Committee shall notify the examinee of its final determination within 10 days of the meeting at which the evidence was considered.

Penalties for Engaging in Exam Irregularities. If the Exam and Procedures Committee reach a final determination that the examinee engaged in improprieties, the Exam and Procedures Committee shall impose any or all the following penalties in its discretion:

- The examinee will not be eligible to take the CCA exam for at least two years, and for up to five years from the date of the final determination.
- A failing grade or not-scored grade will be reported on all or some of the sections of the exam.
- The CCA exam will not be scored or otherwise released.

The report of improprieties will remain in the CCA credential file for at least five years from the date of final determination. It will only be expunged at some later point if directed by the Exam and Procedures Committee. Additional penalties may be imposed at the discretion of the Exam and Procedures Committee if they deem it appropriate under the circumstances presented.

Repeat Offenses. If an examinee has received a final determination that he or she engaged in improprieties during an exam and is found to engage in improprieties during a subsequent exam, he or she will be barred from retaking the CCA exam for a period of 10 years from the most recent final determination.

2.8 PROCEDURES TO PROMOTE SECURITY OF THE ICCA EXAM

Exams are administered via internet-based testing with a remote proctor and require both a front-facing and side-facing camera. ICCA will provide instructions to each examinee to ensure that exams are provided in a standardized manner and will detail security measures to be taken at each exam site used by examinees (home, office, library, other). Examinees will be provided an Examinee Handbook that outlines procedures and policies for testing, and the proctor will also perform security checks at the beginning of the testing session.

Exam proctors shall report any improprieties that occur during the exam both online and via transfer of the video recording of the exam session.

On-site proctors will follow the same procedures, except they will not have cameras or video, but will provide a written report and any evidence from the software program that will flag any improprieties with the computer during the exam session.

2.9 SCORING QUALITY CONTROL

Any errors that are flagged in the item fields during the exam scoring or item review will be edited by the psychometrician. Any changes needed in overall scoring will be completed immediately or communicated to the examinee if an issue is discovered after final results are released.

2.10 ATTEMPTS TO PASS THE ICCA AND LOCAL BOARD EXAMS

Beginning with the February 2017 exam administration, a policy was set in place of a five-year time limit to pass both the international and local board exams. This time limit begins with the first passed exam results being reported. If the five-year time limit is exceeded without both exams being passed, exam results are nullified, and the applicant starts over in year six. Example of five-year time limit: February 2018 to February 2023. August 2023 would be year six and the applicant would need to start over with taking both exams.

CHAPTER III: Credentials Review

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3.1 APPLICATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The application process begins with registering for and taking the ICCA international and local exams. After successfully passing both exams, the applicant receives the ICCA credentials application information via email.

POLICY: The applicant must complete the application and return it within six months of passing both the international and local exams. Applicants are informed of this policy when they receive their passing scores on the exams. They are also informed that materials received after six months are no longer accepted and their exam scores are invalidated at that time. If an applicant's scores are invalidated, he or she must pay the appropriate fees and retake the exams.

POLICY: All application credential forms are to be sent to ASA Headquarters in Madison, Wisconsin.

The date materials are received is logged into the applicant's record in the database. After all credentials have been received, the credentials are sent to the local board. Local boards set their own review schedule; however, completed credential packages are sent to the board at least quarterly. Local boards may request that completed credential packages be sent more frequently if deemed necessary, but not more than monthly.

POLICY: The applicant's inaugural date of certification is the date on the certificate signed by the Board Chair. Certificates will not be issued without a signed copy of the Code of Ethics from the registrant.

3.2 CCA and CCA CANDIDATE REVIEW of EDUCATION AND WORK EXPERIENCE

POLICY: *There are three areas reviewed. 1) Educational background; 2) Work experience; and 3) References. All three areas must be satisfied to become certified, in addition to passing the exams.*

Certified Crop Adviser Applicant has passed both exams and meets all the requirements listed above.

Certified Crop Adviser Candidate Status Applicant has passed both exams but does not meet the experience requirement. CCA Candidate status is granted to an applicant who has passed both exams and has met all requirements as reviewed by the local CCA board but does not meet the experience requirement. The local board will confer CCA Candidate Status and note the number of months or years that are needed to meet the experience requirement. The applicant will be notified by the ICCA office of the board's decision. The applicant will be designated as a CCA Candidate for the number of months or years that are required to fulfill the experience requirement. At that time, the applicant will need to update their experience form and resubmit it to the local board for review, requesting full CCA status.

A CCA Candidate applicant needs to provide at least one reference of any type from a non-relative such as former employers from part-time jobs or professors. This reference does not need to be a farmer/grower.

The time frame for “candidate” status correlates with what the board says is needed to fulfill the experience requirement. The time cannot be extended except in the case of extenuating circumstances such as military duty, medical related issues, or unemployment.

A CCA Candidate will not have CEU requirements and will not have to pay the annual renewal fee. CEU and annual renewal fee requirements will begin once the CCA Candidate becomes fully certified and the status changes to CCA as recommended by the local CCA board.

PROCEDURES:

Certified Crop Adviser (CCA)

1. Education.

- A. Determine the education level of the applicant.
- B. Determine the number of years of experience needed – either 2 years with a BS degree, 3 years with an associate degree, or 4 years non degree or non-related education.

2. Experience.

Determine the number of years of experience the candidate has in crop production advising.

3. References.

Confirm that the applicant has two completed reference forms (both non-relative, one from the employer and one from a client or individual who is familiar with his/her work experience in crop production). A CCA Candidate is only required to provide one non-relative reference.

3.2.1 Determining Education (CCA)

1. Determine the education level of the candidate either as non-degree, associate degree, BS degree, MS degree or PhD degree.
2. If the applicant does not have a degree, the applicant only must complete the experience and reference forms. Four years of crop advising experience is required with this application category.
3. The applicant only needs three years of crop advising experience if he or she has an associate degree in agricultural production. For this provision to apply, the applicant must have a minimum of 15 semester or 23 quarter hours in agricultural production related subjects. This includes basic soils, fertility, crop production, pest management and farm management. If the applicant does not have 15-semester hours or 23 quarter hours of course work in agricultural production, he or she will need four years of crop advising experience.
4. If the applicant has a BS degree, review the course work for two components. The first component is course work in biology, chemistry, math, and physical sciences. The second component is course work in soils fertility, crop production, pest management and farm management.

If the applicant has both components, two years of experience is required. You may credit one year of experience if one component is missing (i.e., good science background, but no production agriculture). The applicant will need an additional three years of crop advising experience.

If the degree is not related to agriculture in any way, deny the candidate any credit and require four years of advising experience.

Supervised summer work experience or internships, up to a maximum of twelve (12) months, may be included in the work experience as long as the activities performed meet the guidelines used for full-time employment. Supervised Work Experience or Internship may be used to substitute for six (6) months of work experience for each three (3) months of supervised work experience. Six (6) months of supervised work experience may count for a maximum of 1 year of work experience. The Crop Advising Experience form should be used to describe the supervised work experience. A separate attachment is recommended.

3.2.2 Determining Experience (CCA)

1. To be certified an applicant must have either:
 - a. Four years of crop advising experience working with farmers or crop advisers and an unrelated degree or no degree; or
 - b. Three years of experience and associate degree in an agricultural related field; or
 - c. Two years of experience and a baccalaureate degree in an agricultural related field.

2. Determine the educational level of the applicant using the guidelines above and then determine the years of experience needed by the applicant. Local boards may refuse to accept a transcript if they have reason to believe the degree from that institution is clearly inferior in content to an accredited U.S. or Canadian degree.

3. A year of experience should be credited for each year of qualified activity, if the applicant indicates that approximately one-third (i.e., at least 30% to 35%) of their time is engaged in one or more of the following activities:
 - a. Advising farmers on crop production.
 - b. Teaching or educating crop advisers about topics that are described in the Exam Performance Objectives or the ICCA Educational Areas Booklet.
 - c. Advising or working with farmers to install soil conservation practices, or to meet state or federal regulations that are related to crop production (such as conservation compliance).

NOTE: If an applicant spends less than 30% of his or her time engaged in the activities described in 3a – c above, partial credit may be assigned based on the following:

Actual Experience	CCA Experience
30%	1.00 year per year involved
25%	0.83 years per year involved
20%	0.66 years per year involved
15%	0.50 years per year involved
<15%	No credit is given. This is not to be retroactive

For example, an applicant spends 20% of his or her time in activities outlined in 3a, b or c and lists 10 years of experience. The applicant should receive 6.6 years' credit for experience (i.e.; 0.66 x 10 years = 6.6 years)

POLICY: If an applicant has farm experience, this experience may count up to one year of CCA work experience regardless of experience duration.

4. If there is not enough detail regarding experience on the application form to determine whether the applicant has the necessary experience, deny certification on the basis that more information is needed.

5. On the CCA Review Worksheet, write in the number of years of experience that has been credited to the candidate. If there is not enough information to make a judgment, a note will be added that more information is needed.

6. **CCA Candidate Status** If it is determined that the applicant meets all requirements but falls short of the necessary minimum experience, CCA Candidate Status is selected, and it is noted how many additional years of experience is still required to meet full CCA status. The CCA Candidate status will be granted and be in effect until the experience requirement is achieved.

3.2.3 References (CCA)

1. Two completed reference forms (non-relative, one from the employer and one from a client or individual who is familiar with the applicant's work experience in crop production). Confirm that the two reference letters are signed and witnessed or notarized. A CCA Candidate is only required to provide at least one non-relative reference.
2. For each reference to be valid, the following two questions must be answered positively:
Does the reference recommend the applicant for certification? Is the reference familiar with the applicant's work history?

NOTE: All of the above must be met for the reference(s) to be valid.

3.3 CPAg REVIEW of EDUCATION AND WORK EXPERIENCE

POLICY: There are three areas reviewed. 1) Educational background; 2) Work experience; and 3) References. No one can be certified without satisfying all three areas.

Certified Professional Agronomist Applicant is a CCA in good standing and has met all the additional requirements for education, work experience and references.

The applicant will be notified by the ICCA office of the local board's decision.

PROCEDURES

Certified Professional Agronomist (CPAg)

1. Education.

Determine the education level of the applicant

2. Experience.

Determine the number of years of experience needed – either 5 years with a BS degree, 4 years with a Master's degree, or 3 years with a PhD.

3. References.

- A. Confirm that the candidate has the appropriate completed references:
1. If references for the CCA certification are less than 2 years old, 3 additional references must be provided, OR
 2. If references for the CCA certification are 2 years old or older, 5 new references must be provided

3.3.1 Determining Education (CPAg)

1. Determine the education level of the candidate - either BS degree, MS degree or PhD degree. The candidate must possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited United States or Canada institution with a major in agronomy or a closely allied field of science and meet the minimum core requirements.
2. Review the course work form to make sure all minimums have been met as stated on the form. The transcript should be used to verify courses listed. The GPA in core course work must be 2.5 or higher. Otherwise, the application should be denied based on not meeting course work requirements.
3. On the worksheet, indicate the educational requirement findings.

3.3.2 Determining Work Experience (CPAg)

1. To be certified as a CPAg, an applicant must have five years of professional work experience in agronomy with a BS degree or 4 years with an MS degree or 3 years with a PhD degree.
 - a. Experience while working toward an advanced (Masters, Doctoral) degree does not qualify for professional experience.
 - b. Applicants are required to demonstrate the percentage of work experience in agronomy.
2. Activities such as farm management, consulting, research, extension, and teaching must make up a minimum of 70% of the applicant's time working in agronomy to count fully as work experience.

Work experience less than 70% will be prorated based on actual percentage listed.

<u>Time working in Agronomy</u>	<u>Experience Equivalent</u>
70% and higher	full credit
Less than 70%, actual percentage times years of experience in position	

Example: 55% of time listed as agronomy work for 10 years

$$55\% \times 10 = 5.5 \text{ years as CPAg work experience}$$

Work experience must be in agronomy.

3. Determine amount of experience needed based on degree level. Determine total number of years/months listed on experience form, based on the requirements above. If work experience is below the minimum requirements, CPAg certification will be denied.
4. On the worksheet, write in the number of years of experience the candidate has been credited with and if there is not enough information to make a judgment, it will be noted that more information is needed.

3.3.3 References (CPAg)

1. References must be familiar with the candidate's work experience used to meet certification requirements and knowledgeable of agronomy, crops, and soils. The applicant will need to designate the time period for which the reference has personal knowledge of his or her work experience history.

A. At least one individual must be associated with their employment: an immediate supervisor, client, or coworker.

B. CCA references must be less than 2 years old to qualify for CPAg.

C. If reference(s) do not support certification, CPAg will be denied based on no supporting references.

2. Confirm that the candidate has the appropriate completed references:

a. If references for the CCA certification are less than 2 years old, 3 additional references must be provided, OR

b. If references for the CCA certification are 2 years old or older, 5 new references must be provided.

3. Confirm that the reference letters are signed and witnessed or notarized.

For each reference to be valid, the following two questions must be answered affirmatively:

Does the reference recommend the applicant for certification?

Is the reference familiar with the applicant's work history?

4. On the worksheet, indicate reference review.

CPAg status will be granted if the reviewers determine that education, experience, and reference requirements, as provided, have been met.

CHAPTER IV: Continuing Education Unit (CEU) Procedures

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4.1 LOCAL BOARD CEU PROCESSING GUIDELINES

1. All boards require a minimum of 20 board approved CEUs.
2. All boards accept all board approved CEUs.
3. The following boards automatically accept Pesticide Applicator* credits:

Local Board	Total Number of Pesticide Credits in Two-Year Cycle
Arizona	20/2 yrs for PCAs
California	25/2 yrs for PCAs
Ohio	10/2 yrs
Pennsylvania	4/2 yrs
Rocky Mountain	6/2yrs
Texas	10/2yrs

*A copy of the Pesticide License showing the license number and expiration date must be sent to the ICCA office in order to receive credit.

4.2 INSTRUCTIONS FOR CEU APPLICATION

To apply for CEU credit, you must provide the information requested on the online CCA CEU Application Form, along with any related supporting materials and applications should be submitted as far in advance as possible of the meeting to promote the availability of CEUs. However, post-meeting applications may be submitted but must be done no later than 30 days past the event date. **Please allow up to 30 days for application processing.** To be eligible for CEUs, the meeting must be relevant to the Continuing Education Standards.

Subject matters not eligible for CEUs are specific product commercial crop input sales training or marketing sessions and award presentations.

CCAs will receive CEUs for attending your meeting by signing in using the pre-assigned QR code and CCA app or signing a sign-in sheet provided at the meeting.

4.2.1 Procedures to Complete the CEU Application Form

The vendor must use the online application found on the CCA website.

CEUs are based on contact time and determined by the following chart:

CEU Conversion Table

Meeting Time	CEUs	Meeting Time	CEUs
30 to 45 minutes	0.5	256 to 285 minutes	4.5
46 to 75 minutes	1.0	286 to 315 minutes	5.0

76 to 105 minutes	1.5	316 to 345 minutes	5.5
106 to 135 minutes	2.0	346 to 375 minutes	6.0
136 to 165 minutes	2.5	376 to 405 minutes	6.5
166 to 195 minutes	3.0	406 to 435 minutes	7.0
196 to 225 minutes	3.5	436 to 465 minutes	7.5
226 to 255 minutes	4.0	466 to 495 minutes	8.0

The vendor completes the online application. The application is reviewed by the CCA – Local Board, once approved a unique tracking number will automatically be assigned and generate the sign-in sheet with the QR Code. Once the completed CEU application has been approved and returned to the appropriate local board, you will be notified of the CEU tracking number assigned to the activity. A CCA sign-in sheet will be forwarded to the vendor with the tracking number indicated at the top. CCA participants at the meeting will have to scan the QR code or indicate their name and CCA certification number on the sign-in sheet. Upon the conclusion of the meeting, the sign-in sheet should be forwarded to the ICCA Office at ASA Headquarters. The credits will be posted to each individual’s CCA account from the sign-in sheet. It is very important that each participant record the required information on the sign-in sheet before they leave the meeting if they do not use the QR Code.

For large conferences or multiple-day events with concurrent sessions, each session should be evaluated separately. Each session will have a CEU value and a tracking number assigned to it. Sponsors must use the sign-in sheet and QR Code provided.

Note: The International Continuing Education Committee and local boards reserve the right to request more information before awarding CEUs.

4.3 LOCAL CEU PROGRAM

4.3.1 Eligibility

The local CEU review committees are responsible for reviewing CEU applications for meetings that are being held within their state or province. If a sponsor is holding a series of meetings in several locations, they must submit an online application for each location.

4.3.2 Application Procedure

To be eligible for CEUs, a course must be relevant to the [Continuing Education Standards document](#). Subject matters not eligible for CEU credit include sales training, marketing sessions and award presentations. Applications should include the proposed breakdown of CEUs requested along with the educational areas: Nutrient Management, Soil & Water Management, Integrated Pest Management, Crop Management, Sustainability, Professional Development, and/or Ethics.

Once the online application form has been completed (including a copy of the agenda and any additional information that will help the review committee evaluate the application for CEUs), the local CEU review

committee evaluates and approves the CEU application. The sponsor will then be notified, via email, if the course is approved and will be provided with a course number and the sign-in sheets.

4.3.3 Local Board Responsibilities

CEU Applications: Local CCA boards will appoint a committee to review and approve or deny educational events and materials. The local CEU committee will assume the responsibility for reviewing CEU applications. They will use the guidelines set forth by the ICCA Program and outlined in Chapter IV of this policy manual. Once approved, tracking numbers and sign-in sheets are automatically sent via email to the contact of the meeting.

CCAs: In February/March of each year, the local boards will review the lists of CCAs who have not made the minimum CEU requirements.

4.4 Organization(s) Seeking Credit

Organizations seeking credit for their educational event or materials are strongly encouraged to do so before the event occurs or the materials are released. **No applications will be accepted 30 days past event date.**

4.4.1 Responsibilities of Organization(s) Holding an Approved ICCA/CEU Event

At appropriate timeframes during the event/sessions, the course sponsors should pass out the sign-in sheets for attendees to scan with the app or manually sign. The completed attendance sheet must be forwarded to the ICCA office within 30 days of the meeting date. Sponsors should keep a copy of the sign-in sheet for their records for a minimum of two years.

If the event instructor presents the same meeting at various locations, the instructor may receive the equivalent CEUs that a participant would receive for one time only.

4.4.2 Individual CCA's Responsibilities

The CCA should record the course number and keep any course materials for his or her records. A CCA must provide their CCA number when signing the sign-in sheet (not required when using the app). If no CCA number is provided, no CEUs will be issued.

4.5 APPLYING FOR CREDIT FOR COURSES THAT ARE NOT PRE- OR POST-APPROVED BY A CCA BOARD

1. Self-Reported CEUs are continuing education events that meet one or more of the educational areas but are not pre- or post-approved by a local CCA board.

The CCA applying for self-reported CEUs must use the online form for self-reporting CEUs. Mailed or faxed forms will be returned.

Local CCA boards will have online access to review all CEUs. Local CCA boards will contact CCAs where discrepancies are noted to determine a resolution.

2. Post-secondary education coursework can be self-reported by the CCA and will be considered “board approved”.

Requirements include:

- a. Course grade slip indicating a passing grade of “C” or higher.
- b. Course outline or syllabus if course title is not self-explanatory.
- c. CCA CEUs = {15 x semester credits} or {9 x quarter credits}.

This applies to all forms of post-secondary education coursework, on-campus and electronic or distance learning.

CCA: Self-Reported CEUs - Audit Process

1. All CCAs regardless of their board certification may earn CEUs and report them by using the “self-reported CEU” form found on the web site.
2. Self-reported CEUs are reported by the CCA using the online self-reporting form. The event is the same type and contains the same content as a board approved event, but no board has reviewed them. A board may choose to review the event and approve it, turning it into a board approved event.
3. A CCA must meet the minimum of 20 board approved CEUs. They can use additional board approved or self-reported CEUs to complete their remaining 20 CEUs to reach their 40 minimum total CEUs. There is no limit to the amount of self-reported CEUs a CCA may report but they must have met the minimum of 20 board approved CEUs.
4. A local CCA board may audit CCA’s CEUs at their discretion using the online administrative access. A local CCA board will audit only CCAs in their jurisdiction. The local CCA board will communicate directly with the CCAs being audited.

4.6 PROCEDURE FOR ASSIGNING A SPECIFIC NUMBER TO A CEU EVENT

POLICY: Each ICCA CEU Board approved event will carry a seven-character tracking number.

PROCEDURE: The first two characters are the two-letter state or province abbreviation for the local board that reviews the CEU event application. This also corresponds to the state, region, or province where the event is held. Though rare, if the first two characters are “NA” it means the international committee approved the event. The following five characters are sequentially assigned numbers. They have no

meaning other than to identify and track the event. The system is continuous and can provide same day service.

This is the only approved ICCA/CEU numbering system.

GUIDELINE: IL 50025 is an ICCA event number that identifies an Illinois event, which has been assigned number 50025.

4.7 RECORDING AND TRACKING CEUs

The local board is responsible for approving educational events and materials submitted by vendors or certificants offered or produced in their state or province. The ICCA office maintains the official records of all educational events and materials.

Vendors send the sign-in sheet back to ICCA for the CEUs to be put onto the certificants' accounts.

4.8 CEU SELF-STUDY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CEUs granted for self-study (written) and self-paced (videos and webinars) educational materials must be pre-approved by the appropriate local CCA board. ICCA will maintain a master copy of the self-study and self-paced materials.

Approved self-study and self-paced materials shall expire three years from the date of publication or first distribution. These materials may be renewed by the vendor but must undergo a review and approval process before they expire. ICCA will send out renewal notices. If the vendor does not wish to renew, ICCA will have the option to serve as the vendor, subject to vendor permission.

ICCA will maintain a library of approved self-study and self-paced materials with their date of expiration for renewal notice. Credit for specific self-study and self-paced material will be granted only once to a CCA. Vendors must identify the geographic area of applicability for materials that are not international in scope.

For self-study CEUs, the CCA must complete a quiz on the material and achieve a passing score of 70% or provide proof of successful completion of a correspondence course. For self-paced CEUs, the system used to deliver the content must have a tracking system to verify attendance and attentiveness if it does not, then a quiz is also required. Product specific materials will be granted CEUs when fair and credible performance comparisons are presented. No credit shall be allowed when emphasis is on product sales. No advertising shall be allowed in self-study or self-paced materials, but sponsor recognition and acknowledgment is permitted.

Self-study and self-paced materials should include field application information (i.e., how does a CCA use this information with farmers?). The online CEU application must be used to request CCA CEUs.

ADDENDUM

Supporting Program Documents

[CCA Credential Worksheet](#)

[CPAg Credential Worksheet](#)

[CCA/CPAg Retired Status Application](#)

[Appeal Form](#)

[Request for Inactive Status Form](#)

[Confidentiality and Conflicts of Interest Agreement for Exam Committees](#)